



**UNHCR**

**GLOBAL APPEAL 2015**  
UPDATE

Afghanistan  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Pakistan

# SOUTH-WEST ASIA



IDPs from North Waziristan Agency in Bannu, Pakistan.

UNHCR / Q. K. AFRIDI



# | Overview |



Since 2002 more than 5.8 million Afghan refugees have voluntarily returned home. About 4.7 million of them have been assisted by UNHCR through the largest voluntary return programme in its history. Returnees currently make up more than 20 per cent of Afghanistan's total population. Nonetheless, after more than three decades of protracted displacement, millions of Afghans remain outside their country, constituting more than 20 per cent of the global refugee population and 40 per cent of those in protracted displacement worldwide. The overwhelming majority are hosted by only two countries – the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan.

Pakistan remains one of the world's main refugee-hosting countries. It hosts some 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees. Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic of Iran hosts the world's largest urban refugee population, including 950,000 registered Afghan refugees. Half of the overall Afghan refugee population are children, which emphasizes the vulnerability of the displaced communities and the need for urgent, prioritized responses.

Afghanistan's level of development is related to its limited capacity to absorb returnees. The difficult socio-economic situation has contributed to declining voluntary returns and affected the ability of those who have already returned to effectively reintegrate. The main obstacles to sustainable return and reintegration include limited access to shelter, basic services and livelihood

opportunities, as well as the unpredictable security situation in some areas.

A series of complex transitions in 2014 and the recent establishment of a new national unity Government offer unprecedented impetus to advance the pursuit of solutions and to support Afghans outside the country who wish to return and take part in the reconstruction and reconciliation process. Significant efforts from all stakeholders are required to support the new Government in creating an environment conducive for return and sustainable reintegration.

In the meantime, the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan continue to honour their commitments to preserve asylum space and seek sustainable solutions, working towards the outcome of the multi-year Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). Endorsed by the international community in 2012, the SSAR provides a comprehensive and integrated regional framework for joint interventions, aimed at facilitating voluntary return and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan, while providing assistance to host countries and communities. To translate the outcomes of the SSAR into measurable actions and to mobilize donor support, in 2014 the concerned Governments, in cooperation with more than 50 humanitarian and development partners, created country-specific portfolios of projects. Empowering young people through education and skills training

remains a priority to enable them to contribute to rebuilding their country upon return.

Military operations in Pakistan's North Waziristan region in mid-June 2014 resulted in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, both within tribal areas

and across the border with Afghanistan. Within Pakistan, 83,000 families from North Waziristan were newly displaced, adding to the over 210,000 families displaced from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. More than 13,000 families have crossed into Afghanistan where they have received assistance.

## | Response and implementation |

*Operations in Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Pakistan, are described in separate country operation chapters.*

UNHCR will continue to support the three Governments in the subregion as they seek to fulfil the objectives of the SSAR, including through implementation of activities contained in the country portfolios of projects.

In **Afghanistan**, UNHCR will continue to support the Government in creating conditions conducive for voluntary return and sustainable reintegration. In support of this overarching objective, the Office will advocate including returnees and refugees outside the country in national development plans and processes, and work closely with other stakeholders to embed the SSAR within national priority programmes, in particular the national solidarity programme.

UNHCR will engage with development actors to encourage investing in rural and urban areas of high return as a priority and seek to expand the scope and scale of community-based programmes benefiting both returnees and local communities. Provision of initial reintegration assistance, complementing the return grants, will help enhance returnees' coping mechanisms, with dividends for local economies.

In the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, the primary focus will be on providing sector-based assistance to Afghan refugees. Programmes supporting the provision of health care and education, as well as livelihoods, will help refugees reintegrate upon return to Afghanistan.

In **Pakistan**, UNHCR will focus on the Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) programme, which is an integral component of the SSAR's in-country implementation. RAHA seeks to increase tolerance towards Afghan refugees and promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence by providing both refugees and their host communities with humanitarian and development assistance. Projects providing skills training and income generation will build resilience and equip refugees with transferrable skills, linked to livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan.

## Challenges

In Afghanistan, economic insecurity and the Government's limited capacity to provide basic services will remain the main challenges to repatriation and sustainable reintegration.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, refugees have been particularly affected by international sanctions, which are affecting their livelihoods. Living costs for refugees have risen and UNHCR's operating costs in the country have increased due to hyper-inflation.

In Pakistan, besides the volatility of the overall operating environment for humanitarian actors, the main challenge will be maintaining asylum space for Afghan refugees beyond December 2015, when their Proof of Registration cards expire.

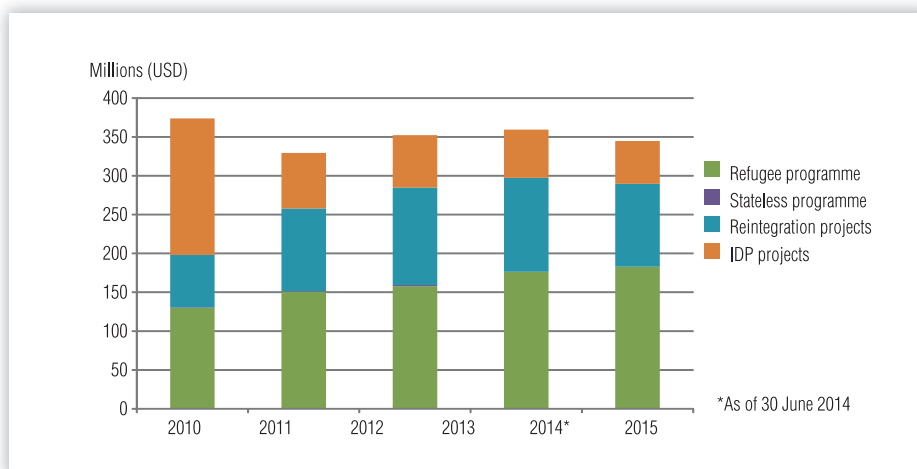
# | Financial information |

The budget for Afghanistan is set at USD 134.6 million, for the Islamic Republic of Iran at USD 73.0 million and for Pakistan at USD 137.1 million.

Afghanistan and Pakistan have both seen an increase in budgetary needs for 2014 after military operations in Pakistan's North Waziristan region led to new displacements within the country and to Afghanistan. These two new situations will require resources that were not planned and therefore not reflected in the 2015 budget.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the overall budget will increase by 6.3 per cent during 2014 to help ensure continuity of the health insurance scheme.

## Budgets for South-West Asia | 2010–2015



## Budgets for South-West Asia | USD

Operation	2014 REVISED BUDGET (as of 30 June 2014)	2015				TOTAL
		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	
Afghanistan	143,165,796	50,838,574	0	56,925,099	26,880,214	134,643,886
Islamic Republic of Iran	68,669,442	73,001,782	0	0	0	73,001,782
Pakistan	147,489,285	58,834,599	304,241	49,613,617	28,382,173	137,134,630
<b>Total</b>	<b>359,324,523</b>	<b>182,674,955</b>	<b>304,241</b>	<b>106,538,716</b>	<b>55,262,387</b>	<b>344,780,298</b>