

| WORKING ENVIRONMENT |


The Asia and the Pacific region is host to some 10.6 million people of concern to UNHCR, representing almost 30 per cent of the global refugee population. In 2011, the region has handled the world's largest refugee operations, as well as the largest voluntary repatriation and Refugee Status Determination (RSD) programmes. It has also seen the highest number of departures for resettlement in the world.

A number of refugee situations in the region are both large-scale and protracted. Addressing such situations is a priority for UNHCR, not only to help share the burden borne by host States, but also because their ramifications may go far beyond the immediate hosting countries. Indeed, many refugees move onward to other parts of Asia and beyond, as they seek better protection, livelihoods and solutions.

Due to the general lack of normative frameworks for refugee protection in Asia and the Pacific, regional approaches are particularly important in safeguarding protection and asylum space. UNHCR is playing an instrumental role in operationalizing a Regional Cooperation Framework devised under the Bali Process. It has also been a key organizer of the Regional Conference on Refugee Protection and International Migration in Central Asia, which culminated in the adoption in March 2011 of the Almaty Declaration. Both platforms have served to facilitate the dialogue and cooperation needed to preserve and enhance asylum space and address mixed migration flows in the respective regions.

The year 2011 has seen Nauru ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention in June, the Philippines ratify the 1954 Statelessness Convention in May, and the Parliament of Turkmenistan approve accession to the same Convention in August. UNHCR continues to advocate for the importance of accession to the Refugee as well as the Statelessness Conventions to governments in the region.

The year has also been marked by record numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) returning to their areas of origin in Kyrgyzstan and Sri Lanka. Refugee returnees included some 46,000 Afghans who voluntarily repatriated to their home country from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran by August 2011. To aid these groups, UNHCR will focus on reintegration in 2012.



A convoy of trucks carrying cement and sand arrives at the Government Agent's office, Oddusudan, Mullaitivu district, north-east Sri Lanka.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



| Strategic priorities in 2012 |

○ *Safeguard protection and asylum space, including in the context of mixed migration and in urban settings*

UNHCR's engagement in multilateral forums aims to foster more systematic and predictable responses to mixed migration, as well as to expand protection space in the Asia and the Pacific region. The Regional Cooperation Framework adopted at the Fourth Bali Process Ministerial Conference, held in March 2011, is one such example. The framework will be made operational through bilateral and multilateral arrangements with member States, and in cooperation with IOM.

Similarly, the Almaty Declaration adopted at the meeting in March 2011 in Kazakhstan will form the basis for future cooperation and dialogue on the background, scale and reasons for mixed-migration movements in Central Asia, and appropriate follow-up. UNHCR is helping countries in Central Asia to develop a regional action plan aimed at differentiated, but protection-sensitive border management, and asylum systems tailored to the realities of this region.

Both Malaysia and India play host to the largest urban refugee population in the world. In Malaysia, most of UNHCR's resources are dedicated to providing protection and finding solutions for its urban refugees and asylum-seekers, many of whom are Muslims from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State. UNHCR will continue to fulfil its mandate responsibility for registration and RSD. It will also monitor detention and work to secure the release of refugees, as well as support a variety of community development, health and education programmes.

India continues to provide protection and humanitarian space for a large number of refugees, despite the absence of a national legal framework for asylum. UNHCR registers and conducts RSD for asylum-seekers, and also implements activities to support more than 24,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas.

○ *Find solutions for protracted refugee situations*

Refugees from Afghanistan in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are

living in one of the most protracted displacement situations in the world. In an effort to establish a comprehensive platform to address the problem, the Governments of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and UNHCR are developing a multi-year solutions strategy. A stakeholders conference expected to be convened in early 2012 will seek to endorse this multi-year roadmap that includes policies and strategic partnerships, as well as a framework for collaboration and resource mobilization.

Implementation of the Government of Pakistan's Management and Repatriation Strategy for Afghan Refugees for 2010-2012 aims at facilitating voluntary repatriation, developing alternative stay arrangements and targeting assistance to refugee-hosting communities, as well as the Iranian Government's landmark health insurance scheme for registered refugees, represent significant initiatives taken by the host countries in the subregion.

In Thailand, UNHCR will focus on consolidating its protection activities for camp-based refugees in the country and promote international protection standards for its urban refugee population. This will involve advocacy and continued engagement with stakeholders, including the Government, to bring about the policy changes that are needed to attain durable solutions and increase the protection space for refugees.

For countries concerned in the region, UNHCR is working to develop a regional strategy that aims to improve the protection space and promote solutions for Muslims from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State, as well as to work on the root causes of the displacement of this group.

UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Government of Nepal, resettlement countries and IOM to seek durable solutions for refugees from Bhutan through the large-scale resettlement programme in the country. As of August 2011, the programme, which was launched four years ago, had reduced the camp population from some 108,000 refugees to some 63,000.

In a parallel initiative, UNHCR is cooperating with the Government of Nepal and other stakeholders

to consolidate refugee camps and introduce the Community-Based Development Programme in refugee-hosting and affected areas. UNHCR is also seeking other comprehensive solutions—including possible voluntary repatriation to Bhutan—for refugees in the country.

○ *Ensure protection and durable solutions for IDPs*

Following the humanitarian crises that hit both Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan in 2010, UNHCR is now working to ensure a smooth transition from emergency to recovery in both countries.

In Kyrgyzstan, UNHCR will continue to assist the IDPs and returnees in the south of the country through community development, re-establishment of the rule of law, livelihood and infrastructure projects. UNHCR will also contribute to reintegration efforts, and help ease the transition from humanitarian relief to recovery. It is envisaged that discrimination and harassment, along with restricted access to documentation, property and other rights, are among the protection issues that may arise.

In Pakistan, UNHCR responded to the devastating floods of 2010 with relief assistance reaching an estimated 2 million people by the time the emergency phase of the response ended in early 2011. While UNHCR's involvement in the Pakistan flood response will be concluded in December 2011, it will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to approximately 450,000 people displaced as a result of conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

UNHCR continues to work with the UN inter-agency coordination mechanism in support of the Government's efforts in registration, camp management and coordination, assistance to host communities and the protection of vulnerable groups. UNHCR is also assisting the Government of Pakistan to draft a national IDP policy.

In the Philippines, UNHCR assumed leadership of the protection cluster for the IDP situation in the southern region of Mindanao in 2010. It has been working with the authorities to ensure that the needs of the displaced and

vulnerable populations are met through the implementation of a number of programmes including Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in IDP returnee communities. In 2012, UNHCR is also planning to expand its geographical coverage through the “protection by presence” strategy.

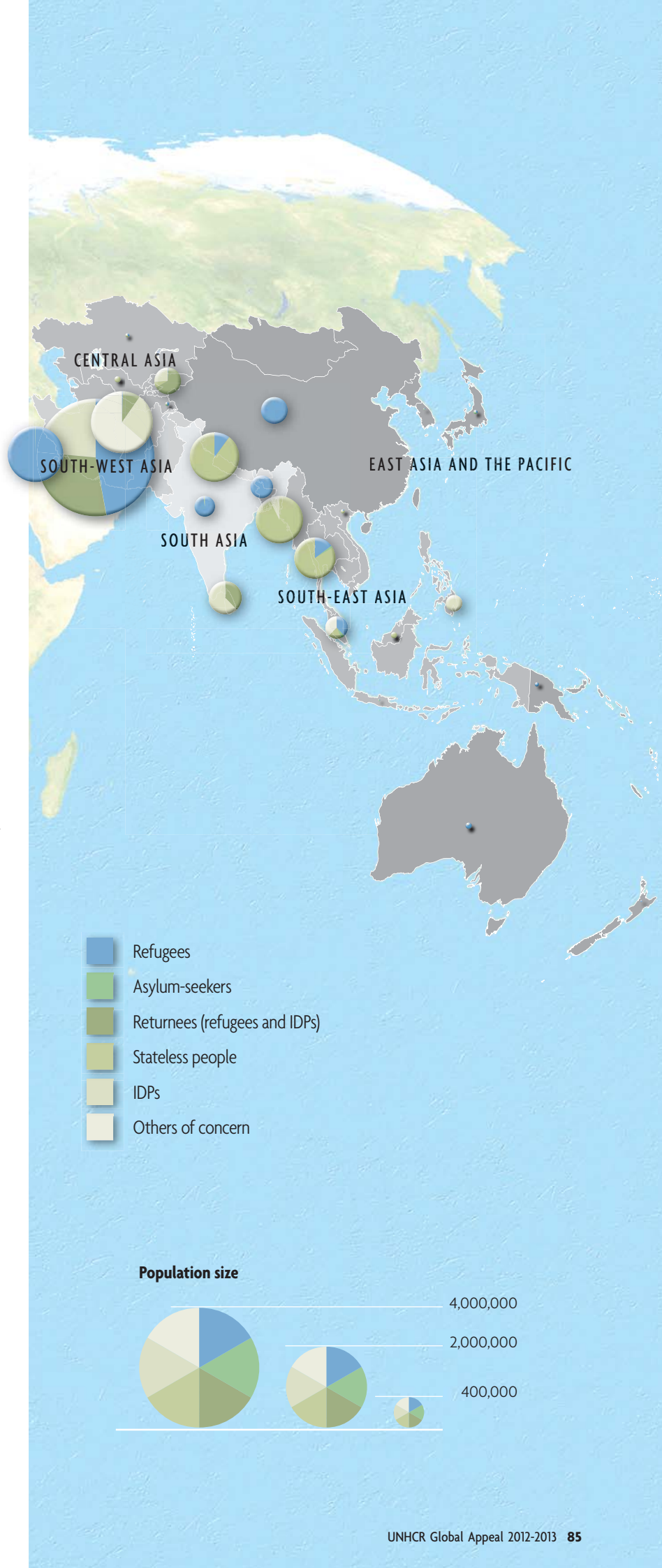
In Sri Lanka, UNHCR has supported the Government’s efforts in ensuring the voluntary return of more than 216,000 IDPs to their homes over the past two years. It has also supported their reintegration through monitoring, QIPs, the provision of non-food items and the construction of shelters. UNHCR will continue to advocate for durable solutions for the remaining IDPs, who were displaced during the earlier phases of the conflict, while reinforcing its support to the voluntary repatriation of refugees.

○ *Reduce and prevent statelessness and protect stateless people*

In Central Asia, following the approval from the Government of Turkmenistan in December 2010 of an Action Plan for Joint Activities on the Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness in Turkmenistan, some 8,000 undocumented individuals have been registered through a countrywide exercises carried out by UNHCR and the Turkmenistan State Migration Service. Another 1,590 stateless people who were registered in earlier Government-led registration exercises were granted Turkmen citizenship in July 2011. In addition, the Turkmen Parliament has approved a bill to accede to the 1954 Statelessness Convention and is now considering accession to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. UNHCR has closely followed these developments and is encouraging other States to follow this example.

In South-East Asia, UNHCR assists some 800,000 Muslim residents in Myanmar’s northern Rakhine State who do not have citizenship. UNHCR will aim to address the needs of the most vulnerable households in northern Rakhine State and conduct a mapping exercise to determine the number and status of people without citizenship in other parts of the country, while providing training to reduce the level of statelessness in Myanmar. UNHCR is also working closely with the Government of Bangladesh to identify the people of concern from Myanmar’s northern Rakhine State who live in the country without any legal status.

UNHCR also works with the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights and is exploring future cooperation, particularly on statelessness, in the region. It is exploring the possibility of co-hosting two regional workshops for this purpose in the near future.



Financial information

Compared to the 2011 budget

of USD 563 million, the budget for 2012 has been reduced by some USD 61 million, to USD 502 million. However, since the region covers countries with the potential for sudden displacement triggered by conflict and is prone to natural disasters, the initial budget may increase in the course of the year. The 2013 budget, at USD 538 million is some USD 36 million more than in 2012. This is in anticipation of increased requirements foreseen in Pakistan (primarily in the areas of its Afghan refugee programme and support to refugee and host communities as part of the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas programme) and Afghanistan (reintegration programmes).

○ Maintain operations in high-risk areas and ensure staff safety

Afghanistan has seen a significant deterioration in its security in 2011, seriously constraining humanitarian access to people of concern. However, UNHCR continues to deliver its assistance by setting up remote delivery and monitoring mechanisms through local partners. At the time of writing, there is no sign that this trend will change in the short to medium term. Most security incidents occur in districts and provinces recently handed over by the International Security Assistance Force to national counterparts. A high number of security incidents are reported each day, some of which specifically target the aid community, including the UN. UNHCR has been proactive in addressing this issue by conducting a security and operational review of its programmes in the country. Humanitarian access remains a challenge in Pakistan as the security situation in certain areas continues to be unstable.

| Challenges |

UNHCR's operational region of Asia and the Pacific covers 48 countries and territories (including 13 Pacific Island Countries) and traverses 11 time zones. The challenges and constraints in the various working environments are equally diverse.

The prolonged refugee situation in many countries in Asia leads to fatigue among host

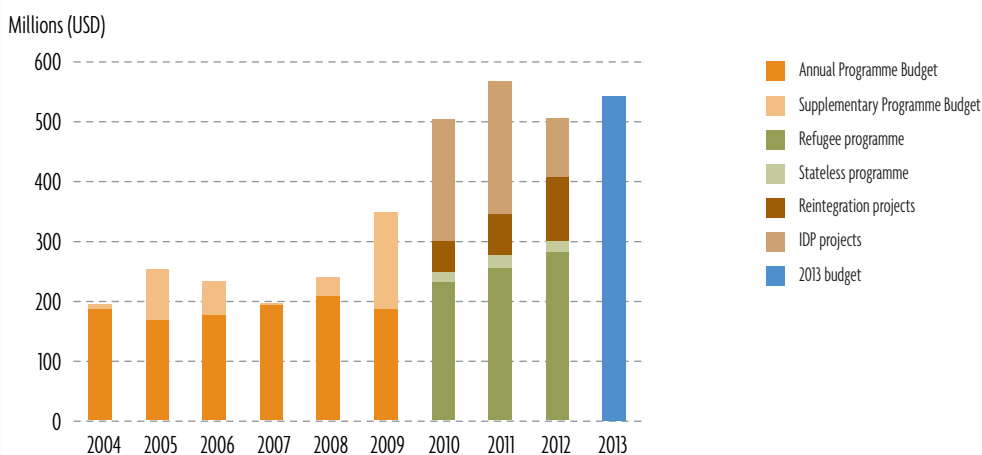
communities, and risks provoking irregular movements further afield as people of concern seek protection and solutions. While achieving durable solutions for protracted refugee situations is the prime goal, a key priority is to enhance protection and asylum space. The aim is to stabilize refugee populations where they are, pending durable solutions, by improving their protection and conditions of stay, thereby discouraging onward movements and by seeking more equitable burden-sharing between all states concerned.

To meet this objective, UNHCR seeks to promote refugee livelihoods and to support host communities. It advocates for States to establish protection-sensitive entry systems, and to explore alternative regulatory and stay arrangements, including via regional migration forums such as the Bali Process.

Mixed migration will remain one of the key challenges facing the region. UNHCR will play an important role in advocating for the preservation of asylum space for people of concern as a means of curbing onward movements.

In 2011, the deterioration of the security situation in Afghanistan has resulted in further internal displacement. Continued insecurity has constrained access and has hindered the delivery of much-needed humanitarian assistance to the newly displaced. Currently, the UN has access to less than half the country, and ensuring the safety and security of its staff and those of its partners has become more of a challenge. ■

UNHCR's budget in Asia and the Pacific 2004 - 2013



UNHCR BUDGET IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC | USD

Operations	2011 Revised budget	2012				Total	2013
		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects		
SOUTH-WEST ASIA							
Afghanistan	100,153,130	43,410,753	0	77,535,733	18,622,584	139,569,070	148,320,229
Islamic Republic of Iran	40,178,139	53,216,250	0	0	0	53,216,250	59,158,540
Pakistan	233,553,176	53,752,066	821,992	28,786,518	50,168,643	133,529,219	152,295,700
Subtotal	373,884,444	150,379,068	821,992	106,322,252	68,791,227	326,314,538	359,774,469
CENTRAL ASIA							
Kazakhstan Regional Office	7,691,607	7,334,466	1,363,773	0	567,780	9,266,019	6,543,080
Kyrgyzstan	13,238,884	2,814,269	290,895	0	7,082,404	10,187,569	6,281,147
Tajikistan	1,876,998	1,731,669	98,518	0	0	1,830,187	2,031,598
Turkmenistan	812,789	549,667	1,044,217	0	0	1,593,884	1,542,400
Subtotal	23,620,278	12,430,071	2,797,403	0	7,650,184	22,877,659	16,398,225
SOUTH ASIA							
India	13,276,507	13,127,135	81,278	0	0	13,208,413	15,377,233
Nepal	17,879,488	12,948,190	1,351,420	1,411,101	0	15,710,711	12,972,434
Sri Lanka	27,171,694	10,100,618	68,724	0	7,553,889	17,723,230	18,573,231
Subtotal	58,327,689	36,175,943	1,501,422	1,411,101	7,553,889	46,642,354	46,922,898
SOUT-EAST ASIA							
Bangladesh	10,778,617	14,411,420	55,966	0	0	14,467,386	14,509,170
Cambodia	1,163,366	938,450	10,000	0	0	948,450	956,950
Indonesia	7,677,369	5,735,087	173,602	0	0	5,908,689	6,269,908
Malaysia	16,736,300	15,894,090	510,384	0	0	16,404,474	16,503,791
Myanmar	17,273,381	0	9,847,188	0	7,211,448	17,058,637	25,074,816
Philippines	9,573,079	785,325	778,277	0	4,457,762	6,021,365	5,488,618
Thailand ¹	25,684,005	21,632,910	706,230	0	0	22,339,140	23,334,055
Thailand Regional Office ¹	0	5,617,310	0	0	0	5,617,310	5,703,671
Timor-Leste	409,342	217,346	19,654	0	0	237,000	231,878
Viet Nam	641,180	0	345,000	565,000	0	910,000	909,999
Subtotal	89,936,639	65,231,937	12,446,302	565,000	11,669,211	89,912,450	98,982,856
EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC							
Australia Regional Office	1,823,008	2,143,115	0	0	0	2,143,115	2,230,115
China Regional Office ²	5,107,541	5,426,957	143,934	0	0	5,570,891	5,698,114
Japan	5,817,578	4,616,961	51,772	0	0	4,668,732	4,704,051
Mongolia ²	208,721	0	0	0	0	0	0
Papua New Guinea	2,369,263	1,374,250	0	0	0	1,374,250	883,185
Republic of Korea	1,749,066	1,905,442	188,402	0	0	2,093,844	2,466,531
Regional activities	200,000	412,769	0	0	0	412,769	406,001
Subtotal	17,275,177	15,879,492	384,108	0	0	16,263,600	16,387,996
Total	563,044,227	280,096,512	17,951,227	108,298,353	95,664,511	502,010,602	538,466,444

¹ From 2012, Thailand and the Thailand Regional Office are reported separately.

² From 2012, Mongolia is reported under the China Regional Office.