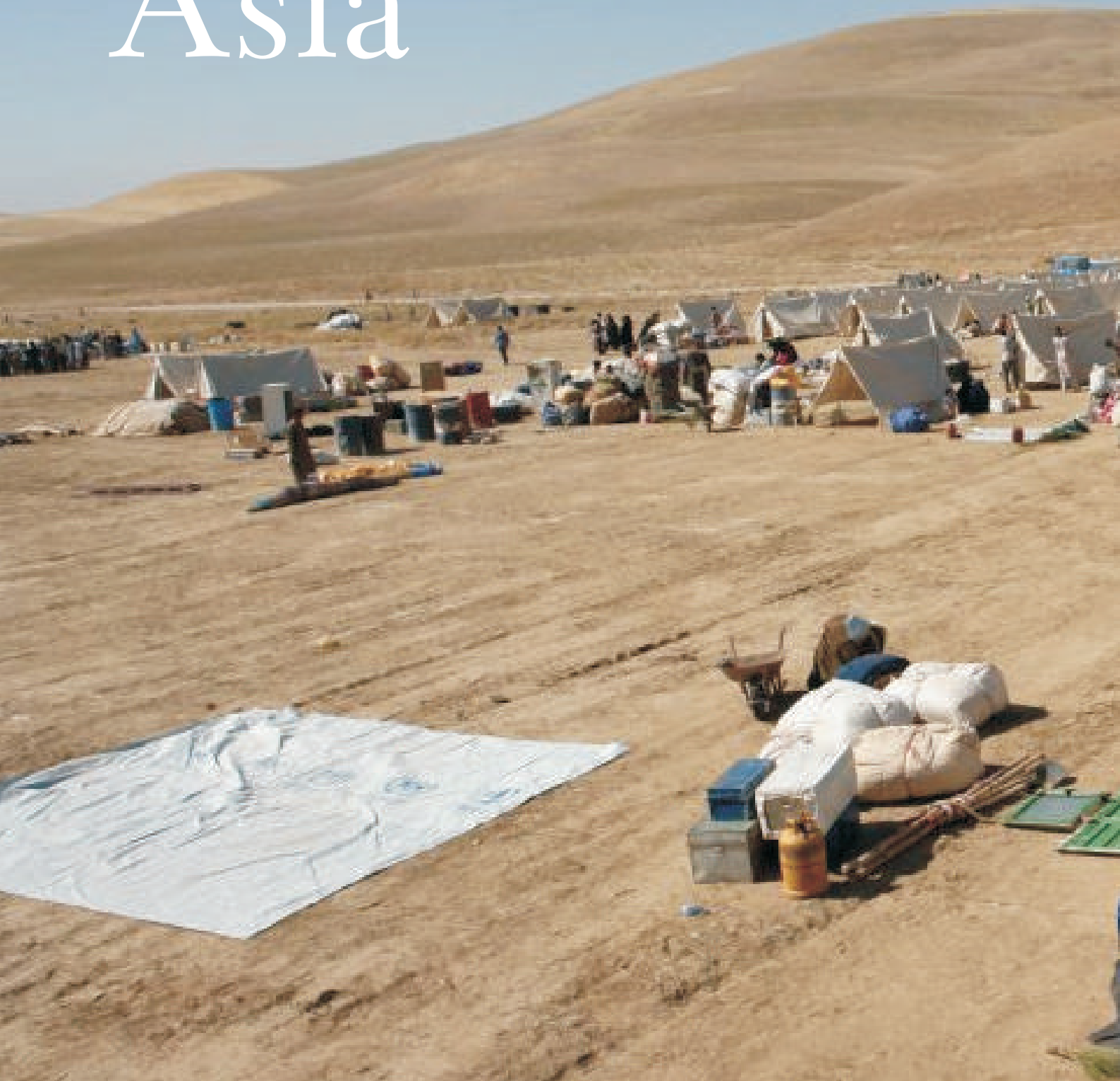


South-West Asia



Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Iran
Pakistan

A transit camp was set up by UNHCR and aid agencies to host returnees from a two-decade exile in Iran

| OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS |

- In 2009 some 54,500 registered Afghans, mostly from Pakistan, returned to their homeland with UNHCR's assistance.
- With internal displacement becoming more of a problem in Afghanistan, UNHCR reoriented its priorities in 2009, negotiating and facilitating the return of just over 7,000 individuals to their areas of origin. Movements were primarily to the relatively stable northern, eastern and central areas of the country.
- The year 2009 saw UNHCR's programme in the Islamic Republic of Iran shift its focus to urban refugees. Through partnership with the Government, the Office supported education and health activities for Afghan refugees. Urban refugee families with specific needs were provided with assistance.
- The Government of Pakistan cooperated with UNHCR on a strategy for the management of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and their anticipated repatriation in 2010–2012. This included extension of the validity of the Proof of Registration (POR) cards of 1.7 million Afghans until 2012.
- In 2009, some 2.7 million Pakistanis fled their homes to escape fighting between the army and rebel forces. UNHCR provided more than 416,000 family kits of non-food items (NFIs) and some 88,000 tents for the affected populations. The Office supported the Government with registration and verification and assisted in camp management. When return movements began, the Office helped the Government to provide return transport, distribute NFIs, set up temporary shelter and establish social service centres in return areas.





| Working environment |

Some 1.7 million Afghan refugees remain in Pakistan and a million more in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The two countries together host one of the largest refugee populations in the world.

The South-West Asia region was affected by a deterioration in security, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both countries experienced a new level of threat in 2009 with the Taliban declaring the United Nations a target. This resulted in deadly attacks against UN staff, who were often forced to suspend operations, giving rise to demands for enhanced security. After a review of its programmes in both countries, the United Nations, including UNHCR, had reduced staffing levels by up to 30 per cent. Despite this reduction, UNHCR programmes were almost fully implemented.

In Afghanistan, the intensification of armed conflict, mainly in areas in the south, created protection concerns for civilians and added to the displacement problem. New political tensions arose following the Presidential elections in August and led to further deterioration in security.

Orchestrating coordinated progress towards the goals set by the 2006 Afghanistan Compact on security, governance, economic growth and social development has proved challenging for the Government and its international supporters. In a bid to respond to this situation, the Governments of Afghanistan and France convened a meeting in Paris in June 2008 to launch the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) to generate donor support for the country. The Paris meeting resulted in pledges of USD 20 billion in aid over the following five years.

In line with ANDS, the Office continued to engage the support of the Afghan Government, neighbouring states, UN agencies, donor countries, international financial institutions and development actors for the reintegration of returnees. UNHCR participated in various forums tasked with overseeing the implementation of ANDS strategies and promoting regional cooperation.

Insecurity and the staggered progress of reconstruction and development programmes continued to constrain access to essential needs for a significant portion of the population in Afghanistan. The impact of a harsh winter, drought and persistent displacement raised the visibility of humanitarian issues.

The humanitarian and security situation has deteriorated dramatically since 2008 in the Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. This has forced millions of Pakistanis, especially in NWFP to move away from their home areas. The situation has been aggravated by political instability, a critical energy crisis, high inflation and food insecurity. New military operations in NWFP in late April 2009 gave rise to sudden and massive movements of people, posing significant challenges for humanitarian assistance programmes.

Although the working environment in the Islamic Republic of Iran was stable, UNHCR voiced concern over the Government's decision to remove subsidies on basic commodities over a five-year period, which will hurt economically vulnerable refugees.

| Achievements and impact |

UNHCR assisted host countries in managing the continued temporary legal stay of Afghans through the extension of the

POR card for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the consolidation of the Amayesh card IV in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

With Pakistan confronted by an unprecedented humanitarian situation in 2009, UNHCR supported the Government in the registration and verification of some 416,600 Pakistani families. After the emergency phase of the humanitarian operation, UNHCR helped the affected persons to return to their places of origin, concentrating on return transport, the distribution of NFIs in return areas, temporary shelter for returnees and the establishment of social service centres. UNHCR has been working with the Government of Pakistan to ensure that the return is voluntary. Managing the delivering of assistance for both people who have left their place of origin and returnees has been difficult for UN agencies in light of the reduced international staffing levels and limited access to return regions.

The tense security situation led to an increase in harassment and arrests of Afghans, including some POR card holders although very few in numbers. UNHCR engaged its governmental and legal partners to intervene, and a hotline was established in all UNHCR offices. The scope of public information campaigns and legal aid services has been increased. Initiatives to sensitize law enforcement groups on refugee protection issues were conducted. In May 2009, the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) programme, developed under the UN's Delivering as One initiative, was launched by the Government with the support of UNHCR and UNDP.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, another phase of Afghan refugee registration has been completed, with more than a million Amayesh IV cards issued. Vulnerable refugees were exempted from paying municipality fees for the issuance of the cards. In addition, refugees were offered free legal advice services regarding property rights in Afghanistan, marriage and divorce, non-payment of salaries and rental issues. Repatriation activities have been maintained and return numbers have remained at the same level as in previous years, with some 6,000 registered Afghan refugees going home with assistance from UNHCR. Over 3,000 Iraqis also repatriated with UNHCR support.

Access for refugee children to primary and secondary education has been improved. Refugees' access to health care has also improved. Temporary work permits were issued to eligible Afghan Amayesh III card holders, improving their conditions of stay in the country. However, the Iranian Parliament passed a law which introduced a significant increase in fees for the issuance and re-issuance of temporary work permits, putting them out of reach for many Afghans.

In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued its returnee and reintegration programme for Afghan refugees and undertook additional activities to make their stay sustainable. Income-generation interventions targeted districts of high return and focused on the rehabilitation of community infrastructure through cash-for-work projects. The shelter programme benefited approximately 47,400 individuals. Returnee monitoring across the country remained one of the key protection activities at the encashment centres.

UNHCR has developed practical tools to address IDP protection challenges and promote innovative methods of community outreach and humanitarian response. These

include practical remote-monitoring tools and organized monitoring by trained local partners, tribal authorities and Government representatives.

| Constraints |

The key constraints in all countries of the South-West Asia region remained the deterioration of the security environment, political instability and the negative impact of the world financial crisis on socio-economic conditions.

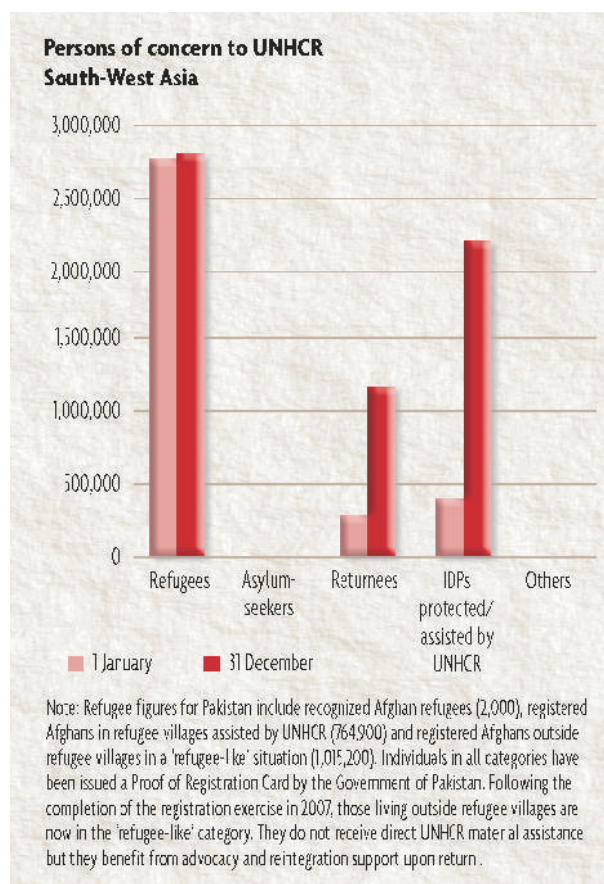
| Operations |

The country chapters on **Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan** provide details of these operations.

| Financial information |

Substantial additional resources were provided for the South-West Asia region in 2009. The budget for the Islamic Republic of Iran was increased by USD 3 million to help the Ministry of Health and Education to provide increased services to Afghan refugees in urban areas. The supplementary budget for the Pakistan Humanitarian Response plan was revised and rose to USD 141 million, which covered requirements for both 2008 and 2009. In Afghanistan, a USD 2.9 million budgetary increase helped UNHCR meet additional needs for essential NFIs, emergency shelter and the enhancement of staff security.

The total budget of the subregion, including the supplementary budget for Pakistan was nearly USD 140 million above the original ExCom-approved budget of USD 877 million.



Budget and expenditure in South-West Asia (USD)

Country	Final budget			Expenditure		
	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total
Afghanistan	57,364,250	0	57,364,250	51,933,968	0	51,933,968
Islamic Republic of Iran	16,576,456	790,000	17,366,456	15,514,079	700,934	16,215,013
Pakistan	24,001,574	126,840,263	150,841,837	20,028,264	103,563,525	123,591,790
Regional activities ¹	1,687,923	0	1,687,923	418,715	0	418,715
Total	99,630,203	127,630,263	227,260,466	87,895,026	104,264,459	192,159,485

Note: Excludes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions against supplementary programmes and the "New or additional activities-mandate-related"(NAM) reserve.

¹ Includes repatriation of Afghans from non-neighbouring countries.

Voluntary contributions to South-West Asia (USD)

Earmarking	Donor	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total
South-West Asia subregion	European Commission	1,577,923		1,577,923
	Sweden	7,542,263		7,542,263
	United States of America	25,000,000		25,000,000
	South-West Asia subtotal	34,120,185		34,120,185
Afghanistan	Australia	1,294,964		1,294,964
	Australia for UNHCR	30,116		30,116
	Belgium	1,404,494		1,404,494
	Canada	2,396,166		2,396,166
	Denmark	1,717,328		1,717,328
	España con ACNUR (Spain)	402		402
	European Commission	10,060,419		10,060,419
	France	393,701		393,701
	Germany	3,497,233		3,497,233
	Greece	200,000		200,000
	HQ Online Donations (Switzerland)	1,045		1,045
	Italy	1,129,419		1,129,419
	Japan	11,115,702		11,115,702
	Japan Association for UNHCR	2,097		2,097
	Netherlands	3,676,471		3,676,471
	Norway	1,690,043		1,690,043
	Private donors in Canada	4,828		4,828
	Private donors in Italy	98,477		98,477
	Private donors in Switzerland	134		134
	Private donors in the United Kingdom	16		16
	Sweden	4,253,706		4,253,706
Switzerland	652,742		652,742	
United Kingdom	350,877		350,877	
United States of America	1,300,000		1,300,000	
USA for UNHCR	514,100		514,100	
	Afghanistan subtotal	45,784,482		45,784,482
Islamic Republic of Iran	European Commission	2,407,900		2,407,900
	Germany	1,317,523		1,317,523
	Greece	66,524		66,524
	Japan	2,604,587		2,604,587
	Japan Association for UNHCR	105,567		105,567
	Netherlands	5,162		5,162
	Spain	348,675		348,675
	Islamic Republic of Iran subtotal	6,855,938		6,855,938

Earmarking	Donor	Annual budget	Supplementary budget	Total
Pakistan	Australia	1,264,209	1,853,620	3,117,829
	Australia for UNHCR		303,753	303,753
	Canada		3,871,415	3,871,415
	Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)		2,009,346	2,009,346
	Czech Republic		242,188	242,188
	Denmark		849,160	849,160
	<i>Deutsche Stiftung für UNO</i> (Germany)		194,561	194,561
	<i>España con ACNUR</i> (Spain)		74,010	74,010
	European Commission	1,555,568	10,158,314	11,713,882
	Finland	376,506	1,297,071	1,673,577
	France		1,541,166	1,541,166
	Germany		7,987,719	7,987,719
	HQ Online Donations (Switzerland)	881	87,433	88,314
	Ireland		56,799	56,799
	Italy	150,602	1,622,444	1,773,046
	Japan	4,234,256	4,205,607	8,439,863
	Japan Association for UNHCR		37,060	37,060
	Netherlands		1,367,647	1,367,647
	Norway		3,087,380	3,087,380
	Oman		1,860,000	1,860,000
	Private donors in Canada	3,149	105,893	109,042
	Private donors in China	125	9,653	9,778
	Private donors in Italy		32,700	32,700
	Private donors in Korea	2,075		2,075
	Private donors in Luxembourg	87		87
	Private donors in Pakistan		178,976	178,976
	Private donors in Sweden		33,745	33,745
	Private donors in the United Kingdom	2,778	12,844	15,622
	Private donors in the United States		47	47
	Republic of Korea		279,000	279,000
	Russian Federation		930,000	930,000
	Slovenia		65,309	65,309
	Spain	348,675	3,920,376	4,269,051
<i>Stichting Vluchteling</i> (Netherlands)		104,674	104,674	
Sweden	1,300,390	2,500,000	3,800,390	
Switzerland		428,967	428,967	
United Arab Emirates		28,037,383	28,037,383	
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)		1,652,677	1,652,677	
United States of America	3,914	35,898,000	35,901,914	
USA for UNHCR		1,191,029	1,191,029	
	Pakistan subtotal	9,243,215	118,087,965	127,331,179
Total		96,003,820	118,087,965	214,091,784