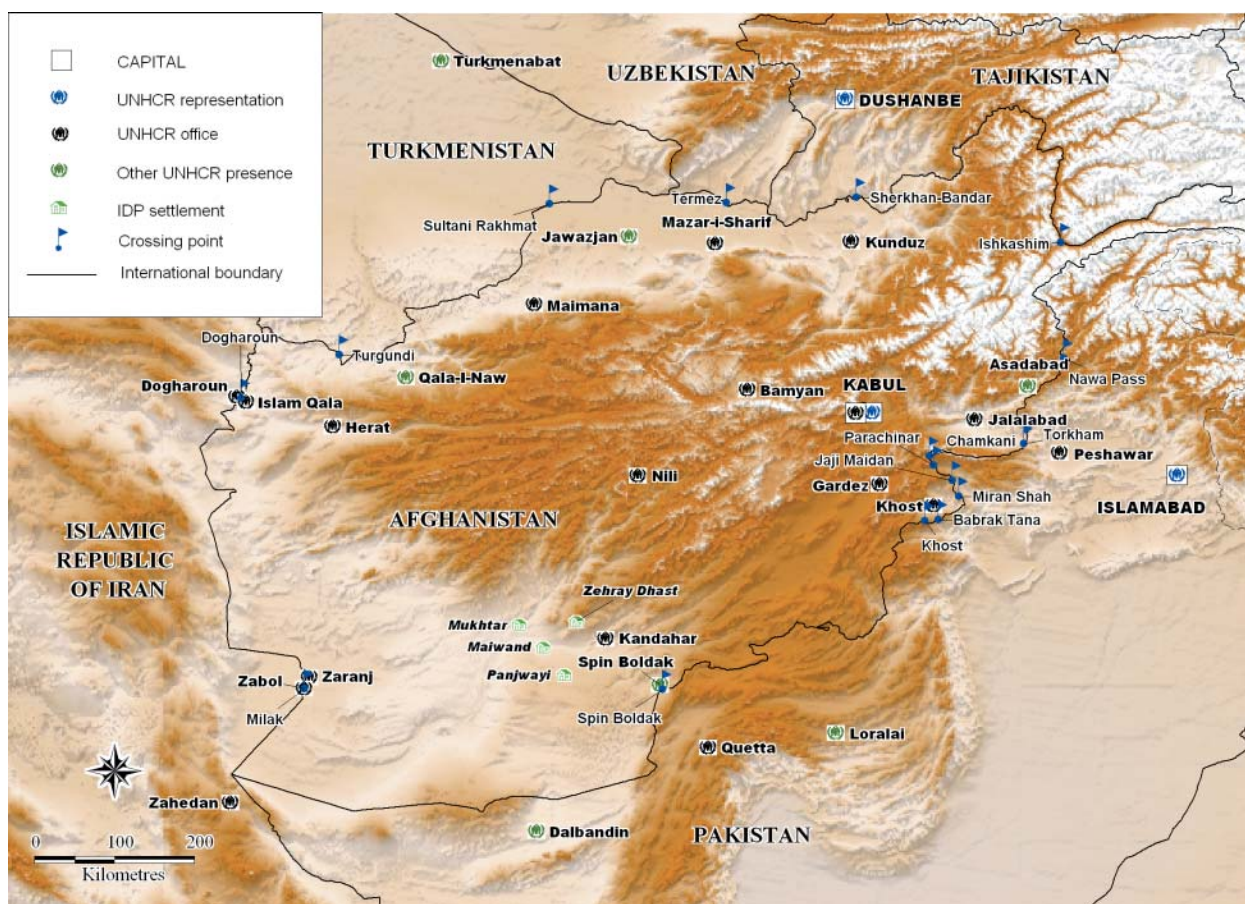


Afghanistan



Working environment

The context

The development process outlined in the Afghanistan Compact of January 2006 and the implementation of the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy for 2006-2010 are well under way. Both the Compact and the Strategy include objectives, benchmarks and indicators for the reintegration of Afghan returnees. However, Afghanistan's overall progress will hinge on security. At the time of writing, the situation in the south and south-east of the country remains extremely volatile, making it very difficult or impossible to have access to returnees.

Despite gradual improvements, Afghanistan still has some of the poorest social indicators in the world. The delivery of public services, transport, electricity and water supply remain erratic, and are unlikely to meet the standards Afghans knew in exile. Issues related to land, whether of tenure, confiscation or illegal occupation, and disputes over property remain significant and look set to hamper the safe reintegration of returnees. More than 46 per cent of returnees face housing problems. Some 28 per cent of returnee households interviewed report that they do not have stable sources of income.

More than three million Afghans remain in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The gradual improvement of conditions in Afghanistan and changes in policy affecting Afghans in countries of asylum are likely to prompt more returns. It is estimated that some 403,000 refugees will return in 2007 (300,000 from Pakistan, 100,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran and 3,000 from other countries).

The needs

New repatriation arrangements contemplating community-based assistance in areas of return are required in order to assist the reintegration of returnees.

There is also a need to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation through training, technical assistance and financial support, as it is being asked to assume greater responsibility for asylum issues. Its brief will cover policy, planning, operational management, monitoring and analysis and documentation of return trends. Other government entities also need technical assistance, training and material support in order to gradually assume their responsibilities in return-and migration-related areas.

All returnees, whether former refugees or internally displaced people (IDPs), will need reintegration assistance, particularly with regard to shelter and land. Although some have access to land, it is frequently not enough to support their families. Land tenure and property rights are also a problem: some returnees have suffered human rights violations in land disputes. The situation will require monitoring, documentation and interventions, and affected returnees will need access to legal aid. However, the capacity of some of the local organizations involved in these activities is limited and they will have to receive training and advice. While UNHCR can provide initial assistance, in the longer term, development actors will need to ensure the sustainability of return.

Total requirements: USD 52,270,958

Main objectives

- Facilitate the voluntary, safe and gradual return of Afghans from Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and other host countries; support the initial reintegration of returnees.
- Ensure that IDPs in Afghanistan are supported through existing mechanisms.
- Ensure that the longer-term reintegration needs of returnees are addressed within the framework of national development programmes, including the allocation of land for agriculture or housing.
- Support the Government in the management of voluntary repatriation; assist it in its dialogue with neighbouring countries on the management of population movements; and develop strategies to address the internal and external displacement of Afghans.
- Ensure that asylum-seekers and refugees have access to fair and efficient refugee status determination procedures.

Key targets for 2007

- 403,000 refugees return to Afghanistan.
- 100 per cent of legal issues submitted by the returnees to the eight information and legal aid clinics are addressed.
- UNHCR's monitoring of human rights is maintained at the current level and reports produced are considered in government and development actors' plans.
- The identification and assistance network for returnees with special needs is expanded and managed by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and 100 per cent of those identified, including women at risk, receive assistance to cover their immediate needs.
- At least 20 per cent of the returnee population receive shelter assistance in areas of return.
- Landless returnees and IDPs benefit from land distribution to establish a home.
- National development programmes take into account the needs of the returnee population.
- An increase in the Government's capacity to engage in the return operation, reintegrate returnees and conduct a dialogue with the neighbouring countries to address the broader population-movement challenges.
- All asylum claims submitted to UNHCR in Afghanistan are processed within a reasonable time frame, with the increasing involvement of Afghan authorities.

Planning figures

Type of population	Origin	Jan 2007		Dec 2007	
		Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Total in country	Of whom assisted by UNHCR
Refugees	Various	30	30	50	50
Asylum-seekers	Various	20	20	-	-
Returnees (refugees)		605,000	605,000	403,000	403,000
IDPs		120,000	120,000	120,000	50,000
Returnees (IDPs)		73,300	73,300	15,000	15,000
Total		798,350	798,350	538,050	468,050



Alemullah builds a solid house for his ten-member family in Tangi Cluster. The 20-year-old returnee says he is proud of the growing community in a barren area of eastern Afghanistan. *UNHCR / M. Nader Farhad*

Strategy and activities

The voluntary repatriation and initial reintegration of returnees in the country in 2007 will continue to be managed as a regional operation. UNHCR will engage neighbouring countries, donors, civil society and UN partners in the gradual transition of population movements into and out of Afghanistan from a refugee perspective to a broader migration framework.

New return procedures will be introduced in 2007. Revised transport and repatriation grants will take into account the significant increases in fuel and other costs during and upon return. The current tripartite agreements with the Governments of the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan are expected to be extended in 2007.

Individual return assistance will be complemented by UNHCR's reintegration programme, particularly as regards shelter. Shelter assistance will be provided to 14,000 of the most vulnerable families. An Employment Service Centre, set up in partnership with ILO at the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, will help returnees find jobs. The situation of returnees will be monitored and the Office will continue to provide legal aid to

them—and to IDPs—in 2007. Working with an NGO partner, UNHCR will boost its capacity-building activities and advocacy with relevant actors, including the Ministry of Justice and the judiciary.

UNHCR will also endeavour to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry for Women's Affairs, the Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation, and others, in order to identify and assist extremely vulnerable people, particularly women and girls.

Closer links will be established with other development actors so they can include the protection and reintegration needs of returnees into their development plans. Financial and technical support will be given to the relevant ministries to strengthen their capacity to facilitate return and reintegration.

IDPs

Despite increasing returns among IDPs, it is estimated that some 50,000 extremely vulnerable individuals among them will continue to need assistance. UNHCR will strongly advocate for their local integration with the relevant authorities.

Constraints

The security situation continues to be a major concern and will likely restrain operational access, especially in the south and the south-east of the country.

Despite UNHCR's efforts, the capacity of relevant government counterparts remains limited due to the high turnover of officials both at the central and provincial levels.

Landlessness continues to be an obstacle to return and will remain so in 2007 unless major steps are taken to secure land for returnees.

Organization and implementation

UNHCR presence

Number of offices	18
Total staff	455
International	30
National	407
UNVs	15
JPOs	3

Coordination

The Afghanistan Compact emphasizes local and regional cooperation and coordination. The Government leads the Interagency Consultative Group which oversees the distribution of aid. UNHCR participates in the sub-group for Refugees and Social Protection.

UNHCR will continue to work with other UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs. It supports the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation in its coordination role, and works closely with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government: Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, Ministry of Women's Affairs.

NGOs: *Abu Muslim Khorasany* Rehabilitation Unit, Afghan Agency for Integrated Development, Afghan Bureau for Reconstruction, Afghan General Help Coordination, Afghan Health Development Services, Afghan Planning Agency, Afghan Public Welfare Organization, Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Afghan Women's Education Centre, Afghan Women's Skills Development Centre, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development, Ansari Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan, Blind *Roshandillan* Association of Afghanistan, Child Fund Afghanistan, Civil Affairs Organization, Community Forum Development Office, Co-operation Centre for Afghanistan, Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, Coordination of Rehabilitation and Development Services for Afghanistan, Development and Humanitarian Service for Afghanistan, Development Association for National Cooperation of Afghanistan, *Emam Saheb* Construction and Rehabilitation Organization, Engineering and Rehabilitation Service for Afghanistan, Huge Afghanistan Rehabilitation and Development Organization, Human Dignity Society, Humanitarian Action for the People of Afghanistan, Humanitarian Aid for Women and Children of Afghanistan, Independent Humanitarian Service Association, International Rescue Committee, INTERSOS, *Jawidan* Rehabilitation Organization for Afghanistan, *Khahan* Improvement Organization, *Malteser* International, *Masood Akbar* Construction Agency, *Medica Mondiale E.V.*, National Consultancy and Relief Association, Norwegian Refugee Council, Peace Winds Japan, Reconstruction and Employment Unit for Afghan Refugees, Rehabilitation and Development Organization, *Sanayee* Development Organization, Save the Children, Services Women Relieve Centre for Afghanistan, *Shafaq* Reconstruction Organization, *Shams* Women's Needs and Help Organization, *Sharq* Foundation for Rehabilitation and Development, *Sheerzad* Reconstruction Organization, *Sina* Association Rehabilitation Service, Society for Afghanistan Development and Assistance in Technologies, Society for Sustainable Development, Voluntary Association for the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan, *Watan's* Social and Technical Services Association, Welfare and Development Society for Social Services, Women Activities and Social Services Association, Women's and Reconstruction Organization of *YASIR* for Afghanistan, Youth Assembly for Afghanistan Rehabilitation.

Others: Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, British Broadcasting Corporation, *Deutsche Gesellschaft Technische Zusammenarbeit*, ILO, United Nations Volunteers.

Operational partners

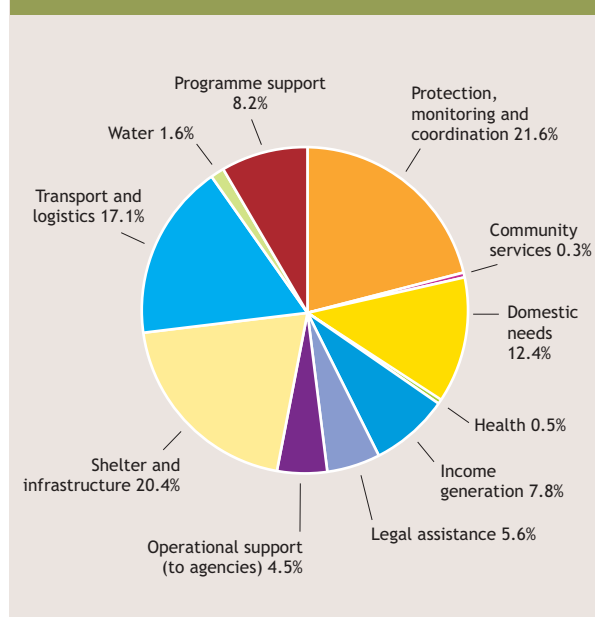
Government: Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

Others: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, UN Country Team, World Bank.

Budget (USD)

Activities and services	Annual Programme Budget	
	2006	2007
Protection, monitoring and coordination	13,182,154	13,583,773
Community services	180,000	575,000
Domestic needs	7,575,777	4,905,000
Health	277,440	235,000
Income generation	4,766,000	3,600,000
Legal assistance	3,392,000	3,205,000
Operational support (to agencies)	2,749,618	2,110,000
Shelter and infrastructure	12,420,698	9,849,800
Transport and logistics	10,435,096	9,507,500
Water	1,000,000	0
Total operations	55,978,783	47,571,073
Programme support	4,999,938	4,699,885
Total	60,978,721	52,270,958

2006 Annual Programme Budget by country



2007 Annual Programme Budget by country

