



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Country Operations Plan 2008

Pakistan

Country Operations Plan– 2008-2009

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Part One: Context and Strategy

Political Background

Pakistan is home to a significant proportion of the world's poor. Over 30% of the country's close to 170 million people survives under the poverty line. Literacy rates are low especially in rural areas, and the drop-out rate from primary schools is thought to be the highest in the world.

The political climate in Pakistan has been tense. In 2007 there were numerous incidents including inter-tribal tensions and the outbreak of violence between provincial and federal authorities in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan in particular. Just recently, however, Islamabad has pointed to recent victories by local militias against foreign militants (who have ties to Al Qaeda) as a sign that its strategy of relying upon traditional leaders, and not the national army, is starting to pay off. Suicide bomb attacks aimed at embarrassing the government have increased and have further questioned its ability to stem the spread of this behaviour within its borders. In addition, elections are due to take place in the last quarter of 2007. No doubt the current government will bank on the popular fear of extremism to tide them over in an election year.

On a domestic front, the reigning political tension has created a delicate working environment for UNHCR. Turbulent inter-tribal politics in NWFP and Balochistan, where the refugee villages are located, and tensions between the federal and provincial authorities have impeded a number of UNHCR activities. The lack of access to many areas has hampered our ability to discuss with Afghans the closure/consolidation of camps and has forced the suspension of registration in areas deemed off limits. In Balochistan, the sense of Baloch nationalism is running strong causing tensions with the Pashtun population as well as the federal authorities. The Government of Pakistan (GoP) now strictly requires foreigners to obtain a No-Objection-Certificates (NOC) prior to travel to and within the province. NOCs are not always granted.

A growing sense of xenophobia against Afghans as a result of economic, social, ethnic and political shortcomings in the country have created an atmosphere of hostility in the local communities and within refugee-hosting populations in many areas. Local Pakistanis, host to the Afghans and business partners for the past 27 years, are now chiming in with the demand that Afghans must leave and pave the way for Pakistanis to take over their business interests. Kabul demands that more needs to be done to track down so called undesirable elements. Pakistan's response is that these groups have found a safe haven in refugee villages. The result is an unconditional solution of camp closures and repatriation of all Afghans within three years. None of this rhetoric bodes well for an organized, gradual return process particularly when registration cards provide temporary stay until it expires at the end of 2009.

For UNHCR this has created a highly sensitive environment in which to conduct any substantial discussions or negotiations addressing the gradual return of Afghans, absorption capacity in Afghanistan, sustainable return and development activities in Pakistan for Afghan hosting communities.

The security environment continues to be complicated, fragile and dependant on a variety of internal and external factors that present a medium to high risk to UNHCR operation and staff. Humanitarian operations have been repeatedly targeted by Islamic Militant groups opposed to the current government.

The impact on UNHCR operations and its overall strategy has been significant. On one hand progress was made with the signing of two memorandums of understanding with the GOP which recognized that not all Afghans are of concern to UNHCR and that those registered Afghans could enjoy relative protection during their temporary stay in Pakistan. This has been seriously eroded by the political climate. Just as progress was being made to recognise that some Afghans will remain in Pakistan for the unforeseeable future we have to content with decisions that they all have to leave within three years. Possibly one of the only positive outcomes of the recent political tension is the admission by both countries that more needs to be done to manage cross border movement of people and goods. This has opened an opportunity for interested bilaterals to offer assistance to both countries on border management and surveillance. This clearly falls within one of the comprehensive solutions measures continually fostered by UNHCR.

Operational Context

For over 27 years, Pakistan has hosted millions of Afghan refugees. A first wave of refugees entered Pakistan in the late 1970s, the last mass exodus from Afghanistan took place in 2001. In an effort to respond to the immediate needs of the Afghans, the Government of Pakistan, UNHCR and NGO partners opened a large number of camps, providing shelter, health, educational and water and sanitation facilities. With the Taliban regime falling apart and a certain stability returning to Afghanistan, a Tri-Partite Agreement was signed in March 2003 between the Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR setting the modalities for a gradual return of the Afghan population. Since then, UNHCR and partners have repatriated over 2.9 million Afghans, leaving the remaining Afghan population at about 2.4 million with 1 million living in camps and 1,4 million residing in rural and urban areas outside of the camps.

Within the framework of the Tripartite Agreements, UNHCR continues to work with all Governments involved to ensure respect for the principle of gradualism and voluntariness of return. With voluntary repatriation from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan well underway and extensions of Tri-Partite Agreements under discussion, UNHCR has been seeking alternative solutions for Afghans who will remain in their countries of asylum after these dates.

UNHCR has been actively engaged in discussions on the future of the Afghan population in Pakistan through a series of strategic consultations and dialogue with the Government and key stakeholders. A Federal Government task force, including relevant government actors and selected international organizations, has been established to coordinate future policy developments regarding Afghans. Exchanges on these occasions have reaffirmed the continued pre-eminence of repatriation as the preferred solution but recognized that many Afghans will remain in Pakistan for a long time to come.

Following the signing of the MOU on the registration of Afghan citizens living in Pakistan in April 2006, the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR finalised preparations of the country-wide registration exercise that started in October 2006. Afghans who were enumerated in the 2005 census were urged to come forward for registration. All Afghans above the age of five received Proof of Registration (POR) with their biometric and other personal data. The POR has facial recognition

and fingerprint biometrics to ensure the security and integrity of the registration process. Children under 5 are listed on their mothers' card. By 15 February, 2.15 million Afghans had registered.

In the midst of a politically tumultuous year at the home front, fraught with suicide bomb attacks, sectarian violence and a swaying public opinion about Pakistan's role in the war on terror, diplomatic sparring and accusations from a turbulent Afghanistan on the presence of alleged Al-Qaeda & Taliban hideouts along the FATA belt continue to be the limelight of the relations between the two neighbouring countries. International mediation and the common borders, however, have promoted joint pledges by the two countries in support of addressing all aspects of bringing peace and stability to the region. Bilateral discussions have also included the process of repatriating over 2.4 million Afghans living in Pakistan in a phased manner, modalities which are being negotiated in coordination with UNHCR, the Government of Pakistan and the Government of Afghanistan and the assistance and cooperation of the international community.

Homeland security considerations and the growing threat of terrorism has increasingly brought to the forefront the need for the Government of Pakistan to formalize a comprehensive policy on the presence of Afghans in the country including phased camp consolidation/closure. Despite the government's reassurances regarding its commitment to the voluntary nature of repatriation, recent rise in tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan, however, have been a growing concern for the Afghan population in general, who see the deteriorating relations adding to the uncertainty regarding their continued stay in the country, regardless of PoRs.

Although Pakistan is not a signatory to the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the actions it has taken with regard to refugees over the last 27 years have been largely in conformity with the principle of non-*refoulement*. The "*prima facie*" concept, applied in essence to Afghans between 1981 and 2000, proved to be a convenient and effective tool for nearly two decades, but may also have proved a disincentive for bolder moves on the legislative or normative front. In light of the lack of any asylum law or legal framework for the protection of refugees in Pakistan, the registration of Afghans will prove an important protection tool against arbitrary arrests that Afghans were increasingly subjected to in the recent times for lack of valid identification documents. The Government of Pakistan has allowed UNHCR to recognize refugees (through the Refugee Status Determination procedures) to remain in the country only temporarily, pending identification of an appropriate durable solution, primarily resettlement. Despite this, UNHCR has consistently advocated for the adoption of a national asylum scheme by the GOP.

- Populations of concern/ themes to be addressed in UNHCR programmes

(1) Afghans residing in Pakistan

Beginning 2007, the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR finalized the registration of Afghans residing in Pakistan, more than 2.15 million individuals were registered. The registration did not target Afghan refugees specifically but all Afghans residing in Pakistan. In the course of 2007, UNHCR will undertake a profiling of the registered population to identify those categories of concern to the organization. Durable solutions will be identified for those persons of concern identified by the profiling exercise. In addition, UNHCR will advocate for a comprehensive solution to Afghan displacement and migration issues, providing a durable solution for Afghans not of direct concern to the office.

Based on the results of the profiling exercise of the POR holder database, UNHCR will review its assistance policy, currently targeting all Afghans residing in camps. The traditional care and

maintenance will be gradually phased out, being replaced by a more developmental approach, integrating the Afghan population in national development plans.

Repatriation will continue in 2008 and 2009, targeting all Afghans with POR. Planning figures for 2008 have been set at 200 000 (65% NWFP, 25% Baluchistan, 10% Punjab, 5% Sindh) and 300 000 for 2009, the last year of validity of the POR.

As the registration data analysis and profiling have not been completed as yet, the data below are based on the census undertaken in 2005. About 2.4 million Afghans are currently residing in Pakistan, 1 million in 85 camps mainly in NWFP and Baluchistan and 1.4 million in urban and rural areas outside of camps.

The majority of Afghans are of Pashtoon origin, mainly from the Khost, Gardez, Paktika, Nangahar and Paktia provinces in Afghanistan. Smaller groups are of Baloch, Hazara, Nuristani, Tajik and Turkmen origin. The majority are Muslim Sunnis, with the exception of the Hazaras and some Tajiks belonging to the Shia community. The ethnic groups are divided in tribes with distinct cultural traditions. The tribes are further separated into clans which account for the geographical spread of camps into ethnic based clusters.

The Afghans are mainly from a traditional rural background. The majority of the adult population is either illiterate or educated up to primary school level. The Afghans continue to practice traditions of tribalism and feudalism, having a special impact on the socio-economic situation of women. Enrolment of girls in school, especially after grade 6 remains low. Practices of early and forced marriage are widespread.

(2) Asylum seekers and recognized refugees

Individual status determination will be available to Afghan as well as non-Afghan in all three offices. The non-Afghan population of 478 refugees recognized by UNHCR is mainly composed of Iraqi, Iranian and Somali nationals. Wherever possible, repatriation or resettlement options are explored as immediate solution. For cases where no immediate durable solution can be identified, minimal individual assistance is provided.

The recognized Afghan population is mainly composed of Afghans with political problems, Afghans from areas where they constitute ethnic minorities, Afghans belonging to religious minorities, converts, journalist and women with specific profiles. It is expected that the office will face a significant increase in the number of Afghans approaching the office requesting to be registered as asylum seekers due to the non-POR policy of the Government which considers all Afghans without a POR as illegal immigrants. The office is currently devising a policy to deal with the increase in Afghan asylum cases. One of the measures to be introduced by the second quarter of 2007 is fingerprinting of recognized refugees (active cases) and asylum applicants. This practice may assist the three offices to address the phenomenon of recyclers using different identities.

- Summary Results of Assessments per programme as defined by population of concern or theme.

In October 2006, UNHCR completed the first phase of the needs assessment exercise in the sectors of water, sanitation, health and education in 38 host districts across Pakistan. Studies conducted found that most communities hosting Afghans are located in some of the poorest areas of the country, health and education indicators for both populations fall below national averages and are way below the set national Millennium Development Goals. *“However, Afghans are more*

vulnerable than the local poor. The surveyed localities belong to low-income households. Within this, the percentage of Afghans falling in the very poor and poor categories are 72.6% compared to 39% of Pakistanis in the same categories. Contrary to popular perception, Afghans are not better off than their local counterparts in terms of ownership of assets, access to health and education, food purchasing power and consumption and access to the job market. The poverty of Afghan households residing in camps is different from camp to camp and depends on many factors, the degree of integration in the local economies being one of the most important factors. “ “Afghans in NWFP and Baluchistan are engaged in various livelihood activities....However, the unemployment and underemployment rates fluctuate greatly between 60 and 70 percent with more impact on refugees living in camps than those residing in urban areas. “

A second phase, concentrating on environment, livelihood etc will be lead by UNDP. Pilot projects in health and water/sanitation addressing the main findings of the initial needs assessment will be developed in 2007, seeking to address the social, economic and environmental consequences in areas with a particularly high density of both refugee and local populations by repairing any adverse impact, creating and supporting basic services to improve living conditions for both communities. In 2008 and 2009, UNHCR will advocate for the inclusion of the “Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas”, and Afghans in general, in the national development plans, under the “One UN” umbrella.

UNHCR Strategy

- Achievements to date per programme as defined by population of concern or theme

(1) Afghans residing in Pakistan

Following the signing of the MOU on the **registration** of Afghan citizens living in Pakistan in April 2006, the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR finalised the country-wide registration exercise in February 2007. 2,15 million Afghans were registered in the process. All Afghans above the age of five received Proof of Registration (POR) with their biometric and other personal data, valid for a period of three years. The registration database will be the basis for the population profiling, identifying these categories of POR holders of concern to the office.

Since the start of the **facilitated repatriation** in 2002, 2 874 302 individuals returned to Afghanistan with the assistance of UNHCR. In 2006, only 133 015 persons returned, the lowest number since 2002. The decline in repatriation numbers can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the planned closure of 4 camps did not materialize and was postponed to 2007. Secondly, the Proof of Registration provided to all registered Afghans allows Afghan citizens to remain in Pakistan and this for three years. Thirdly, the lack of shelter, land, livelihood possibilities and increased insecurity in Afghanistan. Agreement was reached in the Tri-Partite meeting that new return modalities with an enhanced repatriation package will be implemented in 2007. The enhanced package will attract those Afghans currently lacking the economic means to return to Afghanistan.

A country wide network of **Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALAC)** has been providing services to Afghans including information on legal matters and situation in the country of origin, rendering free aid services for Afghans, building the capability of the local authorities in refugee law and raising awareness about the voluntary repatriation programme. The ALAC are also instrumental in seeking remedies for Afghans arrested under the Foreigners Act. In 2007, a revision will be undertaken of all ALACs, streamlining its interventions with the new protection strategy for POR holders.

Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) networks are in place with inter-sectoral/cross sectoral interest groups, coordinating all the relevant actors involved in providing SGBV support. Training

took place in order to improve capacity among partners. In addition, UNHCR has developed and disseminated the SGBV “shared database” format to the relevant NGOs for information management purposes. Furthermore a mechanism to enhance an informal referral system at camp level was developed. SGBV counterparts’ were encouraged to develop work with refugee women and girls including the creation of female support groups. Standard Operating Procedures for SGBV cases were developed at Branch Office and Sub-Office level including a special database to keep track of SGBV cases reported to UNHCR.

To alleviate the difficult social and economical conditions of Afghans living in camps, UNHCR provides **basic community-based humanitarian assistance** to about 1 million Afghans living in camps in NWFP, Punjab and Baluchistan mainly education, health and water. In education, UNHCR and partners provide primary education to 102,347 students through a network of 260 schools. In health, UNHCR and partners run 55 basic health units providing preventive and curative services as well as HIV/AIDS prevention and maternal/child health care. In the water sector, UNHCR supports the Afghan community in the maintenance of the water systems so as to provide a minimum of potable water to the camp population. Continued rationalization of interventions has been undertaken reducing the costs of the services but guaranteeing an acceptable quality of services. The traditional care and maintenance set-up will gradually phase out, integrating services for Afghans in the national provisions. In the short term, UNHCR is sponsoring pilot projects for improving the capacity of the local health services benefiting both the local and host communities. The office is equally focusing on strengthening the refugee community’s contribution in the management of the sectoral services.

(2) Asylum seekers and recognized refugees

In the absence of national asylum laws and procedures, UNHCR conducts **Refugee Status Determination (RSD)** under its mandate for those in need of international protection and pursues durable solutions mainly through the voluntary repatriation or third country resettlement. Individual status determination is undertaken by the protection units in Branch Office Islamabad and Sub-Offices Peshawar and Quetta. The total active Afghan refugee caseload recognized by UNHCR Pakistan as of 31 December 2006, is 352 cases/1302 persons. The total active non-Afghan refugee caseload with UNHCR, Pakistan as of the period mentioned above is 142 cases/485 persons. As of 31st December 2006, 2677 individuals are pending refugee status determination. It is expected that the number of asylum seekers will increase as a result of the Government policy on non-POR holders.

Resettlement activities in Pakistan are being carried out in a cautious manner in order not to undermine the return process. Cases for resettlement are identified only through individual Refugee Status Determination (RSD) carried out at UNHCR offices. During 2006, 203 persons were referred for resettlement consideration to the three main resettlement countries (USA, Australia and Canada).

Recognized non-Afghan refugees registered with the National Aliens Registration Authority (NARA) continue to enjoy protection, freedom of movement and right to seek employment through the NARA card, a result of the MOU signed between the government and UNHCR in 2003.

- Protection and Solutions Strategy for 2008-2009 per programme as defined by population of concern or theme

Overall objectives and their links to Global Strategic Objectives (GSOs)

Provide International Protection and durable solutions to refugees and asylum seekers. (GSOs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 5.1, 5.4, 8.1)

- Following consultations with UNHCR Afghanistan and Iran, UNHCR Pakistan will continue the implementation of a three year protection strategy (2007-2009) that will pursue the following prime goals: 1. the existing asylum space is protected and continues to provide de facto protection to Afghans POR holders, asylum seekers and refugees; 2. refugees and asylum seekers are admitted to safety in conformity with international standards and have access to UNHCR's asylum process; in partnership with civil society, UNHCR continues to work towards the establishment of a national legal framework in conformity with international refugee law and standards; 3. voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement are integrated into UNHCR's regular protection activities and are part of a comprehensive protection and solutions strategy.
- In the absence of a national refugee legislation, ensure that asylum seekers are given access to UNHCR asylum procedures and that persons of concern are protected against *refoulement*.
- Facilitate the gradual return of those opting to repatriate voluntarily and ensure the respect for the principles of safety and dignity.
- Pursue resettlement as a tool of protection and durable solutions for the recognized refugees.

Having identified categories of concern to UNHCR from amongst the Afghan population with Proof of Registration, ensure that a strategy for durable solutions is developed and implemented. (GSOs 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 6.1, 7.3)

- Profiling of the population in the registration base allows UNHCR to identify the categories of concern to the organisation, in need of durable solutions.
- Through a more field oriented protection presence, identify solutions for those individuals or groups who have protection related reasons preventing from repatriating to Afghanistan. Identify issues affecting female headed households, SGBV victims and children under bonded labour and other vulnerable groups in close collaboration between UNHCR field, protection, ALAC and other partners. Develop a durable solutions strategy targeting those groups.
- Explore possibilities of group resettlement for specific groups of Afghans not able or willing to repatriate because of protection related issues. Strengthen the EVI referral system for durable solutions and devise mechanisms to link with the registration data for pro-active identification of possible resettlement cases.
- Facilitate repatriation of a total of 500 000 POR holders willing to return to Afghanistan in 2008 and 2009

Develop a multi-faceted and comprehensive solutions and regional policy framework to Afghan displacement and migration issues and to promote/facilitate its adoption and implementation by all concerned interlocutors. (GSOs 1.3, 5.2, 6.1, 8.1)

- In 2005, the Government of Pakistan conducted a census of Afghan nationals living in the country and identified 3,04 million Afghans. During the Census exercise, 22% Afghans indicated protection/security reasons for not repatriating to Afghanistan. Other reasons for not intending to return were shelter (57%) and livelihood (18%). Due to the porous nature of the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan and cross-border movement between the two countries, it is very difficult to make a distinction between refugees and migrants among the

Afghan population. The Registration exercise will provide additional information regarding those who may fall within UNHCR's mandate. Durable solutions for the majority of the Afghans in country lies therefore outside the mandate of UNHCR but the organization will assist in the development of a migration framework in collaboration with international partners.

Ensure the inclusion of refugee affected/hosting areas and Afghan populations in the national development agenda and area development programmes supported by "One UN" and other bi/multi lateral agencies. (GSOs 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 5.2, 5.5, 6.2, 8.1)

- Shift from the traditional care and maintenance assistance to area development programmes targeting all populations present. Develop partnerships and functional linkages with the Provincial health, education and water departments, to include the Afghans in the provincial set-up.
- Facilitate the implementation of the Refugee Affected Hosting Area (RAHA) Initiative by profiling Afghans/local settlements to be targeted for pilots in the water/health and education sector. Facilitate the UNDP assessments linked to RAHA phase 2.
- Improve the socio-economic situation of both Afghans and locals in the RAHA areas linked to the Millennium Development Goals.

Ensure a coordinated, pro-active and orderly approach to closure of camps and consolidation of services with emphasis on a community based approach in addressing special needs of vulnerable population. (GSOs 1.2, 1.5, 3.2, 3.4, 4.2, 5.5)

- Taking into consideration the Government's agenda on repatriation and camp closure, come up with a realistic plan of operation for consolidation of camps, based on a camp profiling identifying those camps with RAHA potential, camps with no potential for durable solutions, camps, with a population in favor of repatriation and camps with a population with no return perspective. The above will be linked with the profiling of the registration database, identifying those categories of concern to UNHCR.
- Phasing out of major care and maintenance initiatives, focusing on identification and targeted protection of vulnerable, expand the scope of the beneficiary contributions and wherever possible, inclusion in and capacity building of the local/provincial service infrastructure.
- Ensure that repatriation as well as relocation are an option to Afghans residing in camps targeted for closure.

Planning Figure Table

Planning Figures				
Population	Dec. 2006	Dec. 2007	Dec. 2008	Dec. 2009
Refugees	1,044,462	600	1,000	1,500
Asylum seekers	2,677	2,500	5,000	10,000
Registered Afghans		1,903,088*	1,703,088**	1,403,088**

*2,153,088 registered Afghan registered in February 2007; Initial plan to repatriate 250,000 persons in 2007

** repatriation of 200,000 in 2008

*** repatriation of 300,000 in 2009

Partnership and Collaboration

In 2008, UNHCR will revisit its current partnership arrangements with implementing partners as part of the strategy to scale-down/phase-out from major sectoral interventions. Partner selection/retention will be based on careful scrutiny of service delivery records, capacity to co-fund activities and adaptability towards more developmental oriented activities. By the end of 2007, Sub-Office Peshawar will be phasing out three implementing partners – Health Net International (malaria, TB & leishmaniasis control programs), Pakistan Red Crescent Society (medical referral & disability project) and Afghan Medical Welfare Association (primary health care), while Ockenden International (primary education) will be phasing out by June 2007. In 2008, Sub-Office Peshawar will be implementing its programs through 9 implementing partners (3 international, 3 national, 2 Afghan) including the government. Sub-Office Quetta will have 6 implementing partners (CAR, ARC, SCF, Society, TF and Voice), new partnerships with implementing partners, operational partners as well as other UN agencies and Line Ministry Provincial Departments are expected to be developed in the framework of RAHA. In 2007, Branch Office Islamabad will undertake a review of the ALAC set-up, redefining the needs for intervention based on the new protection strategy and a possible need for a different structure/partners.

Over the last couple of years, Sub-Office Quetta has taken the lead in establishing and guiding a local Protection Working Group and an SGBV Network. In these forums UNHCR is working closely with other UN agencies, international and local NGOs; most notably ARC and CRS/ALAC. In order to increase the protection levels and adjust to the changing protection circumstances, particularly for the Afghan population, the establishment of the Protection Working Group and the SGBV Network have been exceedingly instrumental. There is now a very sound common understanding of protection principles amongst UNHCR and our sister agencies, IPs and OPs. On the other hand, it remains a considerable challenge to fully engage the government in protection related activities.

Partnership linkages will be formed with the National TB & Malaria Control Program to incorporate Afghan POR holders' villages and hosting areas for a coordinated approach towards control and eradication of the endemic diseases. In 2008, provisions will be placed with all health IPs for medical referral to tertiary level health care facilities as well as forming partnership linkages with basic local health structures to also cater to the Afghan populations.

At the broader framework for partnerships, coordination mechanisms will be enhanced with the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CAR) in developing policies that affect Afghans in the province, particularly formulation of joint methodologies for consolidation/closure of camps. UNHCR will continue to advocate for the voluntary nature of the facilitated repatriation exercise and provision of relocation option for those who may not be able to repatriate. The government's plans for consolidation/closure of camps in 2007 will determine UNHCR's future stance on similar exercises in 2008 and beyond. Based on detailed analyses of refugee villages and the current security situation particularly in the southern regions, UNHCR will review camp profiles to assess and evaluate possible recommendations to the government for closure of camps, taking into consideration UNHCR and partners' accessibility to the areas.

Priority would also be given to intensifying UNHCR's engagement in and commitment to the effectiveness of the "One UN", implementing participatory planning and needs assessment for Afghan POR holders' and to increase implementation through partnerships. Security arrangements

would need to be optimized by operationalizing an integrated approach to security risk assessment and management that promotes the safety of staff, populations of concern, and organizational assets.

Assumptions and Constraints

- Taking into consideration the present political and diplomatic developments in the region, the asylum/migration practice will be one of the major challenges for UNHCR in the coming years. While the government's planning figures for repatriating a further 2.4 million Afghans up until the end of 2009 may appear a highly ambitious figure, a pro-active approach to encourage a practical and viable solution to the displacement of this large population remains the need of the time.
- The de-registration of Afghan POR holders' at the time of departure will help the various stakeholders to monitor population movements and to devise new policies and institutional arrangements for the implementation of the new return modalities as of 2007. A stable protection climate resulting from the registration of Afghans should allow UNHCR to focus attention on finding solutions and addressing the protection concerns of those remaining Afghans with the most pressing needs.
- Future camp closure decisions of the government will have to be carefully assessed for protection implications and to ensure that durable solutions components of the voluntary repatriation or viable relocation options offered are adhered to.
- After some years with declining numbers of asylum seekers registered by UNHCR, it is assumed that the number of new applicants registered in ProGress will increase significantly through 2007 and into 2008.
- As a consequence of the above, it is equally assumed that the number of refugees that will need an individual durable solutions assessment, and possibly resettlement, will increase significantly.
- Having identified categories of concern in the Afghan National Registration database, there will be a new requirement for strategic identification of durable solutions for groups/categories of people of concern.
- With the current staffing, managing the strategic identification of particularly groups of Afghans would be rather challenging.
- The majority of PoR holders will not opt for Voluntary Repatriation until the end of 2009.
- The consequences of the Afghan Nationals Registration will be clarified in the course of 2007. Hence, the identification of the categories of concern to UNHCR among Afghan PoR holders and of a strategy for durable solutions as well as the progressive development of a multi-faced and comprehensive solutions and regional policy framework for Afghan displacement and migratory phenomenon are expected to require further fine-tuning of the assistance programme and RAHA initiatives
- Further deterioration of the security situation in the areas of origin of Afghans as well as in some areas in Pakistan may possibly disrupt implementation of massive return of Afghans and implementation of general programmes of UNHCR.
- Failure of the Government of Afghanistan to ensure return-encouraging incentives (pull factors) may bring numbers of returnees unexpectedly down.
- Deterioration of the relationship between the Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan and increased public sentiments of xenophobia amongst the Pakistani nationals.

Potential for Durable Solutions and Phase Out

Population movements between Afghanistan and Pakistan are a historic reality. For the past 27 years Pakistan has hosted a large Afghan population that has changed its size and profile depending

on the situation and ongoing developments in Afghanistan. Large-scale movements have occurred with millions of people moving from one side of the border to the other. More than half of the Afghans living in Pakistan are born and have been living in the country all of their lives. Education and economic opportunities are now the main factors that motivate most Afghans to stay and work in Pakistan. Only a few suffer from genuine security issues and a fear of persecution upon return to their country.

The way forward clearly lies outside the mandate of UNHCR. The organization promotes and advocates for an integrated approach to responsible management of population movements in the region, including linking border management and control, visa and entry systems, migration management (legal and illegal migration), asylum systems, refugee assistance and returns within one comprehensive package. However, such a package is beyond the scope of any single humanitarian actor, agency or institution. Only a strong alliance of international partners, involving governments and international bodies in partnership with the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan can develop, implement and source a sizeable, comprehensive and robust integrated initiative. Building on national integrated plans supported by international technical and financial resources, a bi-lateral (and possibly regional) cooperation can be fostered to address all aspects of population movement and management in a responsible fashion.

What appears to be too ambitious, essential and unmanageable in the national and regional context, can indeed be developed in a rather lean and immediate manner, aiming at a timeframe of 3-4 years and using the concept of twinning and technical cooperation by relevant bi-lateral partners working toward one common goal and within one common plan. Certain elements of such an integrated approach, some driven by the security agenda, are already under implementation and can provide valuable lessons-learned in addition to offering a foundation upon which a modular approach can be built. One such element is the current registration exercise of Afghan nationals in Pakistan.

As achieving the above will require a longer term investment before the impact on the Afghan community can be felt, UNHCR programs will continue to benefit both the Afghan POR holders' and the local communities, under the umbrella of the "co-existence & RAHA initiative". Modalities of these initiatives are expected to work on the strengths of community participation and capacity building of the local public service infrastructure as to achieve coverage of both the local as the Afghan population. Under the "One UN" umbrella, inclusion of the Afghan population in the national development plans will be promoted, reducing the need for a specific and parallel structure of facilities mainly targeting Afghans.

UNHCR will equally continue to facilitate repatriation, with a planning figure of 500 000 for 2008 and 2009, leaving the registered Afghan population at 1.4 million at the end of the planning period.

Summary Management Strategy for UNHCR

Despite the government posture, the environment in Pakistan in 2007 has become more violent, and the deepening internal crisis will most probably deteriorate further in the next two years.

In addition to that, this large country presents a very hostile natural environment with access affected by heavy rains or drought combined with lack of infrastructure and harsh terrain. Therefore, investment in security/safety related equipment is considered to be essential to guarantee the safety of the staff.

1. Management objectives

UNHCR in Pakistan will strive to improve the quality and efficiency of its operations for effectively achieving the operational objectives through the following:

- Enhance the management of security to implement the Minimum Operational Security Standards applicable to UNHCR operation in Pakistan. The challenging and, in many cases, dangerous and isolating operating environment will again compel UNHCR to adopt proactive and innovative approaches to staff safety and refugee security.
- To provide effective and proactive leadership that meets the needs and addresses the aspirations of the UNHCR Operation in Pakistan
- To maximise the potential of the individuals to improve their performance and that of the organization in the delivery of UNHCR Global objectives as well as Pakistan's result-based-management;
- To seek to achieve excellence in the delivery of services by securing and managing resources and developing effective processes and structure to deliver the country-specific goals.

In order to achieve the Result-based Management objectives, UNHCR Pakistan will need to demonstrate that the organization is able to meet the challenges of its environment. UNHCR has significant responsibilities within UN Pakistan with a focus upon partnership, participation and accountability as well working together as "One UN".

At the organizational level, UNHCR Pakistan will continue to maximize and expand the use of MSRP as an effective management. We shall ensure that clear and well communicated decision-making criteria exist within UNHCR Pakistan Operation. Also we shall ensure that any delegated authority is commensurate with the required expertise and experience of the delegated task/function and that this process is accompanied by appropriate staff training.

We shall develop adequate measures to ensure that the responsibilities accompanying devolved budgets are clearly understood. To deliver appropriate financial training to relevant senior and middle management staff within the organization as roles and future requirements change.

To enhance staff commitment to the organization, this will be best achieved through positive communication between senior staff and other staff to develop all staff to their potential. Timely and open communication with staff will ensure that accurate information is passed on to all staff. To meet the needs of all staff and organization, UNHCR Management in Pakistan will aim to ensure that staff development and training needs are prioritised and met on an ongoing basis in line with organizational requirements.

2. Justification for post requirements and administrative budgets

The requirements for posts and administrative budgets has been done on the basis of a careful review of the operational activities planned for the year 2008 and 2009

The workforce of the UNHCR Representation Office in Pakistan comprises of staff on established posts, JPOs and UNVs. The Office of the Representative in Islamabad coordinates the overall operational policy and is responsible for the administrative support to two established Sub Offices in Peshawar and Quetta respectively. The two Sub-offices Peshawar and Quetta function in a decentralized structure with their own Administrative Budget and staffing. As Branch Office Islamabad is the Administrative Place of Assignment [APA] for most International staff in Afghanistan.