

In Balti Kazyk, at the border with Uzbekistan, refugees who fled the violence in Kyrgyzstan returning home.



**Kazakhstan**  
**Kyrgyzstan**  
**Tajikistan**  
**Turkmenistan**  
**Uzbekistan**

# Central Asia



## | OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- Following the communal violence, destruction and looting in southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, which led to the forced displacement of 375,000 people—of whom 75,000 fled to Uzbekistan—UNHCR coordinated the protection and relief efforts in Uzbekistan as well as the protection and emergency shelter clusters and the non-food relief sub-cluster in Kyrgyzstan. The refugee population in Uzbekistan received assistance and some 13,400 individuals affected by the violence were supported by the construction of 1,780 transitional shelters in Kyrgyzstan.
- The Government of Kazakhstan adopted a national refugee law which came into force in January 2010, whereby it assumed full responsibility for refugee status determination (RSD). UNHCR provided advice on fair and efficient RSD procedures and advocated to participate in the administrative decision-making process. An informal inter-ministerial working group was established to look into numerous challenges faced by persons of concern to UNHCR.
- In Tajikistan, the Government granted access to its territory to a steadily increasing number of asylum-seekers fleeing the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. UNHCR worked closely with the Government to protect the new arrivals.
- Working in close coordination with UNHCR, the Government of Turkmenistan endorsed a landmark action plan and national strategy to address statelessness. The plan included provisions for the registration of undocumented and stateless people, amendments to legislation on nationality to prevent statelessness, and the protection of stateless people in line with international standards. The Government will also consider accession to the Statelessness Conventions.
- UNHCR continued to pursue durable solutions in Central Asia, mainly through resettlement, for a significant number of refugees.
- As an Affiliate of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Border Management Staff College (BMSC) in Dushanbe, UNHCR contributed to the curriculum and participated in the training of border guards. The BMSC trained high-level officials involved in border management in and beyond the Central Asian region.



## Working environment

For the first time in the history of the OSCE, a Central Asian State (Kazakhstan) assumed the chairmanship of the organization and hosted a summit of OSCE leaders in its capital. The Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, two key regional bodies involved in national security, signed separate cooperation agreements with the United Nations.

A major humanitarian emergency was triggered by the inter-communal violence in the southern part of Kyrgyzstan. Some 375,000 people were forcibly displaced, including 300,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). The events in Kyrgyzstan raised concerns that instability could spread to other parts of Central Asia, and led UNHCR to strengthen and update its emergency preparedness.

The great majority of asylum-seekers and refugees in Central Asia originate from Afghanistan and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In 2010, Tajikistan registered the largest number of new arrivals when State RSD authorities received more than 1,000 asylum applications. Uzbekistan did not undertake RSD but provided international protection to some 75,000 refugees from Kyrgyzstan. No asylum claims were registered in Turkmenistan.

## Achievements and impact

UNHCR's operations in Central Asia focused on protecting refugees and IDPs and providing them with appropriate durable solutions. Other objectives were to reduce and prevent statelessness and to maintain the capacity to respond

to displacement emergencies. The regional management structure that was put in place continued to be operational.

In Turkmenistan, as a follow-up to the recommendations of the regional conference on statelessness held in Ashgabat in December 2009, the Government joined UNHCR to embark on a strategy to prevent and address statelessness on its territory. The Government also began to review its citizenship law.

Border guards were trained on protection-sensitive referral systems. UNHCR also prepared a draft study paper on mixed migration flows in the context of Central Asia for discussion at a high-level Regional Conference on Mixed Migration and International Refugee Protection scheduled to take place in Kazakhstan in early 2011.

UNHCR developed a regional registration and profiling strategy for refugees and asylum-seekers. The strategy will be executed jointly with the authorities in 2011, allowing each office in the region to devise durable solutions that are appropriate for people of concern.

UNHCR continued to deliver material assistance to the most vulnerable refugees throughout the region. Refugees who faced immediate protection risks were submitted for resettlement. In Uzbekistan, where resettlement continued to be the most viable durable solution, more than 200 refugees were accepted for resettlement by third countries.

Age, gender and diversity considerations have been incorporated into the work plans of all operations. In light of the findings from participatory assessments, UNHCR strengthened efforts to address the situation of women and children and prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence.

UNHCR continued to be part of inter-agency initiatives such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Delivering as One initiative.

## | Constraints |

With the exception of Uzbekistan, all States in Central Asia have adopted refugee laws. However, favourable provisions in the refugee laws are not fully consistent with other legislation, administrative practices and migration policies and, as a result, are often not implemented. Concerns related to cross-border and national security continued to take precedence over national and international asylum obligations. This left a number of asylum-seekers with no access to State procedures or facing undue rejection of their claims and, in a few cases, extradition.

The restructuring of governmental departments responsible for refugee and asylum matters in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan has made it necessary for UNHCR to devote resources to basic training, rather than strengthening existing capacities.

Local integration prospects are lacking for most refugees in Central Asia. In general, gainful employment and self-reliance opportunities are scarce, and access to naturalization is difficult.

Official statistics underestimate the number of stateless people in Central Asia, with deficient status-determination systems contributing to these deflated figures. Some countries do not consider addressing statelessness a priority.

## | Operations |

UNHCR's operations in **Kyrgyzstan** are covered in a separate chapter.

Given the common groups of concern and operating environments, UNHCR's operations in the Central Asian countries have some similarities. Afghans make up the largest refugee group in the region.

In **Kazakhstan**, RSD procedures were transferred from the Ministry of Labour to the Ministry of the Interior. Advocacy for the establishment of a fair RSD system remained a priority in 2010, and UNHCR continued to build the capacity of the Government and civil society through regular meetings and training sessions. In order to ensure the protection of rejected asylum-seekers by the State and at risk of deportation as a result, UNHCR continued to maintain its capacity for RSD. UNHCR also reviewed the national legislation on refugees and provided comments on its compliance with international refugee and asylum principles.

Voluntary repatriation prospects remain scarce, while local integration continues to be a challenge in view of restrictions in national legislation. Resettlement was used as a protection tool for those whose protection could not be secured in Kazakhstan. In cooperation with its implementing partners, UNHCR helped the most vulnerable refugees to meet their basic needs. Support was also provided in the areas of health and education, and UNHCR noted improvements in refugee children's access to the local educational system.

In **Tajikistan**, UNHCR participated as an observer in the state RSD commission under the Ministry of the Interior, and monitored the compliance of the process with international asylum principles. The provision of assistance to an increasing number of new arrivals was a significant challenge. UNHCR reviewed its local integration approach in light of its urban refugee policy, and continued to process some refugees for resettlement. It also participated in several OSCE-BMSC organized training sessions for senior border guards from the region and Afghanistan.

UNHCR assisted the Government of Tajikistan to develop a plan of action to prevent and address statelessness. UNHCR is piloting its urban refugee policy in Tajikistan by profiling the target population with a view to addressing gaps in local integration. Contingency planning remained a priority, and due weight was given to UNHCR's concerns within the Rapid Emergency Assessment and Coordination

### Budget and expenditure in Central Asia | USD

Country		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
<b>Kazakhstan Regional Office<sup>1</sup></b>	Budget	3,923,679	83,000	62,773	<b>4,069,452</b>
	Expenditure	2,521,587	82,935	0	<b>2,604,522</b>
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	Budget	3,240,581	365,000	19,639,059	<b>23,244,640</b>
	Expenditure	3,150,857	356,129	17,924,656	<b>21,431,642</b>
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	Budget	319,701	262,014	0	<b>581,715</b>
	Expenditure	213,525	252,281	0	<b>465,806</b>
<b>Tajikistan</b>	Budget	1,206,080	40,000	0	<b>1,246,080</b>
	Expenditure	784,008	24,477	0	<b>808,485</b>
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	Budget	4,117,344	0	0	<b>4,117,344</b>
	Expenditure	2,024,833	0	0	<b>2,024,833</b>
<b>Total budget</b>		<b>12,807,385</b>	<b>750,014</b>	<b>19,701,832</b>	<b>33,259,231</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>8,694,810</b>	<b>715,822</b>	<b>17,924,656</b>	<b>27,335,288</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes the Office of the Regional Coordinator which provides support to countries in the subregion.

Team (REACT) composed of national authorities, UN agencies, national and international NGOs.

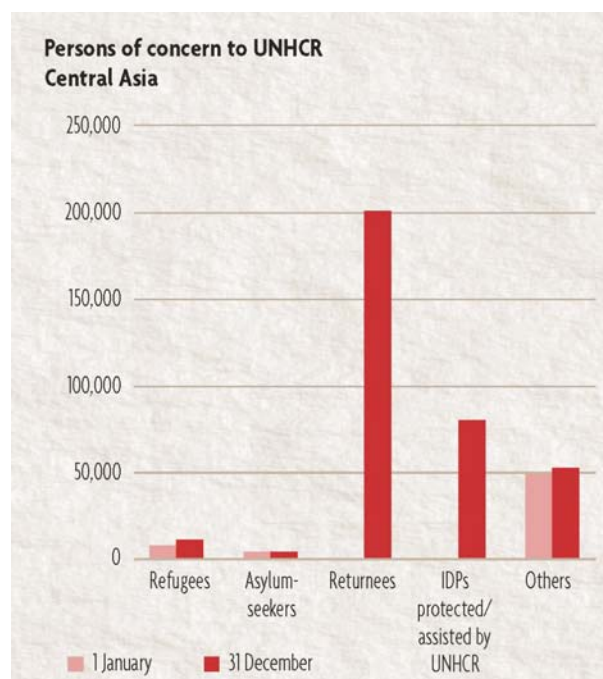
In **Turkmenistan**, UNHCR focused its efforts on the reduction and prevention of statelessness. It developed, jointly with the authorities, a national strategy and action plan aimed at registering undocumented residents, resolving their status and providing them with documentation. The strategy also aimed to prevent statelessness by amending the law in compliance with the 1961 Statelessness Convention.

Through the good offices of UNDP in **Uzbekistan**, UNHCR was successful in achieving durable solutions for people of concern in the country, primarily through the resettlement of some 200 mandate refugees. Resettlement remains the most viable durable solution and protection tool for this group. In June 2010, following the outbreak of violence in southern Kyrgyzstan, some 75,000 refugees sought refuge in Uzbekistan and received protection from the authorities. UNHCR established a temporary field presence to provide humanitarian assistance to this caseload.

## Financial information

In 2010, the budget for Central Asia increased significantly in comparison to previous years, partly due to the introduction of the comprehensive needs assessment and the establishment of supplementary programmes to respond to emergencies in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The supplementary budget for the Kyrgyzstan situation received

strong financial support from donors. Moreover, the offices in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan strengthened activities to address statelessness, and the Tajikistan office piloted implementation of UNHCR's urban refugee policy. In Kazakhstan, UNHCR focused on capacity-building in support of the implementation of national refugee legislation.



## Voluntary contributions to Central Asia | USD

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>CENTRAL ASIA SUBREGION</b>					
Australia				874,126	874,126
Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe (Germany)	61,050		61,050		122,100
España con ACNUR (Spain)				10,512	10,512
Estonia				118,208	118,208
France				337,382	337,382
Ireland				308,261	308,261
Japan Association for UNHCR			1,896	3,992	5,888
Norway				558,036	558,036
Private donors in Australia				16,260	16,260
Private donors in Canada				3,234	3,234
Private donors in China			20,951	2,218	23,169
Private donors in the Republic of Korea				501	501
Private donors in United Kingdom				11,157	11,157
Russian Federation				250,000	250,000
United States of America				1,250,000	1,250,000
<b>Central Asia subtotal</b>	<b>61,050</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>83,897</b>	<b>3,743,888</b>	<b>3,888,835</b>
<b>KAZAKHSTAN</b>					
Fast Retailing Co., Ltd. (Japan)	68,565				68,565
<b>Kazakhstan subtotal</b>	<b>68,565</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>68,565</b>

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>KYRGYZSTAN</b>					
Andorra			9,248		9,248
Belgium			739,827		739,827
Canada			676,983		676,983
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	93,054		3,486,205		3,579,259
Charities Aid Foundation			9,669		9,669
<i>España con ACNUR</i> (Spain)				123	123
European Commission			4,033,419		4,033,419
Finland			288,600		288,600
Germany			308,261		308,261
HQ online donations				96	96
Japan			6,000,000		6,000,000
Private donors in China				3	3
Private donors in the Republic of Korea				4	4
Ikea Foundation (Netherlands)	1,701,124				1,701,124
Sweden			1,296,344		1,296,344
UN Delivering as One		210,801			210,801
UN Peacebuilding Fund			272,850		272,850
Fast Retailing Co., Ltd. (Japan)	247,427				247,427
United States of America			6,605,097		6,605,097
<b>Kyrgyzstan subtotal</b>	<b>2,041,605</b>	<b>210,801</b>	<b>23,726,503</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>25,979,135</b>
<b>TAJIKISTAN</b>					
Fast Retailing Co., Ltd. (Japan)	70,718				70,718
<b>Tajikistan subtotal</b>	<b>70,718</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70,718</b>
<b>TURKMENISTAN</b>					
United States of America		255,000			255,000
<b>Turkmenistan subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>255,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>255,000</b>
<b>UZBEKISTAN</b>					
Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)	1,515,131				1,515,131
Japan	300,000				300,000
<b>Uzbekistan subtotal</b>	<b>1,815,131</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,815,131</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,057,069</b>	<b>465,801</b>	<b>23,810,400</b>	<b>3,744,114</b>	<b>32,077,384</b>

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