

PAKISTAN

IN SHORT



Main Objectives

- Achieve voluntary repatriation of 100,000 Afghan refugees in safety and with dignity.
- Increase self-reliance among Afghan refugees through the provision of limited community-based assistance. Encourage the participation of women in these services.
- Develop and find solutions to the problems of Afghan refugees with particular needs who come from an urban background: including the vulnerable, women and children.
- Ensure protection and find durable solutions for non-Afghan mandate refugees through local assistance, repatriation and resettlement in third countries.
- Protect and assist Afghan refugees facing security problems in certain border regions of the country, particularly women at risk, until a durable solution is found.

Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Afghan Refugees*	1,200,000	1,100,000
Non-Afghan Refugees**	2,000	1,000
Total	1,202,000	1,101,000

* UNHCR estimates that 100,000 Afghan refugees will voluntarily repatriate from Pakistan in 2000.
 ** Approximately 1,000 urban refugees will find solutions in 2000, mostly through voluntary repatriation or resettlement.

**Total Requirements
 USD 16,030,080**



Recent Developments

The Government of Pakistan has continued to maintain a generous asylum policy towards some 1.2 million Afghan refugees, ensuring them freedom of movement and access to gainful employment. A military coup ousted Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Government on 12 October 1999, but no major shift in policy is foreseeable at this stage. It is expected that the new Government will maintain its traditional approach of offering protection to Afghan refugees.

Despite insecurity and continuous fighting in Afghanistan, particularly in the north, and a lack of financial resources for reintegration projects, Afghan refugees continue to return to safer areas of the country through UNHCR's voluntary repatriation programme. Since UN international staff began returning to Afghanistan in March 1999, most rehabilitation projects have resumed. Nevertheless, many basic services and economic opportunities are still not available; this makes the majority of the remaining Afghans in Pakistan hesitate to return.

Close monitoring and contingency planning will be required for the arrival of a small group of Afghan refugees (Hazara) in Baluchistan and the potential arrival of more Afghans who are currently displaced in the Panshir Valley as a result of the recent summer offensive in Afghanistan.

The security situation of the Afghan refugees in urban centres of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Baluchistan, and particularly in Peshawar and Quetta has deteriorated. This has coincided with the strong influence of the Taliban in these border regions, where the local population is increasingly attracted by their ideology.

The situation of non-Afghan refugees, mainly Iraqis, Iranians and Somalis, remains unchanged.

Constraints

Despite encouraging progress in community-based education and health services, the deteriorating economic situation in Pakistan represents a growing economic and social threat, especially to the most vulnerable refugees. The decreasing interest within the international community for the Afghan problem in recent years has also had a negative impact on funding of UNHCR's assistance programme.

The identification of individuals facing a security problem and of women at risk will continue to be a delicate task due to the difficulty in accessing the most needy cases, as they are scattered in an urban environment.

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STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

Solutions to the Afghan refugee situation in Pakistan are contingent upon peaceful conditions and support for reconstruction in Afghanistan. Except for a small group of Afghan refugees with special needs, voluntary repatriation is the durable solution of choice. UNHCR's assistance will therefore continue to be geared towards this objective. The voluntary nature of the repatriation (particularly of women) will be ensured through verification and registration in the refugee villages before departure or at four border crossing points in NWFP and Baluchistan.

Resettlement of individual Afghan refugees will be limited to those who are in danger, women and children who are at risk, and to facilitate family reunions.

UNHCR will ensure access to refugee status determination procedures and protection for non-Afghan refugees. Resettlement will remain the durable solution for this group. It is expected that some 1,000 non-Afghan refugees will be assisted by UNHCR during the year 2000. With a long-term objective of achieving increased understanding and tolerance for refugees, the promotion of refugee law will target Government officials and others who are in contact with refugees.

Assistance

Refugees returning to Afghanistan will receive a repatriation grant comprising cash (5,000 Rupees or USD 100 per family), wheat (provided by WFP) and domestic items. Refugees who return in groups will be helped to assess and meet their reintegration needs in Afghanistan prior to return. Vulnerable refugees returning to remote areas in Afghanistan will receive transport assistance to the border areas. UNHCR will coordinate with the authorities to monitor the safety of the returnees during their journey home.

The core assistance activities for refugees in Pakistan aim to increase their self-reliance. This



is encouraged by Government policy in respect of freedom of movement and access to employment for Afghans in Pakistan. However, there will also be support for the development of primary health care, an improvement of basic educational services and an increase in school attendance by Afghan refugee children. The education programme will focus on an increase in female participation at all levels (students, teachers, trainers) and types of courses available (formal, informal and vocational).

Assistance to non-Afghan refugees in Islamabad/Rawalpindi will consist of subsistence allowances provided on a monthly basis to meet basic needs such as accommodation, food and other miscellaneous expenses. Self-reliance will be encouraged when feasible. Refugee women, children and vulnerable refugees will receive assistance designed to meet their individual needs, with particular attention to education and health services.

Desired Impact

UNHCR's assistance aims to improve the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, particularly vulnerable groups such as refugee women and children. UNHCR's assistance in education and health is expected to have a long-term development impact on the Afghan refugee communities in facilitating their reintegration in their country of origin should they decide to repatriate.

In the absence of a national law on refugees as well as other protection mechanisms for the non-Afghan refugees, UNHCR's intervention helps fill the gap, pending durable solutions.

Refugees in NWFP, and its counterparts in Quetta and Punjab are the main operational partners in their respective provinces.

Twenty agencies, including specialised agencies of the UN such as WFP and UNFPA as well as NGOs, are working closely with UNHCR in the programme. Some NGOs complement UNHCR's programme with activities funded from other sources.

Offices		
Islamabad	Peshawar	Quetta
Partners		
Government Agencies		
Ministry of States and Frontier Regions and Northern Areas		
NGOs		
Afghan Medical Welfare Association		
Church World Service		
Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees		
Frontier Primary Health Care		
<i>Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>		
Health Net International		
International Rescue Committee		
Kuwait Joint Relief Committee		
Mercy Corp International		
Ockenden Venture		
Pakistan Red Crescent		
<i>Radda Barnen</i>		
Rifah Foundation		
Savera Counselling Services		
Save the Children Fund - USA		
Sayyad Jamaluddin Afghani Welfare Organisation		
Serving Emergency Relief and Vocational Enterprises		
Skills for Employment and Self Employment Agency		
Union Aid for Afghan Refugees		

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Management Structure

UNHCR's Office of the Representative in Pakistan is based in Islamabad. Field-based offices include those in Peshawar and Quetta. A total of 96 UNHCR staff (20 of whom are international and 76 national) will work in these offices in 2000. Five Junior Professional Officers bring additional support to the operation.

Coordination

UNHCR works closely with the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions and Kashmir which is responsible for Government policy on Afghan refugees. The Office of the Chief Commissioner for Afghan

Budget (USD)	
Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	1,751,753
Community Services	466,285
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	2,271,171
Education	4,383,223
Health/Nutrition	3,659,143
Income Generation	79,404
Legal Assistance	480,089
Operational Support (to Agencies)	732,766
Sanitation	113,300
Transport/Logistics	205,318
Water (non-agricultural)	328,201
Total Operations	14,470,653
Programme Support	1,559,427
Total	16,030,080