

# SOUTH-WEST ASIA



Afghanistan  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Pakistan

Registration at Jalozi IDP camp  
near Peshawar (Pakistan)



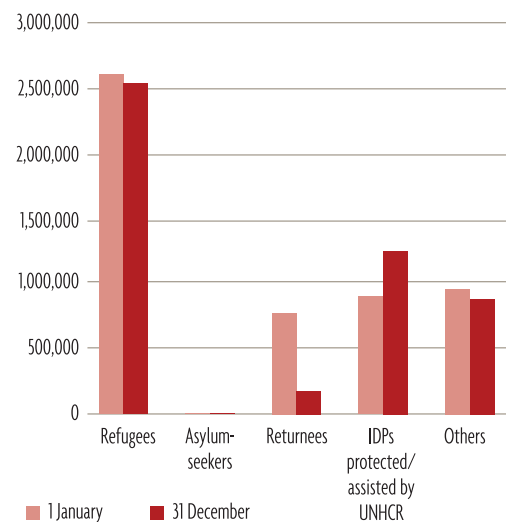
# Overview



## Highlights

- The Afghanistan situation, with an estimated 2.5 million registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, remained the largest protracted refugee situation under UNHCR's mandate. The Office facilitated the return of more than 93,000 Afghan refugees primarily from these two principal countries of asylum.
- To address these challenges, the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, supported by UNHCR, agreed on a multi-year (2012-2014) Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance to host countries, which was endorsed by the international community in Geneva in May 2012. These three countries and UNHCR established a Quadripartite Steering Committee to coordinate and guide the implementation of the solutions strategy.
- The Afghan Ministry of Refugee and Reintegration (MORR) with support from UNHCR coordinated closely with 12 of the line Ministries who had agreed to prioritize the development of high return areas through the National Priority Programme. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) to this effect have been signed between MORR and these twelve Ministries.
- In the Islamic Republic of Iran, close to 330,000 vulnerable Afghan Refugees representing some 40 per cent of the registered Afghan Refugee population benefited from secondary and tertiary health insurance coverage.
- In Pakistan the Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) programme has impacted the lives of millions of Pakistanis and Afghan refugees. It was launched in 2009 as an integral part of the Solutions Strategy (SSAR) and the *UN Delivering*

People of concern to UNHCR in 2012  
South-West Asia



as *One Framework*. In 2012, UNHCR, in close collaboration with the Government, UN agencies and NGOs, implemented a total of 176 projects in 91 hosting communities.

- In Afghanistan, the SSAR has promoted community-based investment in high return areas, which requires the robust engagement of development stakeholders. Afghanistan has been selected as a pilot country for the Secretary-General's initiative on durable solutions for refugees and IDPs which has promoted an approach to relief and assistance that ensures the inclusion and engagement of host communities, providing them with an incentive to be receptive to returnees, refugees and IDPs.

## Working environment

The working environment in the subregion remained volatile. The situation was exacerbated by the drawdown of international military forces in Afghanistan, to be completed by the end of 2014. Economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic of Iran have had a major impact on refugees in that country. Presidential elections will be held in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan in 2013 and in Afghanistan in 2014.

## Achievements and impact

- UNHCR and the three Governments in the region established the Quadripartite Steering Committee to coordinate the implementation of the multi-year SSAR. Implementation was pursued through the robust facilitation of voluntary repatriation and pursuit of sustainable reintegration and support to host communities, in collaboration with Governments and development partners. UNHCR also helped to coordinate IDP protection and assistance through its leadership of the protection, emergency shelter and non-food item (NFI) clusters. Assistance to host communities was aimed at maintaining positive public attitudes to refugees.
- UNHCR supported a total of more than 94,000 refugees who returned voluntarily to Afghanistan in 2012. Returnees received NFIs and cash grants to cover transportation and other costs related to their initial reintegration. Some 80,000 of the refugees returned voluntarily from Pakistan, 15,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and less than 100 from other countries. This represents an increase of more than 21,000 when compared to the returnee figures for the previous year, primarily due to increased assistance provided to returnees from Pakistan from 23 October to 31 December 2012. Overall, it corresponds to a 40 per cent increase in the total number of returns for the year and about a 60 per cent increase in returnee numbers for the corresponding period (October to December 2011) of the previous year.
- In 2011, six years after ratifying the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, Afghanistan pledged to draft a national refugee law and asylum procedures which met international standards. By the end 2012 the draft had been finalized with UNHCR's help.
- Though UNHCR continued to respond to conflict-induced displacement with emergency assistance in Afghanistan, it began to focus more intensely on facilitating durable solutions, particularly regarding IDP returns, and creating an environment conducive to local integration. UNHCR also strengthened its monitoring capacity, mostly through Afghan NGOs, and identified partners to assess IDP movements in the areas bordering Pakistan. The information thus collected is fed into a real-time database called Population Movement Tracking (PMT), which assesses the magnitude of movements, their causes and the protection and assistance needs of IDPs.
- The Islamic Republic of Iran acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol in July 1976. The authorities in the country have stated their intention to formulate a strategy concerning the large Afghan population, which includes both documented and undocumented individuals. This is manifested in the Government's offer to refugees registered in the country to consider the voluntary exchange of their Amayesh cards (which indicate refugee status), for documents allowing temporary residence status as an alternative stay arrangement. These stay arrangements would accord additional rights, freedoms and benefits to temporary resident status holders, particularly with regard to mobility and employment.
- In December 2012 the Government of Pakistan agreed to extend the stay of Afghan refugees until 30 June 2013 and established a cabinet committee to draft a national policy on Afghan refugees for the period July 2013 and beyond. The RAHA programme continued to be a component of the *UN Delivering as One Initiative* and formed an integral part of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan refugees. UNHCR, in collaboration with other RAHA partners, implemented a total of 176 projects in 91 hosting communities, primarily in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces where the majority of the 1.6 million Afghan refugees live. Over 2.4 million Pakistanis and 262,000 Afghan refugees benefited from these interventions in 2012. Efforts to find durable solutions for refugees for whom voluntary repatriation is not an option resulted in enhanced resettlement opportunities. Pakistan became a global priority resettlement country in 2012, and a Pakistan Contract Group, chaired by Australia, was established.
- Security operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) continued to cause displacement. In support of the Government's efforts, UNHCR provided protection and assistance to approximately 758,000 IDPs and assisted with return and reintegration activities. Within the UN inter-agency framework, UNHCR continued to lead the protection, emergency and camp coordination and camp management clusters.
- The SSAR and the Secretary-General's initiative on durable solutions for IDPs have been well received and endorsed by Governments in the region, as well as donors and NGO stakeholders. They provide a collaborative approach to community-based assistance for the benefit of returnees, refugees, IDPs and hosting communities.

## Constraints

The volatile security conditions restricted UNHCR's access to some areas of operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, impeding assistance and relief programmes. For instance, shelter materials procured in Pakistan for UNHCR's programme in Afghanistan were held up for almost eight months in the Khyber area of Pakistan because of road closures. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, economic pressures have also had an impact on refugee assistance programmes.

## Operations

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

The launch and implementation of the SSAR to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration and assistance

to host communities was a major achievement in 2012 for the South-West Asia operational subregion. The robust engagement of development stakeholders, and advocacy with donors to help support the outcomes of the SSAR, will be imperative for the successful implementation of the strategy.

## | Financial information |

In 2012, financial requirements for the South-West Asia subregion amounted to USD 329.5 million, while available funding permitted expenditures totalling USD 193.8 million. The relatively high rate of repatriation, when compared to previous years, and the need to

respond to the growing number of internally displaced populations increased costs, as did the need to address secondary displacement among returnees to Afghanistan, leaving funding gaps in all of these areas.

### Budget and expenditure in South-West Asia | USD

Operation		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
Afghanistan	Budget	43,425,747	0	77,616,776	18,622,582	<b>139,665,105</b>
	Expenditure	33,265,580	0	40,664,082	13,433,853	<b>87,363,515</b>
Islamic Republic of Iran	Budget	53,221,255	0	0	0	<b>53,221,255</b>
	Expenditure	30,851,656	0	0	0	<b>30,851,656</b>
Pakistan	Budget	53,963,279	876,992	28,786,519	52,968,645	<b>136,595,435</b>
	Expenditure	30,175,505	872,617	13,247,839	31,274,485	<b>75,570,446</b>
<b>Total budget</b>		<b>150,610,281</b>	<b>876,992</b>	<b>106,403,295</b>	<b>71,591,227</b>	<b>329,481,795</b>
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>94,292,741</b>	<b>872,617</b>	<b>53,911,921</b>	<b>44,708,338</b>	<b>193,785,617</b>

### Voluntary contributions to South-West Asia | USD

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>SOUTH-WEST ASIA SUBREGION</b>					
Finland				3,083,110	<b>3,083,110</b>
United States of America				47,600,000	<b>47,600,000</b>
<b>South-West Asia subtotal</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50,683,110</b>	<b>50,683,110</b>
<b>AFGHANISTAN</b>					
Belgium		592,535	378,968		<b>971,503</b>
Central Emergency Response Fund		2,299,944			<b>2,299,944</b>
Denmark	584,938	3,320,473	935,901		<b>4,841,313</b>
European Union	147,984	2,435,168	5,796,750		<b>8,379,902</b>
Germany	2,304,475	2,429,115	460,746		<b>5,194,337</b>
Italy		2,800,000			<b>2,800,000</b>
Japan	9,000,000	11,000,000		1,260,875	<b>21,260,875</b>
Netherlands				2,857,143	<b>2,857,143</b>
Norway				1,983,799	<b>1,983,799</b>
Sweden				1,385,042	<b>1,385,042</b>
Switzerland			544,070		<b>544,070</b>
USA for UNHCR				89,311	<b>89,311</b>
<b>Afghanistan subtotal</b>	<b>12,037,398</b>	<b>24,877,236</b>	<b>8,116,435</b>	<b>7,576,170</b>	<b>52,607,239</b>

Earmarking / Donor	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	All pillars	Total
<b>ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN</b>					
Australia	237,325				<b>237,325</b>
Educate A Child Programme	800,000				<b>800,000</b>
European Union	6,487,562				<b>6,487,562</b>
France	394,734				<b>394,734</b>
Germany	3,953,668				<b>3,953,668</b>
Japan	4,000,000			1,260,875	<b>5,260,875</b>
Norway	2,041,069				<b>2,041,069</b>
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran subtotal</b>	<b>17,914,359</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,260,875</b>	<b>19,175,234</b>
<b>PAKISTAN</b>					
Belgium	971,503				<b>971,503</b>
Brazil	250,000				<b>250,000</b>
Canada				2,006,018	<b>2,006,018</b>
Central Emergency Response Fund			7,674,006		<b>7,674,006</b>
Charities Aid Foundation				1,871	<b>1,871</b>
Educate A Child Programme	494,445				<b>494,445</b>
European Union	2,577,114		8,818,312		<b>11,395,426</b>
Germany	1,986,755		426,667		<b>2,413,422</b>
Japan	6,000,000			1,260,875	<b>7,260,875</b>
Japan Association for UNHCR	112,374				<b>112,374</b>
Norway				1,322,533	<b>1,322,533</b>
Private donors in the Republic of Korea	7,692		1,557		<b>9,249</b>
Switzerland	272,035		272,035		<b>544,070</b>
United Nations Development Programme		1,911,894			<b>1,911,894</b>
United States of America			7,200,000		<b>7,200,000</b>
USA for UNHCR			44,312		<b>44,312</b>
<b>Pakistan subtotal</b>	<b>12,671,918</b>	<b>1,911,894</b>	<b>24,436,888</b>	<b>4,591,297</b>	<b>43,611,997</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,623,674</b>	<b>26,789,130</b>	<b>32,553,323</b>	<b>64,111,451</b>	<b>166,077,578</b>

Note: Includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the “New or additional activities – mandate-related” (NAM) Reserve.