

PAKISTAN



Working environment

The economic crisis, related unemployment, high food prices and shortages of water, fuel and electricity led to high levels of instability and insecurity in Pakistan in 2008. This increased the pressure on Afghans in the country to return home.

Conflict in the regions straddling the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and the general security situation in Pakistan affected UNHCR's ability to implement its planned programmes. Staff had to work in a flexible manner to maintain the operation.

The July/August floods affecting some 200,000 people and the conflict in the Bajaur Agency of Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) caused a humanitarian crisis in NWFP. More than 250,000 people were displaced as a result. UNHCR, other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) responded to the NWFP provincial government's request for humanitarian assistance.

Operational highlights

- UNHCR helped some 274,000 Afghan refugees to return to Afghanistan.
- The Government of Pakistan agreed to develop a strategy for the management of registered Afghans beyond 2009.
- The Office facilitated community-based health and education services for Afghan refugee villages.
- The preparatory phase of the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Area (RAHA) proposal under the UN Delivering as One initiative was finalized.
- UNHCR provided shelter for some 47,000 conflict-affected IDPs and registered almost 140,000 IDPs in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) as part of an emergency response through the cluster approach.

Achievements and impact

• Main objectives

In 2008, UNHCR's main objectives were to develop and implement durable solutions for the registered Afghan population; provide greater predictability of stay, international protection and durable solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers; and continue to facilitate voluntary repatriation.

The Office, supported by other UN agencies and the UN Delivering as One initiative, aimed for the inclusion of refugee-affected and hosting areas and Afghan populations in the national development agenda and area development programmes. UNHCR and other UN agencies also worked to provide emergency responses to flood and conflict-affected IDPs in NWFP as part of the cluster approach.

○ Protection and solutions

Towards the end of the year the Government of Pakistan indicated that it is anticipated that the Three-Year Plan, which foresaw all registered Afghans returning in 2009 prior to the expiry of their POR cards, would be reviewed. The Government also indicated that it is considering a longer-term strategy for the management of Afghans in Pakistan and the extension of the validity of POR cards beyond 2009.

In 2008, more than a quarter of a million Afghans repatriated, including people from the Jalozai Afghan refugee village outside Peshawar that was closed in May.

As a result of rising militancy, particularly in FATA, Afghans were exposed to arrest and deportation, leading UNHCR to intervene. Access to several districts was limited and it was not always possible to meet people of concern. UNHCR therefore established a 24-hour hotline for individuals in need of protection in the field.

In 2008, UNHCR continued with refugee status determination (RSD) needs assessments (608 cases), besides RSD interviews at first instance or on appeal (594 cases). A total of 639 RSD decisions were taken, predominantly with regard to Afghans. Of these, 232 were recognized as refugees. At the end of 2008, a total of 885 cases (2,770 individuals) recognized through RSD procedures remained in Pakistan. Although practice differs from province to province, UNHCR's mandate was generally respected by the Government of Pakistan.

○ Activities and assistance

Community services: Sectoral committees with responsibility for water, health and education were established and trained in 11 refugee villages in Balochistan, NWFP and Punjab. Eleven protection committees, 12 youth groups for boys, 15 youth groups for girls and 32 women's groups were formed to support community activities in all the refugee villages of Balochistan province.

Domestic needs and household support: UNHCR had distributed the following non-food items in NWFP by the end of 2008: 4,500 tents, 16,400 plastic sheets, 102,000 blankets, 7,400 kitchen sets, 11,800 jerry cans, 6,600 buckets, 10,500 mosquito nets, 20,600 sleeping mats, 6,700 plastic mats and 22,500 bars of soap.

Education: UNHCR assisted about 67,000 camp-based children through 173 primary schools. Communities contributed salaries for watchmen and teachers and recycled books. Through support from the German Government, the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees' (CAR) Education Cell reactivated 50 middle and secondary schools with the support of the communities. These schools provided primary education to around 10,000 children.

In 2008, the Albert Einstein Academic Scholarship Programme for Refugees (DAFI) provided college and university scholarships to 123 male and female Afghan refugee students in Pakistan.

Vocational skills training courses were conducted in Charsadda and Peshawar during the year. Both refugees and locals benefited from health and hygiene education in Charsadda. In Balochistan, a lack of teachers in the camps was partially resolved by transporting qualified female teachers from Quetta to the camps. In some camps in Balochistan it was difficult to increase girls' enrolment. A home-based girls' school was opened in Mohd Khail to increase the number of female students. In Balochistan, almost 13,000 students in 35 schools successfully completed the school year.

Health and nutrition: Community-based basic health services were provided in NWFP and Balochistan through a network of 52 UNHCR-funded basic health units, seven secondary health units, two mobile health units, one emergency obstetrics care (EMOC) unit and one family health centre.

In 2008, due to limited funds and the need to prioritize assistance, Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) projects focused on the health sector, targeting four districts of Balochistan that host large numbers of refugees. UNHCR created and supported basic health services in the refugee-hosting areas benefiting both refugee and local populations.

In the Loralai district in Balochistan, a pharmacy was established and an extensive training was given to ten dispensers and five local health volunteers. The pharmacy was sustained through a revolving fund. In Killa Sialfullah district, the infrastructure of the government district hospital in Muslim Bagh was improved, medical equipment provided and staff trained. In Pishin district, the delivery room of the government district hospital was

Persons of concern ¹					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Afghanistan	764,900	764,900	47	53
	Various	800	800	49	41
Refugee-like situations	Afghanistan	1,015,200	-	46	50
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	2,500	2,500	47	56
	Somalia	260	260	41	30
	Various	160	160	43	33
Returnees (refugees)	Various	10	-	-	-
IDPs		155,800	155,800	47	59
Total		1,939,630	924,420		

¹ Total refugee figures for Pakistan include recognized Afghan refugees (2,000), registered Afghans in refugee villages who are assisted by UNHCR (764,900), and registered Afghans outside refugee villages who are living in a 'refugee-like' situation (1,015,200). Individuals in all categories have been issued a Proof of Registration Card by the Government of Pakistan. Following the completion of the registration exercise in 2007, those living outside refugee villages are now in the "refugee-like" category. They do not receive direct UNHCR material assistance but they benefit from advocacy and upon return reintegration support.

repaired; medical equipment, including an ultrasound machine and an ambulance, was provided; and staff members were trained in the use of an ultrasound machine. Training and material was provided to traditional birth attendants from refugee and local communities. In Chaghi district, a delivery room which included a generator and other essential equipment was constructed in the Posti refugee camp.

Under RAHA, the emergency obstetrics care facility at Ismailia, Mardan, remained operational. UNHCR funded two health posts at Baghicha and Kagan refugee villages in NWFP until March. As of April, the health posts were funded through revenue generated in the emergency obstetrics care facility.

Legal assistance: UNHCR continued to identify cases for resettlement through refugee status determination. A total of 63 cases (224 individuals) were submitted for resettlement to third countries, and 24 cases (91 individuals) were accepted. Sixty-two individuals, the majority of them people with legal and physical protection needs or women at risk, departed for resettlement countries. The plan to enhance resettlement for protracted Afghan refugees in Pakistan was finalized in late 2008 and will be implemented in 2009.

By the end of 2008, the Proof of Registration (PoR) Card Modification Project under the Registration Information Project for Afghan Citizens in Pakistan (RIPAC) processed nearly 5,000 cases of Afghan applicants who sought to update, revise or replace their cards. Although the project had a slow start due to the deteriorating security situation,

five PoR Card Modification Centres (PCMs) were established in NWFP, Punjab, Balochistan and Sindh. An earthquake in Balochistan delayed operations in October in Quetta.

The PCMs focused on newborns and children reaching the age of five who were eligible to receive PoRs cards. More than 36 per cent of the total registrations in the five PCMs were newborns, with the number of boys slightly exceeding the number of girls. About 30 per cent were children who were reaching the age of five, with nearly equal numbers of boys and girls.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR helped its partners to deliver programmes to Afghans and Iraqis.

Shelter and other infrastructure: 15,000 tents were provided and three camps established to accommodate more than 47,000 conflict-affected IDPs by the end of 2008.

Transport and logistics: Stocks of contingency items in warehouses allowed a timely response to the routine and emergency needs of people of concern.

Water: Water and sanitation remained among the main concerns of Afghan refugees and hosting communities in 2008. Several disputes between refugees and host communities over scarce water resources required interventions by the refugee-run Water and Sanitation Committees, which also performed a quarter of all the major repairs on water schemes. Where necessary, water sources were cleaned and minor wells were repaired.



A displaced girl hides behind the purdah of her family tent at Sheikh Yasin spontaneous camp in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province



○ Constraints

The security situation in Pakistan, especially in Peshawar, was the major challenge for UNHCR in 2008 as it severely affected the implementation of planned activities.

| Financial information |

Though earmarking for Pakistan was low, overall subregional funding for South-West Asia stood at 95 per cent. All activities under the annual programme could be implemented in 2008.

However, during recent years, funding constraints compelled UNHCR to cancel interventions in urban areas and projects such as those refurbishing water supply systems in the old refugee villages.

| Organization and implementation |

UNHCR's operation in Pakistan was coordinated by the Representation in Islamabad and implemented by sub-offices in Peshawar and Quetta. In 2008, UNHCR Pakistan operated with 24 international staff, 137 national staff, one JPO, eight UNVs and six consultants. More than 120 temporary assistance staff were to support the IDP Operation in NWFP and Afghan repatriation.

| Working with others |

The Office in Pakistan continues to participate actively in the UN Operations Management Team, the UN Reform pilot and the Delivering as One initiative. During the IDP emergency, UNHCR acted as cluster lead for protection, camp management, camp coordination and shelter. UNHCR worked with the Government of Pakistan and with 12 national and four international implementing partners.

| Overall assessment |

UNHCR faced major security challenges in Pakistan in 2008. This impeded the organization's operations and required maximum flexibility to implement defined objectives. RIPAC, in particular, got off to a slow start because of the security situation.

More than a quarter of a million refugees returned to Afghanistan with UNHCR assistance in 2008, reflecting UNHCR's biggest global repatriation operation for the year.

The discussions on extending the validity of the PoR cards beyond the end of 2009 were some of the most important activities of the office in 2008.

UNHCR, along with other UN agencies and NGOs, was able to react quickly to the internal displacement due to floods and conflict in NWFP and galvanize a response to the situation before the onset of winter. Camps were established and non-food items distributed for camp and non-camp IDP populations.

Partners
Implementing partners
Government agencies: Government of Pakistan – Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR), Islamabad; Directorate of Social Welfare, Peshawar, CAR Balochistan, CAR NWFP
NGOs: International Rescue Committee, USA; American Refugee Committee; Save the Children Federation, USA; Islamic Relief; Basic Education; Sayyed Jamaluddin Afghani Welfare Organization, Pakistan; Union Aid for Afghan Refugees, Pakistan; the Frontier Primary Health Care; Taraqee Foundation, Pakistan; Society for Humanitarian Rights & Prisoners; Society for Community Support to Primary Education; Struggle for Change; Basic Education for Afghan Refugees; Sarhad Rural Support Programme; National Database & Registration Authority; Centre of Excellence for Rural Development
Operational partners
Others: UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, WFP

Budget, income and expenditure in Pakistan (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available ¹	Total expenditure
Annual budget	21,993,276	9,256,539	11,336,566	20,593,104	20,644,536
IDP operations in Pakistan SB	15,526,561	12,659,159	49,722	12,708,881	10,011,574
Total	37,519,837	21,915,698	11,386,288	33,301,986	30,656,110

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

¹ Total funds available include currency adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Pakistan (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Previous years' projects
	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	6,914,058	193,837	7,107,895	0
Community services	429,773	6,754	436,527	29,320
Domestic needs and household support	64,709	8,100,480	8,165,189	(166)
Education	1,755,771	0	1,755,771	(1,020)
Health and nutrition	2,213,746	0	2,213,746	87,167
Legal assistance	1,717,064	162,246	1,879,310	37,229
Operational support (to agencies)	1,480,868	82,040	1,562,908	126,158
Sanitation	15,834	0	15,834	0
Shelter and infrastructure	16,219	686,553	702,772	226,082
Transport and logistics	123,991	95,099	219,090	1,212
Water	291,321	0	291,321	32,811
Instalments to implementing partners	969,197	636,107	1,605,304	(538,793)
Subtotal operational activities	15,992,551	9,963,116	25,955,667	0
Programme support	4,651,985	48,458	4,700,443	0
Total expenditure	20,644,536	10,011,574	30,656,110	0
Cancellation on previous years' expenditure				(201,727)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	7,495,776	1,464,822	8,960,598	
Reporting received	(6,526,579)	(828,715)	(7,355,294)	
Balance	969,197	636,107	1,605,304	
Outstanding 1st January				1,530,500
Reporting received				(538,793)
Refunded to UNHCR				(280,428)
Currency adjustment				76
Outstanding 31st December				711,355