

# Pakistan

March 2023

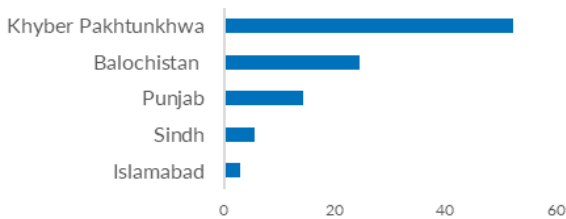
Pakistan continues to be **one of the world's largest refugee hosting** countries providing safety to some **1.3M registered refugees** who were forced to flee their countries

**UNHCR** supports efforts undertaken by the Government of Pakistan to provide **protection** and **assistance**, while strengthening cohesion in host communities

With a focus on global solidarity, the **Solution Strategy for the Afghan Refugees (SSAR)** guides the strategic direction of refugee programming in **Pakistan**

## REGISTERED REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN PAKISTAN: 1.3MILLION (99%) AFGHANS, 1% OTHERS

### Per province



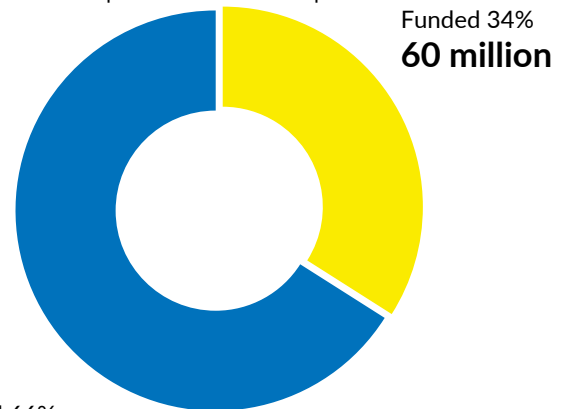
- **69 per cent** of Afghan refugees live in urban/semi-urban localities
- **31 per cent** continue to reside in the remaining 54 refugee villages

\* Data source : UNHCR Operational Data Portal, January 2023

## FUNDING (AS OF 7 MARCH)

**USD 176 million**

requested for Pakistan Operation



Unfunded 66%  
**116 million**

## UNHCR PRESENCE

**245 Staff:**

**165 National Staff**

**80 International Staff**

**1** Country Office in Islamabad

**2** Sub-Offices in Peshawar and Quetta

**Presence** in Chaman Dalbandin, Haripur, Hyderabad, Karachi, Kohat, Loralai, Sukkur Torkham



## Pakistan Impact Areas



### Attaining Favourable Protection Environments

Changes in the enjoyment of rights as a result of increasingly favourable conditions for protection.



### Empowering Communities & Achieving Gender Equality

Intended shifts in the protection and solutions of persons of concern as a result of advancements in community mechanisms, gender equality, health and livelihoods.



### Securing Solutions

Changes in the enjoyment of durable and alternative pathways to solutions for people we serve.

## Main Activities



### Protection

For more than 40 years, Pakistan has a long and commendable tradition of providing protection to refugees and asylum-seekers. An estimated 1.35 million displaced people with protection needs are living in Pakistan. These include mainly Afghan refugees holding Proof of Registration (PoR), as well as a small number of non-Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers from other countries such as Myanmar, Yemen, Somalia and Syria.

Pakistan does not have a national asylum system in place nor is it signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention. UNHCR continues to advocate for a better access by refugees and asylum seekers to basic rights in the country while enhancing self-reliance among refugees and their host communities for sustainable solutions.

- **Registration:** Government of Pakistan - the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), the Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) - and UNHCR with a technical support of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) concluded the Documentation Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) in February 2023. The exercise aimed to verify and update records of the Proof of Registration (PoR) holders and to address the need for new identity documents of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. These smartcards provide faster and safer access to services such as health and education and banking. In 2023, 11 PCM centres continuously update refugee data that had been collected and verified during DRIVE to further systematize UNHCR's approach to data building and evidence-based programming.
- **Legal Assistance:** UNHCR operates nine Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALACs) in the main refugee-hosting areas run by two partners. These centres directly secure release of persons of concern who are arrested/detained, conduct legal awareness raising sessions with the community and capacity building activities with law enforcement agencies on the rights of refugees.
- **Community-based protection:** With the support of Outreach Volunteers (OVs), refugee elders and focal points in the community, UNHCR empowers refugees and their host communities to mitigate protection risks, mobilise behavioural change, and to identify community-led initiatives aimed at sustainable solutions. UNHCR also supports Social Cohesion Hubs to bring together the refugee and hosting communities and build existing capacities among its members.
- **Child Protection and Gender-based Violence:** UNHCR and partners implement programmes for child protection and gender-based violence survivors, including case management, psychosocial support, life skills programmes, safe houses and friendly spaces, alternative care, family tracing and reunification, in addition to community outreach and awareness programmes. Prevention, risk mitigation of and response to GBV are also part of the response, with women and girls' empowerment activities.



## Statelessness

UNHCR works in partnership to provide legal assistance to stateless Bengali, Bihari and Rohingya communities in Karachi. The legal assistance focuses on acquiring and unblocking of identity documentation, legal advice and awareness raising on importance of identity documentation, birth registration and help to access to basic services. UNHCR also raises awareness on the procedures for birth registration in Pakistan and the importance of basic civil documentation as a measure to prevent statelessness in a protracted situation.



## Durable Solutions

- **Voluntary Repatriation:** UNHCR supports refugees who expressed their intention to their country of origin. Two Voluntary Repatriation Centres in Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkwa are available to support Afghan refugees who wish to return home. Considering rising inflation and increased transportation costs, UNHCR adjusted the voluntary repatriation grant to USD375 per individual for registered refugees who express their intention to voluntarily return to their home country. UNHCR assisted a total of 6,039 Afghan refugees to return to their communities through our Voluntary Repatriation Program in 2022, bringing the total number supported with “Vol Rep” to some 4.39 million people in the year to date.
- **Resettlement and complementary pathways:** Recognising that conditions in Afghanistan continue to be challenging, UNHCR resumed its resettlement programme in 2022 with 3,504 applications to six resettlement countries. For 2023, UNHCR aims to increase applications to 4,500 on behalf of Afghans, identifying the most vulnerable people with heightened protection needs for resettlement.



## Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

UNHCR works to promote livelihoods and economic inclusion for refugees, supports them in becoming more resilient and achieving self-reliance. Projects are designed to provide livelihood options with a focus on strengthening social and economic capital in refugee and host communities. Assistance focuses on agriculture and artisanal skills alongside different vocational trainings adapted to the local market and refugees' interests. UNHCR also advocates to expand access to tertiary education opportunities, employment, and financial services. In recognition that voluntary return is the primary durable solution for most of the refugees, a cross-border dimension has been integrated through these efforts. The private sector equally features prominently as a partner to include refugees in supply chains and build new private sector partnerships. To date, seven private sector and industry partners are actively supporting efforts linking refugees to markets.



## Education

UNHCR's education strategy aims to increase enrolment and improve the retention rate of the most marginalised refugee children and youth, and host communities, to have access to quality education services through the provision of safe schools in refugee-hosting areas and refugee villages, trained teachers and access to learning materials. Inclusion of refugees in public schools contributes to peaceful co-existence in host communities, maximises investment in public resources and infrastructure and avoids provision of a parallel education system. Approximately 50,000 refugee children are enrolled in public schools, and UNHCR directly supports 144 primary and secondary schools across 54 refugee village. To increase girls' access to education, UNHCR supports the Accelerated Learning Programme (ALP) in KP, and Home-Based Girls' Classes in Balochistan, while providing cash-based assistance and transportation allowances for those attending to secondary school. UNHCR also provides tertiary-level scholarships to Afghan refugees between 17 to 30 years old through the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) and advocates at local level for the inclusion of refugees in undergraduate programs that would allow them to contribute to their host communities.



## Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) Programme

RAHA is a government-led programme with financial support from donor countries and the United Nations. UNHCR, together with the Government of Pakistan, implement the RAHA programme, a humanitarian development nexus initiative which seeks to increase tolerance towards Afghan refugees and supports the overarching goals of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). RAHA constitutes an effort to move away from prolonged dependence on open-ended humanitarian aid by enhancing social cohesion and building empowerment, resilience and productive capacities of refugees and host communities through targeted investments into national public service delivery systems (health, education, social protection etc.) and infrastructure.



### Health & WASH

UNHCR is contributing to a scale-up of local and central government capacity on health along with Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). UNHCR provides support that enables refugees to reach national services, when available, and to support host communities to have better access to public health services, including through the provision of medical equipment in public hospitals. With a focus on enabling factors for inclusion, UNHCR is transitioning from support to parallel refugee facilities towards harmonized area-based programmes covering both host communities and refugee villages. Working with the Government of Pakistan, UNHCR will explore options to expand refugees' access to public services in social protection and health insurance schemes.



### Access to Energy

In Pakistan, most of the rural population where Afghan refugees live, have no access to electricity and depend heavily on traditional fuels, increasing protection and health risks as well as environmental concerns. Addressing the energy needs of refugees and host communities by improving access to sustainable, clean and affordable energy sources is a priority activity. UNHCR has solarised facilities and water systems in host communities, provided renewable energy appliances, and vocational skills training on operation and maintenance of these tools, along with environmental education for Afghan refugee men and women. Such activities are aimed at improving communities' protection and wellbeing, while also reducing the environmental impact of energy generation and consumption.

## Support to Government-led efforts in natural disasters



UNHCR has supported the Government-led response, delivering over 10,000 metric tons of goods in less than four weeks from our warehouses and suppliers in Pakistan and regional and global contingency stocks in Termez and Dubai. This amounted to 300 trucks and 23 airlifts. In addition, UNHCR bolstered its leadership of the Protection Sector, and signed two agreements with UNFPA and UNICEF to improve the protection environment. UNHCR assured coordination between the flood response and the ongoing needs of refugees, including those impacted by floods through regular participation in the Inter-Sector coordination group and the thematic working groups.

## Working with Partners

UNHCR works in coordination with the Government of Pakistan, UN agencies, humanitarian and development organizations, and civil society to find solutions for refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern to UNHCR. UNHCR funds a total of 31<sup>1</sup> partners including 19 national organizations, seven government partners, five international non-governmental organizations to provide protection and humanitarian assistance.

- **Governmental:** Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), including the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR) and the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees at provincial level is the main counterpart. At federal level, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Education and Professional training, National Health Regulation and Services, and the Planning Commission are key partners to continue strengthening services and support for refugees and host communities. UNHCR works jointly with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) for registration of Afghan refugees. UNHCR also works in partnership with National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) at the federal level and Technical Education and Vocational Training Authorities (TEVTA) at the provincial level for the youth skill development. UNHCR collaborates with provincial department of health, education, social welfare, home, and tribal affairs along with other provincial and district level government line departments.
- **UN Agencies and NGOs:** UNHCR works in partnership with 19 national organizations, seven government partners, five international non-governmental organizations and two UN agencies to provide protection and humanitarian assistance including:
  - **Government:** Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees (CCAR), Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA), National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC), Frontier Primary Health Care, Pakistan (FPHC), Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIITEMS).
  - **National:** Inspire Pakistan, Society for Humanitarian Rights & Prisoners (SHARP), Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), Imkaan Welfare Organization (IWO), Initiative For Development And Empowerment Axis (IDEA), Khwendo Kor, Hashoo Foundation, Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP), Drugs And Narcotics Educational Services For Humanity (DANESH), Society For Empowering Human Resources (SEHER), Water, Environment & Sanitation Society, Pakistan (WESS), Peoples Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) Balochistan, Innovative Development Organization (IDO), Taraqee Foundation (TF), Society for Community Support to Primary Education (SCSPE), Tameer-e-Khalq Foundation (TKF), Citizens Archive of Pakistan (CAP) and Integrated Regional Support Programme, Pak Mission Society.
  - **UN Agencies and International NGOs:** UNICEF and UNFPA; International Rescue Committee (IRC), International Medical Corps, Muslim Hands, Secours Islamique France and Pathfinder International.
- The UNHCR-led inter-agency Refugee Response Plan (RRP) facilitates UN agencies' and other partners' contributions to Pakistan's refugee situation. 56 partners joined the 2023 RRP, including 30 local NGOs, in comparison to 10 in the previous year. The RRP 2023 recognizes the on-going deterioration in living conditions for both Afghans and the communities that host them across all sectors, caused by economic hardship, inflation, and the impact of floods and other climate related hazards. Coordination forums such as the Pakistan Refugee Consultative Forum, which is co-chaired by UNHCR and the Ministry SAFRON/CCAR, are used for strategic and operational planning, resource mobilization and advocacy. In addition, UNHCR coordinates its work with a

<sup>1</sup> UNHCR Islamabad and Peshawar have signed separate partnership agreements with SHARP. Therefore, UNHCR has 20 partnerships with 19 national organizations in Pakistan.

number of thematic working groups, including education, health, food security, livelihoods and resilience, WASH while leading a protection working group. These are co-led by specialized UN agencies and relevant government counterparts and are a valuable coordination mechanism to enable a joint response.

- **National Goodwill Ambassador:** Actress Mahira Khan uses her voice to raise awareness on the refugee situation.

### Core Group of Support Platform for Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR)

- Committed to a comprehensive refugee response and greater burden- and responsibility-sharing, fourteen states and international organizations have become members of the Core Group of the Support Platform for Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) at a global level: Asian Development Bank, Denmark, European Union, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Qatar, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, UNDP, United States of America, and World Bank. The current chair of this Group is the European Union.
- In Pakistan, the Local Core Group was established in 2021, duplicating the arrangement at the global level. The local Core Group regularly meets at the ambassadorial and working levels. Under the Local Core Group, at the technical level, a Livelihoods Thematic Working Group (LTWG) and an Education Thematic Working Group (ETWG) have been led by the United States

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to this operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

### Country-level earmarked contributions

Austria | Booking.com NV | Canada | Denmark | European Union | Germany | Ireland | Italy | International Islamic Charitable Organization | Japan | Kuwait-America Foundation | Netherlands | Private donors France | Private donors United Arab Emirates | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Switzerland | United States of America | Other private donors

### Other softly earmarked contributions

Canada | Iceland | Ireland | Germany | Norway | Private donors Germany | Private donors

### Unearmarked contributions

Sweden | Norway | Denmark | Netherlands | Germany | Switzerland | Belgium | Ireland | Italy

Algeria | Australia | Bulgaria | Canada | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Philippines | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | Türkiye | Uruguay | Private donors

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