

Pakistan

31 January 2020

***6,220** registered refugees who returned to Afghanistan between 1 March – 30 November 2019

1,984 Afghan refugees whose births were registered between 1 January – 31 January 2020

1,569 Afghan refugees who have received legal assistance during January 2020

146 schools supported by UNHCR for **56,000** refugee students

5,288 patients treated in **38** health facilities supported by UNHCR

2,145 persons (Afghan refugees and Pakistani nationals) received livelihood assistance



Afghan refugee school children in Panian refugee village in Haripur, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa © UNHCR/Asif Shahzad

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Country of origin	Total persons of concern
Afghan refugees with proof of registration (PoR) cards	1,418,054
Afghan mandate refugees (without PoR cards)	3,018
Somalia (refugees)	181
Others (refugees)	341
Asylum-seekers	8,916

UNHCR PRESENCE

Staff

157 national staff

36 international staff

Offices

One Country Office in Islamabad

Two Sub-Offices in Peshawar and Quetta

Presence in Haripur, Kohat, Karachi



UNHCR team assessing the needs of Afghan refugees in Attock, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (C) UNHCR/ Asif Shahzad

* The voluntary repatriation process stopped on 30 November 2019 for winter break and will resume from 1 March 2020. Please refer to the UNHCR Afghanistan Situation Data Portal and the UNHCR Pakistan website for the latest updates.

Working with partners

- UNHCR collaborates closely with the Government of Pakistan. It works jointly with the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON), as well as the Chief Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees and the Commissionerates for Afghan Refugees at the federal and provincial levels, respectively.
- UNHCR partners with a range of national and international non-governmental organizations to provide protection and humanitarian assistance, as well as collaborates with non-implementing partners, such as the World Bank, sister UN agencies and private sector partners.

Main activities

Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (2018-2019)

- The regional multi-year Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) provides a framework for cooperation between humanitarian and development actors to address the needs of Afghan refugees and the communities that host them. It supports the pursuit of durable solutions, as well as youth empowerment through education, the development of vocational skills and livelihoods training. During the last quadripartite meeting held in June 2019 in Islamabad, all parties agreed to extend the SSAR to 2021. Aligned with the SSAR, a dedicated SSAR Support Platform was launched on 16 December 2019, one day prior to the Global Refugee Forum. The platform seeks to (i) enhance international solidarity and burden-sharing for the Afghan refugee situation, resulting in stronger political and financial commitments to achieve solutions; (ii) Additional investments and expanded partnerships for coherent humanitarian and development responses that increase absorption capacity for voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan, while easing the burden on host communities in the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan and (iii) Sustained visibility for the Afghan situation by linking the SSAR to the GCR and the Global Refugee Forum, enabling the sharing of regional good practices, prioritization of gaps and meeting the need to work towards enhanced international burden- and responsibility-sharing.

Protection and durable solutions

- **Voluntary repatriation:** UNHCR operates two Voluntary Repatriation Centres in Pakistan where refugees wishing to repatriate to Afghanistan must deregister. Refugee returnees subsequently receive a cash grant of approximately \$200 per person upon arrival at one of three UNHCR Encashment Centres in Afghanistan.
- **Legal assistance:** UNHCR operates nine Advice and Legal Aid Centres (ALACs) in the main refugee-hosting areas in four provinces. Eight of these centres are run by UNHCR partner SHARP. The remaining centre is run by UNHCR partner SEHER.

- In January 2020, UNHCR and its partners provided legal assistance to a total of 1,569 persons of concern. During the month, UNHCR and its partners intervened at police stations for 49 arrested/detained persons of concern and secured the release of all. In most of all cases, UNHCR and its partners managed to obtain the release of the arrested persons of concern before they were formally charged by the law enforcement agencies. Most were released within 24 hours. In addition, ALAC partners represented seven persons of concern in the courts who had been charged under the Foreigners Act (dealing with the unauthorized stay of foreigners) and other preventive laws (allowing preventive detention of person acting in a manner prejudicial to the integrity, security and defence of the country and public order). These interventions resulted in court ordered releases.
- Partner's staff provided individual legal counselling to 444 persons of concern who visited the Advice and Legal Aid Centres as well as legal advice to a total of 671 persons of concern through ALAC helplines. Birth registration, police harassment, information on repatriation, PoR card modification, ACC information and asylum application process were the major areas requiring assistance during the reporting period. Out-of-court legal assistance was provided to 383 persons of concern, mostly related to police harassment, PoR card verifications, rental agreements and affidavits.
- UNHCR and ALAC staff also organized a total of 62 legal camps and shura meetings, reaching 1,167 participants (41% of whom were women) in the reporting month. 42% of the legal sessions were held in refugee villages and the remaining sessions in urban areas of Pakistan. Through these legal sessions, refugees shared various issues affecting their communities. UNHCR partner staff informed refugees of available free legal aid and UNHCR helpline services.

In January:

- *1,569 individuals received legal assistance;*
- *49 individuals were arrested/detained and then released;*
- *7 individuals were provided with court representation;*
- *444 individuals received individual legal counselling; and*
- *671 people were assisted through ALAC helplines.*

Community-based protection

- UNHCR's CBP teams facilitated a country-wide information dissemination campaign on the new policy for un-collected Proof of Registration (PoR) cards at the PCM centers, including outreach in various refugee settlements, for both male and female groups. Along with the information sessions, information leaflets and a poster were also displayed and distributed within the refugee communities.
- The first batch of seven Afghan refugee girls from Kot Chanda refugee village Mianwali school, who had appeared in the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Examination Sargodha, Punjab passed their examination with A+ grades. The school is funded by UNHCR and run by Commissionerate of Afghan Punjab. This was the first such batch to pass the exam.
- Outreach volunteers and refugee community members in the I-12 Afghan settlement in, Islamabad led an initiative to convert a communal meeting place into a school. The community has also engaged with an NGO, Alight, to support them by funding three

teachers and supporting the school to gradually prepare students to integrate into nearby public schools.

Education

- UNHCR continued to support access to education in refugee villages and encourage the inclusion of refugee children in the national structures. By improving public facilities near refugee villages, refugee children are welcomed in schools. This benefits host and refugee communities and contributes to social cohesion.
- There are 433 DAFI scholarship awardees being supported by UNHCR in 2020.

UNHCR supports:

- 146 schools;
- 30 satellite classes;
- 51 home-based schools;
- 433 DAFI scholars; and,
- Teacher student ratio 1:41.

Health

UNHCR supported the provision of maternal and child health services in refugee villages in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Punjab. Refugee women and children enrolled in preventive and reproductive health care programmes received antenatal, pre-natal and postnatal care. WHO, UNICEF and the Government of Pakistan's health department, together with the support of UNHCR's partners, conducted polio eradication campaigns in refugee villages. An Expanded Programme Immunization component of these campaigns has been officially transferred to the provincial health department. Afghan refugees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa now have access to these services in public health facilities, in line with UNHCR's health strategy.

Livelihoods

- UNHCR in partnership with National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) provided vocational and technical skill trainings to 2,156 refugee and host Pakistani youth.
- UNHCR launched Graduation Project for 3,000 ultra-poor refugee families, which will be implemented by Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) in KPK and Balochistan.
- UNHCR Pakistan has developed Youth Empowerment Strategy for Refugees and host Pakistani youth to contribute to the stability and development of the societies in which they live. The UNHCR youth empowerment strategy seeks to meet the aspirations of youth and aims to create an enabling environment for inclusive and meaningful engagement and participation of young refugees in development discussions, formal planning, programming and decision-making processes as agents of change in the country of asylum and contributing to rebuilding in the country of origin upon their voluntary return.
- UNHCR providing food security and livelihood support to 310 vulnerable refugees live in 15 refugee villages remotely located in Balochistan province. In Quetta 240 refugee women are supported through livelihoods and protection support through Safe from the Start Project.

Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) programme

- Since 2009, the Government of Pakistan has implemented the RAHA programme, an initiative which supports the implementation of the regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees. Through RAHA, a wide variety of projects have been carried out in the sectors of education, health, livelihoods, infrastructure, water, sanitation and social protection. In 2019, UNHCR Pakistan is celebrating 10 years' achievements of RAHA. During this decade, RAHA has supported more than 4,250 projects which align with UNHCR's livelihoods, education and health strategies aiming to ensure that Afghan refugees are included in public systems and structures.
- *In total, 4,273 projects have been completed since 2009.*
 - *12.4 million beneficiaries in the projects implemented in 47 districts of Pakistan.*
 - *14 projects in 2019*
 - *15 projects in 2020*

External / donors relations

Earmarked contributions to the UNHCR Pakistan in 2019¹

Canada | Denmark | European Union | Japan | Norway | Switzerland | United States of America | UN programme on HIV/AIDS | United Nations Development Programme | Miscellaneous private donors

Unearmarked contributions to UNHCR Pakistan in 2019²

Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Japan | Norway | Netherlands | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | private donors

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LINKS

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1. Contributions are shown by the level of flexibility in the earmarking. Contributions earmarked to a situation within a country are allocated at country level.
2. Unearmarked funding gives UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other persons of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.

