

A man with a dark beard, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and a light blue turban, is riding a grey donkey through a shallow, muddy flood. The water is rippling around the donkey's legs. In the background, there are several trees and a simple, partially destroyed structure with a corrugated metal roof. The scene is set in a rural area, likely in Pakistan, following devastating floods.

An Afghan family transports its belongings back to temporary shelter after the devastating floods in Pakistan.

Afghanistan
Islamic Republic of Iran
Pakistan

A photograph showing a flooded area with people and debris. In the foreground, a man is walking through the water, carrying a large white pot on his head. To his left, another man is sitting on a wooden structure, also carrying a pot. In the background, there are trees and a large pile of debris, including wood and metal, suggesting a destroyed or damaged area. The sky is clear and blue.

South- West Asia

| Working environment |

Insecurity and natural disasters featured prominently in South-West Asia in 2010, notably in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The humanitarian situation deteriorated dramatically with the devastating floods of July 2010 that affected 20 million people across Pakistan. Surges in Pakistani military operations against militants in Khyber Pukhtoon Kwa (KPK), Balochistan and Sindh Provinces have driven the displacement of more than 3 million people and destroyed crops, housing, infrastructure and livelihoods. The fighting and the disasters brought additional problems for the large number of IDPs still unable to return to their homes, and for a number of long-established Afghan refugee communities.

In Afghanistan, the worsening of security since 2007 has prevented humanitarian workers from being able to reach more than half the country. The security situation and associated political uncertainties have eroded public confidence in the Government's ability to implement much needed reconstruction and development programmes. This will have an impact on the prospects of large-scale voluntary repatriation, especially in the case of families who have been in exile for almost three decades. With rising numbers of civilians

caught up in the conflict, displacement is likely to continue, mostly towards urban areas. Limited livelihood opportunities and poverty will also continue to drive internal and external migration movements.

Against this backdrop of conflict and poverty, UNHCR seeks to provide protection and find solutions for conflict-driven IDPs, reviewing its contingency and emergency preparedness capabilities, and looking for solutions through return and reintegration or local integration, where possible.

In terms of protracted refugee situations, both Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are host to some of the largest and longest-staying refugee populations in the world. Some 1.7 million Afghans remain in Pakistan and a further 1 million in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The number of registered Afghan refugees who opted for voluntary return in 2010 has been double the previous year's total, with some 100,000 repatriated (95,000 from Pakistan and 5,000 from Iran) between March and August 2010. But the overall decline in the trend of returns since 2008 can be attributed to a considerable extent to the profile of the remaining Afghans, to the deterioration in security, and to the prevailing poverty in Afghanistan.



The issuance of temporary work permits by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to eligible Afghan refugees during the *Amayesh* registration process remains of particular importance, as it provides a framework for a more predictable and sustainable stay. In Pakistan, the extension of the validity of the Proof of Registration (PoR) cards for Afghans until 2012 will facilitate the protection of refugees by ensuring them asylum space, and enabling them to remain in the country pending a durable solution.

Strategy in 2011

Finding solutions for the remaining 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to present a complex challenge for UNHCR.

The extension of the validity of the PoR cards will ensure targeted protection intervention and assistance for registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Two major projects will also assist these refugees: the Registration Information Project for Afghan Citizens (RIPAC) and the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) programme. The first ensures the updating and issuance of identification documents by the Government, while the second supports both Afghans and Pakistanis through development-related projects aimed at promoting peaceful co-existence.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Office will continue to advocate for issuance of *Amayesh* registration cards, as well as temporary work permits in order to ensure a more predictable and sustainable stay in the country. The Office will focus on vocational training to enable refugees to acquire skills for gainful employment. It will also work with the Ministries of Education

and Health to facilitate the access of registered urban refugees to education, primary health care and emergency medical assistance. Finally, the Office and the Government will examine ways to introduce community-based projects to refugee-affected and hosting areas. UNHCR will continue to facilitate voluntary and sustainable repatriation to countries in the region.

Notwithstanding the difficult operational environment in Afghanistan, the Office will support the initial reintegration of returning refugees and IDPs. In support of the Afghan Government's National Development Strategy, UNHCR will solicit donor support for national programmes that expand socio-economic opportunities, particularly in rural areas.

UNHCR will continue to emphasize the protection of IDPs, the monitoring of returning refugees, and emergency response and preparedness across the country. It will also continue to lead the shelter and protection clusters. In all its return, reintegration and protection work, UNHCR will focus on vulnerable families and individuals. It will strengthen partnerships at local and community level, and try to gain more access to populations of concern.

While many displaced persons affected by the humanitarian situation in Pakistan's KPK province and in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were expected to return home in 2010, a significant number will remain with host families, and in makeshift shelters due to the massive floods of July 2010. UNHCR and the UN Country Team will seek to restore livelihoods for millions of people affected by this disaster. The key areas of UNHCR's involvement will be return (transport); protection monitoring through legal and social centres in return areas; distribution of non-food items (NFIs) in return areas; and temporary shelter. UNHCR will work closely

with its partners through the three clusters it leads: emergency shelter, camp coordination and camp management, and protection.

Constraints

The serious deterioration in the humanitarian situation in Pakistan, particularly following the July floods, and continuing instability in Afghanistan are major concerns for UNHCR. The Office is faced with the difficult task of delivering humanitarian assistance while maintaining staff security. Gaining access to IDP return areas will remain a major challenge because of logistics and security.

The lack of infrastructure and livelihood opportunities, a volatile security situation and increasing competition for land, water and natural resources in Afghanistan may continue to discourage Afghan refugees from returning. Military operations in Afghanistan could increase internal displacements.

Despite being granted temporary work permits, registered Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran continue to face difficulties in obtaining employment. This is due in part to the high demand for jobs among the local population. The re-issuance of refugee cards and temporary work permits will continue to be a costly exercise.

Operations

UNHCR's operations in **Afghanistan**, the **Islamic Republic of Iran** and **Pakistan** are covered in separate chapters.

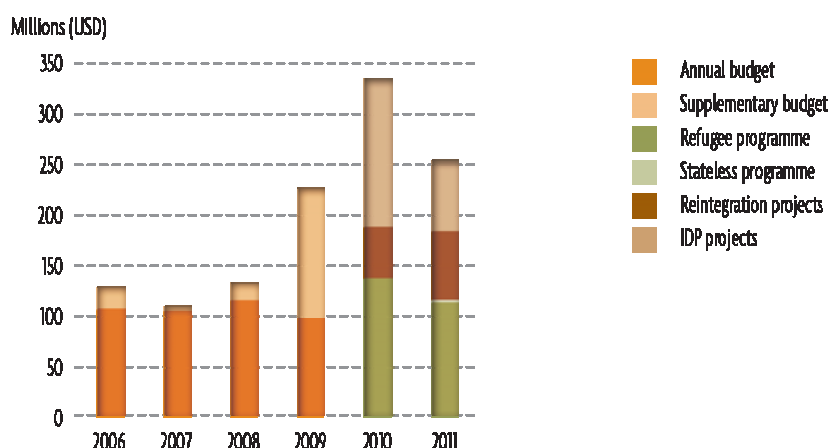
Financial information

The disbursement of cash grants for returnees in Afghanistan has been higher in 2010 than in 2009. In spite of this direct assistance, there are many unmet needs related to shelter and reintegration. Substantial resources will be required to respond to sudden displacements; they will also be needed to implement programmes with an integrated community-development approach that will help ensure the sustainable reintegration of returnees, as well as support national and local partners.

UNHCR's financial requirements in Pakistan have varied significantly over the past few years as the Office responded to a number of emergencies. In 2011, UNHCR's focus will be on recovery and reconstruction as a large number of IDPs are likely to have returned to KPK and other flood-affected areas.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the overall budget will increase to offset the withdrawal of government subsidies for the most vulnerable refugees. Meeting the needs in the health sector will continue to be a priority.

UNHCR's budget in South-West Asia 2006 – 2011



UNHCR budget for South-West Asia (USD)

OPERATION	2010 REVISED BUDGET	2011				TOTAL
		REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	REINTEGRATION PROJECTS PILLAR 3	IDPS PROJECTS PILLAR 4	
Afghanistan	106,256,686	31,739,109	0	45,070,684	23,326,337	100,136,130
Iran, Islamic Republic of	37,018,562	39,951,111	0	0	0	39,951,111
Pakistan	190,034,475	42,724,345	815,199	22,373,910	46,251,697	112,165,151
Total	333,309,723	114,414,565	815,199	67,444,594	69,578,034	252,252,392