


Afghan refugees benefit from health services at Savah settlement in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

# ASIA AND THE



This chapter provides a summary of the general environment in which UNHCR operated in Asia and the Pacific in 2014. It presents the main challenges and constraints that affected the organization's operational response, and sums up the year's achievements across the region.

Details of the largest operations in the region and its subregions in 2014 are presented on the *Global Focus* website at <http://reporting.unhcr.org>.

# PACIFIC

## | WORKING ENVIRONMENT |

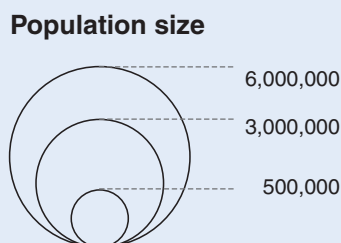
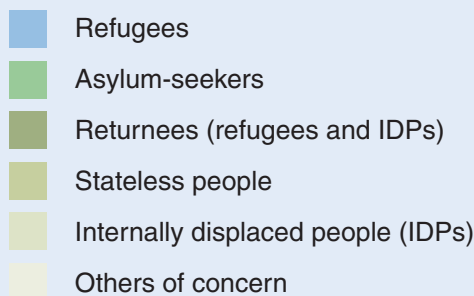
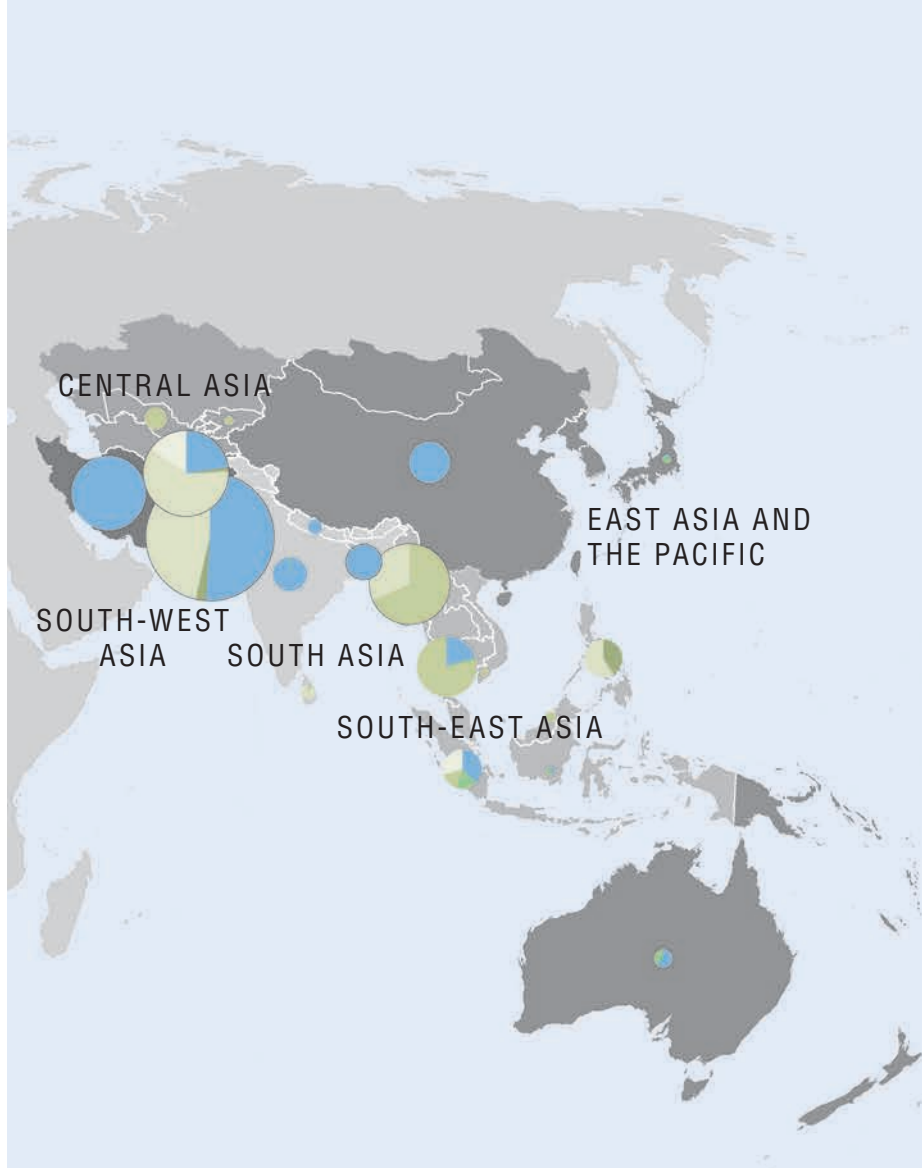
- By the end of 2014, some 8.7 million people of concern to UNHCR were living in the Asia and the Pacific region, including 3.6 million refugees, 2.7 million internally displaced people (IDPs) and more than 1.5 million stateless people. Most countries and territories in the region continue to uphold their traditions of hospitality towards refugees and displaced people, although only 20 out of 45 States have acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.
- The majority of refugees in the region are from Afghanistan and Myanmar. There are nearly 2.6 million Afghan refugees across the world, but the vast majority are in the neighbouring Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan. In addition, there are an estimated 2 million unregistered Afghans in these two countries. For decades, the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan have shown extraordinary generosity towards these millions of refugees.
- The voluntary repatriation of Afghans has taken place in waves during moments of change, when refugees considered that prospects for peace and stability in their country of origin had improved. These return movements have been overlaid with refugee outflows during times of conflict. During the past few years, the rate of voluntary return has decreased significantly, reaching a historical low in 2014.
- At the same time, Afghanistan has entered a new chapter in its history. The forging of a new national unity Government has created an opportunity for the people of Afghanistan to work together towards peace, security and development. The new era also paves the way for Afghans around the world to fulfil their aspirations to voluntarily return and help rebuild their country.
- UNHCR is working closely with concerned Governments to ensure that conditions are conducive for the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees. The engagement and financial commitment of the international community is crucial not only to help ensure the sustainable return of Afghans but also to achieve long-term stability and development in Afghanistan.
- In Myanmar, after years of political turmoil and inter-communal violence, peace negotiations are expected to pave the way for elections in late 2015. Inside Myanmar, approximately 370,000 people remain displaced in Rakhine and Kachin States, and in the south-east of the country. Moreover, an estimated 810,000 people are without citizenship in Rakhine State. There are also approximately 265,000 refugees of different ethnicities, originating from Myanmar, who are displaced in neighbouring countries.
- Around 75 per cent of refugees – 2.7 million people – in the Asia and Pacific region are living in urban or semi-urban areas. Protecting and responding to the needs of large numbers of urban refugees remains a priority. Displaced people in urban situations can be more vulnerable than camp populations and may have a different set of protection needs, which are often not adequately addressed. For example, because they are not confined to a camp, many lack documentation and are at risk of arrest, detention and deportation. Lack of documentation also

prevents them from legally accessing the labour market, and they are therefore more likely to become victims of labour exploitation. Women and adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

- Inadequate protection, unequal access to education and livelihoods, and the lack of solutions all contribute to onward movement by sea or other means. Increasing numbers of people are undertaking these dangerous journeys, making irregular migration a key issue facing the Asia and the Pacific region. In 2014, some 63,000 people undertook irregular maritime journeys. The vast majority departed from the Bay of Bengal bound for Malaysia and Thailand. Hundreds of others followed routes through the Indian Ocean from South Asia and Indonesia to Australia, and across the Strait of Malacca from Malaysia to Indonesia.

- UNHCR received reports of 750 people who allegedly died at sea in South-East Asia in 2014, due to starvation, dehydration or ill treatment on board vessels. Those who arrived were malnourished and traumatized as a result of mistreatment at the hands of smugglers. The increasingly high rate of irregular migration placed a heavy burden on asylum countries and often overstretched the organization’s capacity to carry out refugee status determination under its mandate.

- After 40 years, UNHCR’s office in Viet Nam closed at the end of June 2014. The Regional Office in Bangkok assumed coverage of activities in Viet Nam as of 1 July 2014, and will continue its cooperation with the Vietnamese Government to support ongoing activities.



## | CONSTRAINTS |

In 2014, UNHCR observed a worrying trend in States' policy responses to irregular maritime movements in the region, notably the increased use of deterrent and punitive measures. Domestically, these policies severely restricted asylum-seekers' access to protection; internationally, they have resulted in unilateral action by some individual countries, undermining the principles of cooperation promoted by regional initiatives such as the Bali Process and ASEAN meetings.

Insecurity, along with unpredictable political and socio-economic conditions, continued to plague most of South-West Asia, affecting UNHCR's operations in the subregion. Meanwhile in parts of South-East Asia, the ability of humanitarian

organizations to work independently and impartially was seriously hampered throughout 2014.

Overall, States appeared to rely on resettlement as the main protection tool and durable solution for refugees and asylum-seekers, particularly as numbers grew. UNHCR is engaged in discussions with States on how solutions of the past may be revisited and adapted to present-day realities. Competing emergencies in other parts of the world, combined with a lack of funding and decreased donor interest, adversely affected the organization's operations in Asia and the Pacific in 2014. Gaps in protection and assistance in some countries were caused by a lack of resources.

## | ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT |

### ● *Safeguarding access to protection and asylum*

In 2014, UNHCR carried out refugee status determination in countries without national eligibility procedures. While supporting the establishment of such procedures, the Office promoted protection-sensitive migration management systems throughout the region.

Priorities included identifying alternatives to detention for asylum-seekers, to individual status determination, and to third-country resettlement.

The Office continued to provide technical support for the development of national asylum procedures and was granted observer status in the national refugee status determination commissions of some

countries in Central Asia. States were also called upon to respect international law, including the principle of *non-refoulement*.

At the end of 2014, some 1.5 million Afghan refugees were registered in Pakistan, including more than 300,000 children under the age of five. Nearly 1.2 million of these refugees renewed their Proof of Registration cards. This represents 93 per cent of the total registered Afghan refugee population in Pakistan. The decrease of 7 per cent in the registered population was due partly to departures abroad or death, but primarily, to the failure of refugees to collect Proof of Registration cards during the renewal process that was available during most of 2014.

UNHCR continued to work on addressing the root causes of irregular movements, improving protection standards and seeking adequate solutions through closer multilateral cooperation in the Asia and the Pacific region. The Office engaged in discussions with States on bolstering their protection activities and the search for solutions for refugees residing on their territories. Permits to stay, subsidiary protection or other forms of protection, such as labour migration schemes, were explored.

In Bangkok, the Office established a Maritime Monitoring Unit in 2014. Its primary role is to compile and report periodical statistics related to the irregular maritime departures, and identify trends.

In 2014, UNHCR and the Government of Indonesia co-chaired a workshop to assess the implementation of the 2013 *Jakarta Declaration on addressing irregular*

*movement of persons*. In addition to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 14 States, representing countries of origin, transit and destination, participated in the workshop. States reiterated their commitment towards burden sharing and common responsibility, and underscored the importance of regional agreements and practical actions to protect people rescued and intercepted at sea.

A number of recommendations on strengthening the capacity to address human trafficking and smuggling were made at the High Commissioner's December 2014 Dialogue on Protection Challenges on the theme of Protection at Sea. Participants also stressed the importance of reinforcing regional cooperation, protecting those who otherwise may be subject to detention and *refoulement*, and increasing the capacity for rescue at sea in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

In Central Asia, UNHCR promoted protection-sensitive border management in line with the *Almaty Process on Refugee Protection and International Migration* (Almaty Process). In 2014, Almaty Process Member States expressed concern over inadequate emergency preparedness, and agreed to establish national mechanisms for the identification and referral of people in need of international protection.

### ○ *Seeking solutions for protracted refugee situations*

Under the joint United Nations programme on Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas

(RAHA), over 1,000 projects were carried out throughout Pakistan in education, health, environment, social protection, water and sanitation, livelihood, and infrastructure sectors in 2014. The main objective of RAHA is to promote tolerance towards Afghan refugees in hosting communities in Pakistan.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNHCR, together with the Government, undertook health, education and livelihood programmes to enable Afghan refugees to acquire the skills they need to facilitate their reintegration upon eventual return to Afghanistan.

In 2014, more than 8,000 refugees from Bhutan benefited from third-country resettlement. Since the inception of the programme in 2007, nearly 94,500 refugees from Bhutan have been resettled to third countries. In 2014, UNHCR conducted a “last call” exercise for group resettlement. While some 2,000 refugees opted out, a further 10,000 to 12,000 of this group may be resettled in the coming two years. For some 10,000 refugees who would then remain, UNHCR is collaborating with concerned Governments to seek alternative durable solutions.

In Myanmar, UNHCR prepared for the return of IDPs and refugees to the country’s south-east. Some 120,000 refugees have been living in nine camps in Thailand with a view to eventual return. UNHCR intensified dialogue with the authorities and stakeholders, including refugees, on both sides of the border, and designed a strategic roadmap on the different phases of return – from facilitation to promotion. A verification

exercise is underway in the camps to update the camp population data and plan for durable solutions.

### ● *Ensuring protection and durable solutions for IDPs*

In Afghanistan, the launch of a national IDP policy, endorsed by the Government in 2013, took place in 2014. The Office is now collaborating with the authorities to design a strategy and roadmap for the policy’s implementation through advocacy and training.

Last year, UNHCR supported IDP programmes in Pakistan by distributing tents and basic household items to those affected by military operations in the North Waziristan and Khyber Agencies. With some 690,000 people forced to flee their homes, the Government plans to facilitate the gradual return of IDPs.

In Myanmar, as cluster lead for the sectors of protection, shelter/non-food items (NFIs) and camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), the Office continued to support some 100,000 IDPs in Kachin State. In Rakhine State, where some 140,000 people remain displaced, UNHCR has also taken the lead in these four sectors since December 2012. New camp management offices, multi-purpose buildings and warehouses were constructed in 2014. The Office also carried out maintenance and repair programmes in 23 priority camps in the townships of Myebon, Pauktaw and Sittwe.

In Sri Lanka, UNHCR's IDP assistance programme is reaching its final stages. The Office is working with the newly elected Government and other stakeholders in support of the sustainable return of Sri Lankan refugees.

In the Philippines, the Strategic Response Plan for Typhoon Haiyan ended in August 2014, following the Government's decision to phase out the humanitarian response coordination structures in favour of State-led recovery systems. The protection cluster, which was co-led by UNHCR, was merged into the protection working group, which has since been led by the Government authorities.

### ○ *Reducing and preventing statelessness and protecting stateless people*

In June 2014, the International Conference on Migration and Statelessness in Ashgabat, hosted by the Government of Turkmenistan and co-organized by IOM and UNHCR,

convened over 40 delegations. They aimed to address regional challenges and identify best practices for reducing and preventing statelessness, and improving migration management. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have taken practical steps towards resolving statelessness in their respective countries. Through funding provided by the "Seeds for Solutions" initiative (see *Glossary*), these countries registered and documented people of undetermined nationality, provided access to legal counselling, strengthened the capacity of local and national authorities, engaged in outreach and information campaigns, and undertook legislative reform.

In South-East Asia, UNHCR carried out projects to reduce statelessness in Malaysia and the Philippines. Moreover, efforts will continue in 2015 to improve civil registration, including birth registration and vital statistics, together with partners, such as ASEAN. ■

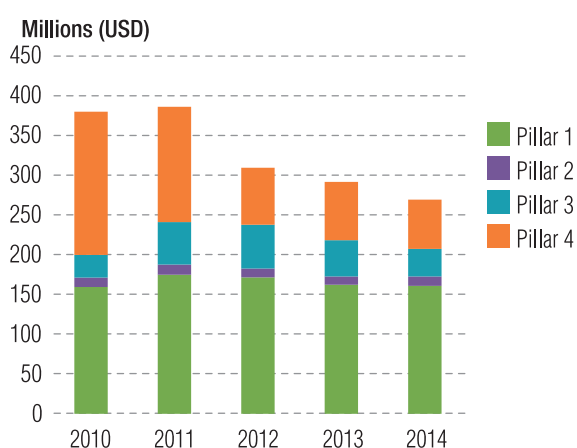
## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR's requirements in Asia and the Pacific have remained constant, at around USD 550-600 million for the past five years. The initial budget for the region approved by the Executive Committee in 2013 amounted to approximately USD 581 million. The revised 2014 budget at the end of the year had increased to over USD 610.4 million, mainly because of the additional requirements of USD 15 million as presented in the supplementary appeal for the North Waziristan emergency. However, the total funds available allowed for expenditure of just USD 269.4 million.

This critical funding shortfall meant that protection monitoring and other protection-related activities, such as much-needed outreach initiatives for people of concern, were hampered. It also affected the Office's ability to monitor and improve the quality of refugee status determination processes in the region, and the implementation of self-reliance activities.

South-West Asia also experienced major challenges, due to military operations in the Khyber and North Waziristan Agencies. This resulted in additional displacement, and therefore the need for more resources. In addition, the lack of funding in Afghanistan led to a reduced level of support for refugee returnees and IDPs, particularly in the areas of non-food items, shelter and peaceful co-existence. In Pakistan, water, nutrition and livelihoods for refugees were the most significant unmet needs.

## EXPENDITURE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC | 2010-2014





## BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC | USD

<i>Operation</i>		Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	Total
<b>SOUTH-WEST ASIA</b>						
Afghanistan	Budget	58,444,557	0	60,084,704	33,441,595	151,970,856
	Expenditure	25,271,084	0	24,421,360	14,567,018	64,259,462
Islamic Republic of Iran	Budget	68,480,442	0	0	0	68,480,442
	Expenditure	30,145,199	0	0	0	30,145,199
Pakistan	Budget	57,675,697	212,420	60,849,015	43,746,456	162,483,588
	Expenditure	33,374,770	185,668	9,825,226	21,112,522	64,498,186
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>184,600,696</b>	<b>212,420</b>	<b>120,933,719</b>	<b>77,188,051</b>	<b>382,934,886</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>88,791,053</b>	<b>185,668</b>	<b>34,246,586</b>	<b>35,679,540</b>	<b>158,902,847</b>
<b>CENTRAL ASIA</b>						
Kazakhstan Regional Office	Budget	4,996,036	2,320,000	0	90,350	7,406,386
	Expenditure	2,517,448	1,536,161	0	62,637	4,116,246
Kyrgyzstan	Budget	2,784,867	1,081,575	0	2,366,817	6,233,259
	Expenditure	1,335,779	810,191	0	1,369,885	3,515,855
Tajikistan	Budget	1,917,886	188,478	0	0	2,106,364
	Expenditure	1,419,108	184,684	0	0	1,603,792
Turkmenistan	Budget	421,588	434,795	0	0	856,383
	Expenditure	315,215	365,761	0	0	680,976
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>10,120,377</b>	<b>4,024,848</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,457,167</b>	<b>16,602,392</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>5,587,550</b>	<b>2,896,797</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,432,522</b>	<b>9,916,869</b>
<b>SOUTH ASIA</b>						
India	Budget	13,594,575	30,000	0	0	13,624,575
	Expenditure	6,520,779	25,898	0	0	6,546,677
Nepal	Budget	10,135,088	2,231,142	3,030,049	0	15,396,279
	Expenditure	6,780,392	376,964	491,882	0	7,649,238
Sri Lanka	Budget	7,651,524	75,742	0	1,264,439	8,991,705
	Expenditure	4,874,658	60,534	0	967,069	5,902,261
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>31,381,187</b>	<b>2,336,884</b>	<b>3,030,049</b>	<b>1,264,439</b>	<b>38,012,559</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>18,175,829</b>	<b>463,396</b>	<b>491,882</b>	<b>967,069</b>	<b>20,098,176</b>
<b>SOUTH-EAST ASIA</b>						
Bangladesh	Budget	12,306,018	15,010	0	0	12,321,028
	Expenditure	7,534,730	10,496	0	0	7,545,226
Indonesia	Budget	7,961,354	155,005	0	0	8,116,359
	Expenditure	4,141,773	118,071	0	0	4,259,844
Malaysia	Budget	18,916,426	1,231,502	0	0	20,147,928
	Expenditure	8,899,317	378,440	0	0	9,277,757
Myanmar	Budget	6,095,294	12,940,291	0	49,073,119	68,108,704
	Expenditure	0	5,669,476	0	15,855,744	21,525,220

<i>Operation</i>		Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	Total
Philippines	Budget	717,981	927,340	0	8,324,270	9,969,591
	Expenditure	694,520	783,035	0	7,983,423	9,460,978
Thailand	Budget	32,082,665	710,059	0	0	32,792,724
	Expenditure	13,770,849	519,109	0	0	14,289,958
Thailand Regional Office	Budget	6,568,665	577,849	0	0	7,146,514
	Expenditure	3,316,159	250,088	0	0	3,566,247
Viet Nam	Budget	0	437,203	0	0	437,203
	Expenditure	0	226,467	0	0	226,467
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>84,648,403</b>	<b>16,994,259</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57,397,389</b>	<b>159,040,051</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>38,357,348</b>	<b>7,955,182</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23,839,167</b>	<b>70,151,697</b>
<b>EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC</b>						
Australia Regional Office <sup>1</sup>	Budget	2,629,814	0	0	0	2,629,814
	Expenditure	1,852,783	0	0	0	1,852,783
China Regional Office <sup>2</sup>	Budget	4,613,161	121,219	0	0	4,734,380
	Expenditure	3,530,949	117,485	0	0	3,648,434
Japan	Budget	3,930,134	80,428	0	0	4,010,562
	Expenditure	3,229,343	75,986	0	0	3,305,329
Republic of Korea	Budget	2,013,761	96,385	0	0	2,110,146
	Expenditure	1,215,919	89,868	0	0	1,305,787
Regional activities	Budget	367,236	0	0	0	367,236
	Expenditure	214,188	0	0	0	214,188
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>13,554,106</b>	<b>298,032</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,852,138</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>10,043,182</b>	<b>283,339</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10,326,521</b>
<b>Total Asia and the Pacific</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>324,304,769</b>	<b>23,866,443</b>	<b>123,963,768</b>	<b>138,307,046</b>	<b>610,442,026</b>
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>160,954,962</b>	<b>11,784,382</b>	<b>34,738,468</b>	<b>61,918,298</b>	<b>269,396,110</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes activities in New Zealand, the Pacific Island Countries and Papua New Guinea

<sup>2</sup> Provides support to Mongolia

## VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO ASIA AND THE PACIFIC | USD

<i>Donor</i>	Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
Australia	3,621,908.41				1,311,912.10	4,933,820.51
Canada	2,692,998.20			1,976,327.61	5,324,012.77	9,993,338.59
Central Emergency Response Fund	701,406.00			2,310,622.00		3,012,028.00
China					129,464.00	129,464.00
Common Humanitarian Fund for Afghanistan	1,299,997.87					1,299,997.87
Denmark	2,937,425.67	306,606.86	1,784,505.07		6,079,085.36	11,107,622.96
European Union	12,325,665.61	885,008.64	1,719,949.17	5,541,519.52	946,638.79	21,418,781.74
Finland					4,126,547.46	4,126,547.46
France	328,317.00					328,317.00
Germany	3,385,840.50		6,385,696.04	2,719,239.87		12,490,776.41
Japan	15,458,526.98	601,066.90	2,987,711.70	1,177,115.28	4,212,496.44	24,436,917.29
Kazakhstan					191,788.46	191,788.46
Kuwait					125,000.00	125,000.00
Kyrgyzstan					71,154.00	71,154.00
Luxembourg	271,739.13					271,739.13
Netherlands	111,079.00					111,079.00
Norway					3,336,670.00	3,336,670.00
Private donors in Canada				379.57		379.57
Private donors in China (Hong Kong SAR)				1,888.46		1,888.46
Private donors in France				12,729.33		12,729.33
Private donors in Germany	495,662.95					495,662.95
Private donors in Greece				36,983.59		36,983.59
Private donors in Italy				99,167.66	37.55	99,205.21
Private donors in Japan	186,179.80			1,297,451.07		1,483,630.87
Private donors in the Philippines				245.70		245.70
Private donors in Qatar	1,636,785.90					1,636,785.90
Private donors in Spain				148,842.76		148,842.76
Private donors in Sweden				285,214.79		285,214.79
Private donors in Switzerland				38,182.35		38,182.35

<i>Donor</i>	Pillar 1 Refugee programme	Pillar 2 Stateless programme	Pillar 3 Reintegration projects	Pillar 4 IDP projects	All pillars	<b>Total</b>
Private donors in Thailand	3,427,084.80			2,271.00	706,465.54	4,135,821.34
Private donors in the Netherlands	1,173,084.37			65,175.00		1,238,259.37
Private donors in the Republic of Korea	6,711.63			27,593.66		34,305.28
Private donors in the United Kingdom				2,640.69		2,640.69
Private donors in the United States of America	327,061.29		147,400.00	215,498.00		689,959.29
Republic of Korea	2,200,000.00		5,260,000.00	2,140,000.00		9,600,000.00
Russian Federation	100,000.00				100,000.00	200,000.00
Saudi Arabia	31,302.00					31,302.00
Spain				4,536.49		4,536.49
Sweden					1,525,087.69	1,525,087.69
Switzerland	338,875.75	110,253.58		829,858.39		1,278,987.73
Turkmenistan					94,089.60	94,089.60
United Kingdom				1,650,165.02		1,650,165.02
United Nations Development Programme		19,995.00				19,995.00
United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs			75,000.00			75,000.00
United Nations Peacebuilding Fund				1,303,268.00		1,303,268.00
United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS	306,861.00	32,500.00		32,500.00		371,861.00
United States of America	12,300,000.00		8,900,000.00	10,200,000.00	83,000,000.00	114,400,000.00
Viet Nam					90,000.00	90,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,664,513.86</b>	<b>1,955,430.98</b>	<b>27,260,261.98</b>	<b>32,119,415.79</b>	<b>111,370,449.76</b>	<b>238,370,072.38</b>

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the “New or additional activities – mandate-related” (NAM) Reserve