

AFGHANISTAN



Operational highlights

- Over 68,200 refugees returned to Afghanistan under UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme, which offered them grants to cover transportation and initial return needs. The repatriating refugees received counselling in health, legal and social matters as well as on the risk of mines.
- UNHCR worked with the Governments of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to prepare for an international conference in May 2012 on a comprehensive solutions strategy focused on voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host communities.
- The level of internal displacement in Afghanistan increased sharply in 2011, with over 200,000 new internally displaced persons (IDPs) bringing the total number of IDPs in the country to more than 447,500. However, some 75,000 IDPs were able to find solutions through local integration, relocation or return to their areas of origin.
- UNHCR launched a pilot project to support sustainable reintegration in seven sites in areas of high return. The project provided multi-sectoral community-based

Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Various	70	70	33	-
People in a refugee-like situation	Pakistan	2,900	2,900	50	49
Asylum-seekers	Various	50	50	47	49
IDPs	Afghanistan	447,500	447,500	50	49
Returnees (IDPs)	Afghanistan	75,500	-	50	49
Others of concern	Afghan returnees of concern to UNHCR	951,200	951,200	49	55
Returnees (refugees) ¹	Pakistan	52,100	49,200	50	56
	Islamic Rep. of Iran	18,900	18,900	50	56
	Various	200	170	50	56
Total		1,548,420	1,469,990		

¹The demographic breakdown of returnees refers to the total 71,200 Afghan returning refugees.

assistance to refugee returnees to help them achieve parity with other community members in terms of access to basic services (i.e., health, education and water, livelihood, protection and shelter). An analysis of the impact of the pilot project will be available in 2012.

| Working environment |

In 2011, the working environment in Afghanistan was characterized by shrinking humanitarian space, increased cross-border movements and internal displacement. Some 2.7 million Afghan refugees remained in exile in neighbouring countries, and though the UNHCR voluntary repatriation programme continued, the number of refugee returnees to the country in 2011 was the second-lowest on record since 2002. Nonetheless, since the voluntary repatriation programme began in March 2002 more than 4.6 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan.

| Achievements and impact |

• Main objectives and targets

UNHCR's main objectives for 2011 included facilitating voluntary repatriation; pursuing sustainable reintegration through collaboration with the Government; and coordinating IDP protection and assistance through leadership of the clusters for protection, emergency shelter and NFI assistance.

Favourable protection environment

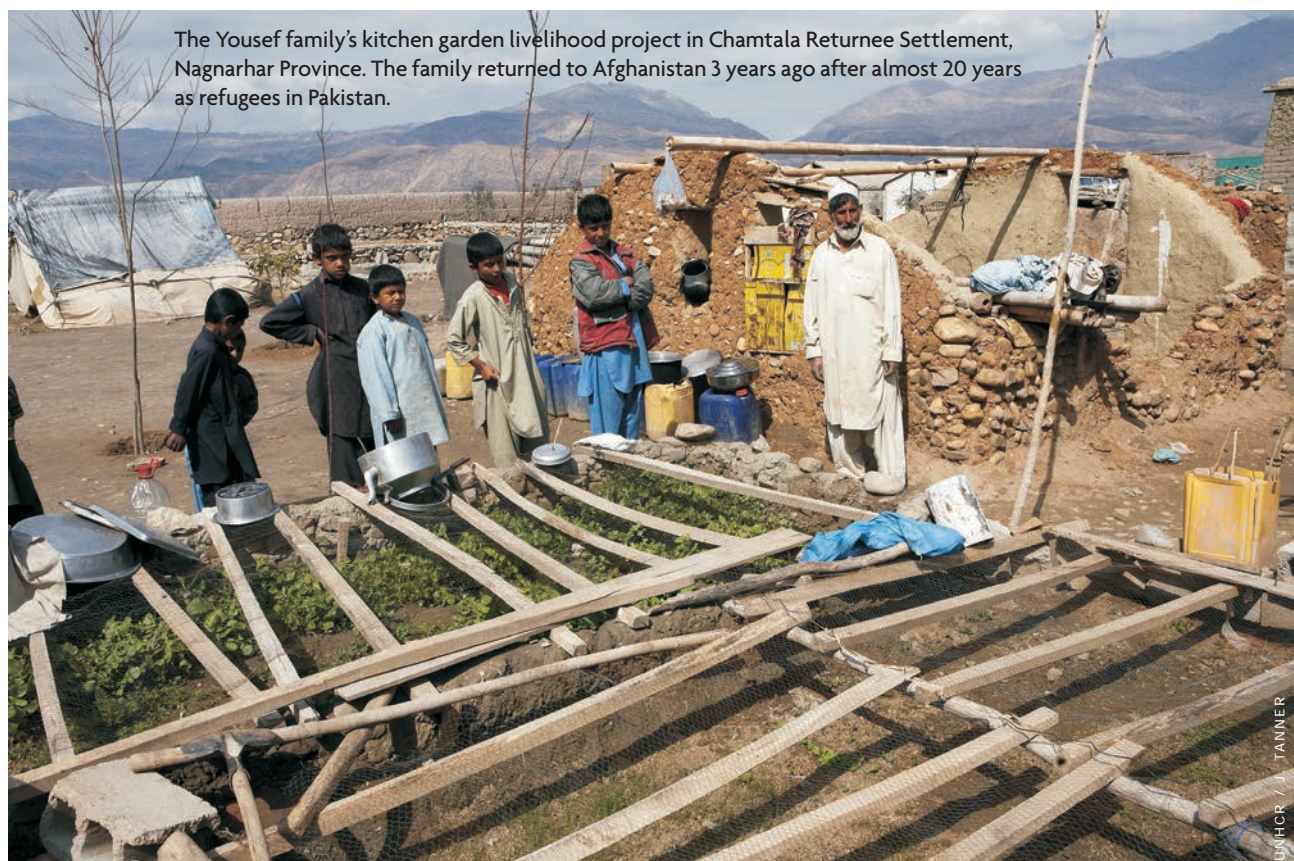
- Legal assistance was provided to returning refugees and IDPs through the Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance Project (ICLA), which helped resolve more

than 500 cases. The ICLA network focused on registration, property disputes and family law. Training was also given to both formal and informal justice decision-makers.

- In spite of the small number of asylum-seekers and refugees in Afghanistan, the refugee status determination (RSD) process was taking up to four months to issue a first decision. UNHCR therefore revised the RSD procedures; undertook training to improve interviewing, information collection and confidentiality; and upgraded reception facilities. Some 60 individuals were registered as asylum-seekers in 2011.
- UNHCR was able to gain access to detention facilities and make referral agreements with relevant agencies to help identify those in need of international protection. With the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation (MoRR) in the process of drafting national refugee legislation, UNHCR is looking for opportunities to promote protection-sensitive entry procedures and reception conditions.
- The IDP strategy developed for the Protection Cluster continued to be implemented by UNHCR. A protection workshop targeting staff of cluster and task force lead agencies demonstrated how to incorporate protection principles into projects and programmes.

Fair protection processes

- UNHCR worked with the MoRR to build the latter's capacity, including through the secondment of experts in protection, education, income generation, social services, finance and administration. MoRR offices throughout Afghanistan participated in identification exercises and needs assessments related to vulnerability, reintegration and border and returnee monitoring.



- The reporting of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) remained difficult owing to the cultural context. Major incidents of SGBV were less frequently reported in 2011 than in the previous year. The overall response to these cases was improved through a series of capacity-building activities undertaken as part of a Joint Global Programme on GBV Capacity Promotion led by UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA. Survivors of SGBV received support through mechanisms to aid persons with specific needs.

Basic needs and services

- Over 10,000 shelter units were provided for nearly 62,000 vulnerable people, including some 9,000 returning refugee families and vulnerable local community members and some 1,400 IDP families. More than 53,000 families received an NFI package during the year, including some 22,700 returning refugees, 27,700 IDP families, 1,600 cross-border families in a refugee-like situation and 1,100 deportees.
- UNHCR implemented income generation, cash-for-work, and vocational training projects throughout the country, targeting 93,000 returnees and 10,000 IDPs. Activities included training in making cement blocks, setting up bakeries, electrical work, welding, tailoring and food processing, as well as the provision of livestock, seeds and tools.
- In collaboration with UNICEF and the Ministry of Public Health, UNHCR provided polio and measles vaccinations to all returnee children visiting UNHCR encashment centres. Wells were dug and pipe systems were constructed and rehabilitated, benefitting more than 15,800 refugee returnees and nearly 8,500 IDPs.
- Some 100 refugees and asylum-seekers received accommodation, food, clothing and medical care.

Community participation and self-management

- In 2011, UNHCR conducted extensive training in age, gender and diversity considerations for UNHCR staff and implementing partners. During the needs assessments conducted to identify model sites for the 2012 reintegration strategy, returnees' needs in terms of protection, shelter, water and livelihoods were identified through participatory processes.

Durable solutions

- Over 68,200 Afghans returned home voluntarily with UNHCR assistance, 49,200 from Pakistan, 18,900 from the Islamic Republic of Iran and a further 100 from non-neighbouring countries such as India and the Russian Federation. Each refugee returnee received a voluntary repatriation grant after identity confirmation at the encashment centres.
- Although return assistance needs for IDPs remained largely unmet due to the volatile and fragile security situation in the country, some 75,000 IDPs were reported to have spontaneously found solutions. UNHCR facilitated IDP returns through the provision of shelter packages to 200 families, or a total of 1,200 individuals.

- In 2011, a panel was introduced to decide which cases to consider for resettlement. Moreover, it was decided that resettlement would be centralized through the Kabul office.

Logistics and operational support

- Remote monitoring mechanisms, including through partners who had better access than UNHCR to some parts of the country, were developed. These provided visual progress reports through web-based technologies and GPS-stamped and dated photographs. They also provided information about community perceptions of the interventions.

| Constraints |

UNHCR's strategy since the launch of the voluntary repatriation programme has been to provide the most vulnerable with initial return assistance, shelter support or access to land.

It was foreseen within the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) that macro-development initiatives would improve economic conditions in rural and urban areas, increase food security and raise general community health. Unfortunately, development initiatives have been unable to fully realize these expectations, and returning refugees are among the most marginalized members of communities. UNHCR is hopeful that its work with UNDP and other development actors will address the gap between relief and development more effectively.

The humanitarian space in Afghanistan is restricted, with large parts of the country classified as high-risk environments and inaccessible to most agencies. Serious constraints remained with regard to UNHCR's ability to identify new conflict-induced displacements, especially in non-accessible areas, and in tracking the changing nature of IDP populations across the country.

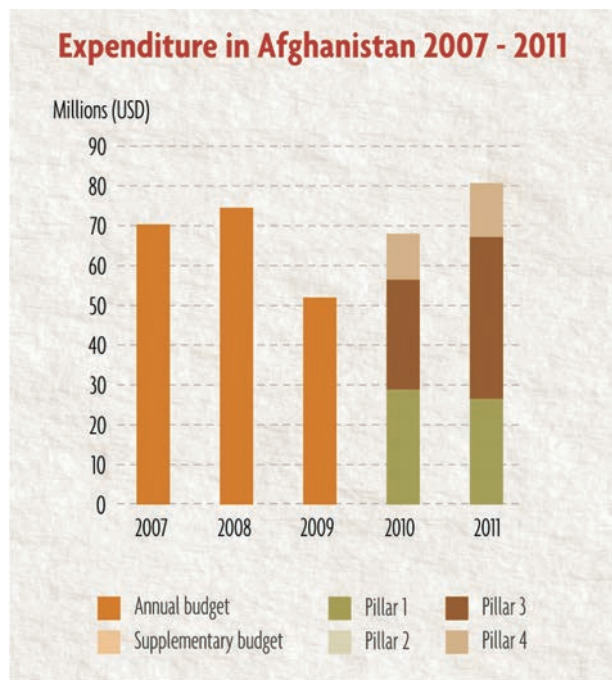
The limited absorption capacity of urban centres and the inability of the humanitarian community to respond comprehensively due to security challenges have led to secondary displacement. IDP data collected and collated by UNHCR in collaboration with the MoRR underestimates the magnitude of displacement in the country.

| Financial information |

UNHCR has received significant donor support for its operation in Afghanistan, and this support increased in 2011. But stronger efforts are needed, by UNHCR and development actors, to improve livelihood opportunities and services and address chronic poverty in Afghanistan. The unmet needs require more effective channelling of resources, not only to UNHCR, but also to development and Government actors in order to better address returning refugees' needs and ensure they achieve parity with other community members.

| Organization and implementation |

UNHCR undertook a community snapshot survey, interviewing community and returnee leaders who represented more than 1.4 million returning refugees in high-return areas. The survey's conclusion was that returnees



were considered to be living in significantly worse conditions than other community members in terms of basic services, livelihoods, protection and access to land and shelter. More than 15 per cent of all refugee returnees had experienced secondary displacement, frequently from rural to urban areas, in search of food and livelihoods as well as security. Research is underway to calculate the number of refugee returnees who have not achieved sustainable reintegration.

UNHCR's presence in 2011

□ Number of offices	8
□ Total staff	347
International	29
National	312
UNVs	5
Others	1

Working with others

UNHCR established a working group with the MoRR to develop and begin implementing a revised approach to sustainable reintegration for returning refugees. The working group received inputs from seven ministries, including those of Foreign Affairs, Rural Development, Urban Affairs, Public Health, Labour, Social Welfare and Education.

Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, UNHCR participated in a number of UN Country Team meetings to design and plan an inter-agency response to high-return areas. UNHCR continued to lead the protection and emergency shelter/NFI clusters and led the IDP Task Force alongside the MoRR in six regional locations: Kabul, Jalalabad, Gardez, Herat, Kandahar and Mazar. A joint World Bank/UNHCR study released in June highlighted the growing problem of the displaced living in urban areas, often in informal settlements.

UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP to establish a joint programme to pursue sustainable reintegration. The programme is intended to provide a platform for several UN agencies to work with various government ministries on multi-sectoral community-based reintegration activities in 48 high-return communities.

Overall assessment

The low number of returning refugees, when compared to previous years, may be a reflection of growing concerns among exiles about security problems in Afghanistan. UNHCR has also noted with concern the deficiencies in development that impede the sustainable reintegration of returnees.

Improved coordination is required to track IDP population movements, understand and address the root causes of displacement, and provide improved responses in emergencies. UNHCR will pursue a more coordinated effort to facilitate spontaneous as well as assisted solutions.

In addition to the modest number of asylum-seekers and refugees in Afghanistan, more than 3,000 people are considered to be living in a refugee-like situation, having been displaced from their homes across international borders. UNHCR is increasingly engaged in the drafting of refugee legislation as well as in lobbying the relevant authorities to improve reception conditions and ensure protection-sensitive border policies.

Partners	
Implementing partners	
Government agencies:	Ministries of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Public Health, Refugees and Repatriation, Women's Affairs
NGOs:	Afghan Bureau for Reconstruction, Afghan Community Rehabilitation Unit, Afghan General Help Coordination Office, Afghan Institute of Learning, Afghan Planning Agency, Afghan Public Welfare Organization, Afghan Society Relief and Care Organization, Afghanistan Association of the Blind, <i>Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement</i> , Agency of Consultancy for Training, Ansari Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan, Basic Education and Employable Skills Training, Cooperation Centre for Afghanistan, Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees, Development and Humanitarian Services for Afghanistan, Education and Aid Centre, Health Protection and Research Organization, Huge Afghanistan Rehabilitation and Development Organization, Human Dignity Society, Human Resources Development Agency, Humanitarian Action for the People of Afghanistan, Mediatek Afghanistan, Nangarhar Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Directorate, National Consultancy and Relief Association, Naveed Association Rehabilitation for Afghanistan, Norwegian Project Office-Rural Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan, Norwegian Refugee Council, Organization of Human Welfare, Reconstruction and Employment Unit for Afghan Refugees, Relief International, Sina Association Rehabilitation Service, Social Service Organization for Afghan Returnees, Society for Afghanistan Development and Assistance in Technologies, Voluntary Association for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan, Watan Social and Technical Services Association, Zardozi - Markets for Afghan Artisans
Operational partners	
Government agencies:	Ministries of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NGOs:	Emergency shelter, NFI and protection cluster members, National and Regional IDP Task Forces, Housing, Land and Property Task Force
Others:	British Broadcasting Corporation, <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> , IOM, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, UNDP, UNV, World Bank

| Unmet needs |

- Some 4,000 families of returning refugees and some 5,800 IDP families did not receive shelter support.
- Only some 40 per cent of persons with specific needs among the returning refugees were assisted.
- Only a third of the planned income-generation projects were implemented.
- Less than half of the returning Afghan refugees received NFIs.
- Only some 30 per cent of required water projects were actually implemented.

Budget, income and expenditure in Afghanistan | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
FINAL BUDGET	32,108,113	45,070,681	23,326,335	100,505,129
Income from contributions	26,365,970	19,942,984	4,079,636	50,388,590
Other funds available	183,000	20,713,696	9,400,242	30,296,938
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	26,548,970	40,656,680	13,479,878	80,685,528
EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN				
<i>Favourable protection environment</i>				
International and regional instruments	424,695	0	0	424,695
National administrative framework	0	0	291,496	291,496
Policies towards forced displacement	0	0	291,496	291,496
National and regional migration policy	0	453,518	0	453,518
Cooperation with partners	424,695	452,559	291,496	1,168,750
Emergency management strengthened	424,695	0	291,496	716,191
Subtotal	1,274,085	906,077	1,165,984	3,346,146
<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>				
Reception conditions	82,781	0	0	82,781
Registration and profiling	498,027	905,119	270,299	1,673,445
Access to asylum procedures	82,781	0	0	82,781
Fair and efficient status determination	82,781	0	0	82,781
Family reunification	580,807	0	0	580,807
Civil status documentation	0	0	270,299	270,299
Subtotal	1,327,177	905,119	540,598	2,772,894
<i>Security from violence and exploitation</i>				
Effects of armed conflict	0	301,744	0	301,744
Gender-based violence	0	301,744	380,805	682,549
Non-arbitrary detention	106,547	0	0	106,547
Access to legal remedies	106,547	815,187	381,221	1,302,955
Subtotal	213,094	1,418,675	762,026	2,393,795
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>				
Food security	0	402,237	226,221	628,458
Water	0	1,120,594	375,693	1,496,287
Shelter and other infrastructure	0	14,927,643	2,433,215	17,360,858
Basic domestic and hygiene items	2,330,779	6,891,839	2,585,352	11,807,970
Primary health care	1,046,440	428,787	231,647	1,706,874
Education	0	402,237	0	402,237
Sanitation services	0	402,237	228,906	631,143
Services for groups with specific needs	76,055	206,380	75,735	358,170
Subtotal	3,453,274	24,781,954	6,156,769	34,391,997

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>				
Participatory assessment	0	495,339	0	495,339
Community self-management	0	495,340	0	495,340
Self-reliance and livelihoods	0	3,634,535	1,160,980	4,795,515
Subtotal	0	4,625,214	1,160,980	5,786,194
<i>Durable solutions</i>				
Durable solutions strategy	0	0	290,924	290,924
Voluntary return	13,723,244	838,860	570,102	15,132,206
Rehabilitation and reintegration	0	1,064,391	438,500	1,502,891
Resettlement	213,094	0	0	213,094
Local integration	0	0	290,924	290,924
Subtotal	13,936,338	1,903,251	1,590,450	17,430,039
<i>External relations</i>				
Donor relations	294,192	236,691	247,012	777,895
Resource mobilisation	294,192	236,692	247,012	777,896
Partnership	294,192	236,691	247,012	777,895
Public information	319,850	239,191	247,012	806,053
Subtotal	1,202,426	949,265	988,048	3,139,739
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>				
Supply chain and logistics	3,133,184	0	0	3,133,184
Programme management and coordination	1,940,359	1,652,506	796,131	4,388,996
Subtotal	5,073,543	1,652,506	796,131	7,522,180
Balance of instalments with implementing partners	69,035	3,514,618	318,892	3,902,545
Total	26,548,972	40,656,679	13,479,878	80,685,529