

Pakistan

1-17 April 2020

Overview

- The number of COVID-19 cases in Pakistan continues to grow. The total number reached 7,025 as of 17 April 2020, with 135 deaths.¹ In urban areas, two registered Afghan refugees have died. Another two have tested positive for COVID-19.
- On 14 April 2020, the general lockdown was extended for another two weeks until 30 April 2020. Flights as well as intra- and inter-city public transportation remained suspended. However, some sectors, including agriculture, construction and small businesses, such as barbers, electricians and plumbers, were allowed to resume their economic activities.
- The Government of Pakistan has started disbursing cash assistance to some 12 million families through the BISP/Ehsaas emergency cash programme. Families will receive a total of Rs.12,000 (approximately \$73) to help meet their most urgent needs during a period of four months.
- Between 6 and 9 April 2020, the Torkham and Chaman borders were temporarily reopened. Tens of thousands of Afghan nationals crossed over to Afghanistan with very limited immigration control or respect for social distancing.
- In order to facilitate the movement of goods to landlocked Afghanistan, the Government of Pakistan allowed the movement of cargo to Afghanistan from 10 April 2020. The trucks will operate three days a week. The movement of people remains suspended.
- As part of a coordinated response, the National Disaster Management Authority requested the activation of specific sectors including Health, Food Security, WASH, Nutrition, Logistics, Emergency Communication, and Women and Children Protection. The draft Coordination Framework, including sector leads, is currently being discussed between the United Nations and the Government of Pakistan.

Operational highlights

Health

- UNHCR provided 28 self-standing and durable housing units to the provincial Health Departments of the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Large Rubbhalls were also delivered to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority in Balochistan to reinforce isolation facilities.
- Previously, UNHCR donated 10 fully-equipped ambulances to the government authorities, including the Provincial Disaster Management Authority, in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The ambulances are operating in various districts of both provinces. In Balochistan, an ambulance provides swift transportation in emergency situations at the Taftan border. In the Loralai district, another is used exclusively to respond to the needs of people who are being treated for COVID-19.
- UNHCR has procured large quantities of medical supplies including personal protective equipment (e.g. masks, gowns and gloves), hand sanitizer, soap, disinfectants and infrared thermometers. Due



UNHCR loading core relief items into trucks for dispatch and distribution. © UNHCR/Anjum Pervaiz

¹ For the latest official statistics on COVID-19, please visit the Government of Pakistan's portal: <http://covid.gov.pk/stats/pakistan>.

to the increased global demand for these items and delays in international procurements, UNHCR is acquiring some of the materials from the local market in order to bridge the gap. This equipment will meet the needs of the front-line medical staff in the health facilities in refugee villages and UNHCR partner staff who are in contact with refugee communities in the field.

WASH

- UNHCR, together with the Ministry SAFRON/Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees and its partners, is in the process of upgrading water and sanitation (WASH) facilities in the rural health centres and schools located in the refugee villages across the country.
- A corporate donor made a generous in-kind donation of 60,000 soap bars and 4,320 units (500 ml each) of disinfectants to the UNHCR operation in Pakistan. These items, which are available in the country, will be distributed to the most needy refugees. The distribution of these items, along with UNHCR's ongoing awareness-raising messaging on COVID-19, aim to prevent and mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Pakistani and refugee communities.



At the Kot Chandna refugee village in Punjab, UNHCR staff on the front lines provide basic sanitation supplies and share important public health information on Covid-19. © UNHCR

Cash-Based Intervention

- Due to the lockdown, many refugees, who are mainly daily-wage earners, have lost their only source of income and livelihood. In order to respond to this urgent humanitarian situation, UNHCR is in the process of implementing a cash-based assistance programme. As a first step, UNHCR is engaging with partners and community leaders to identify the most vulnerable families. It is coordinating with provincial Commissionerates for Afghan Refugees and the Pakistan Post for the disbursement of cash assistance to identified vulnerable families.
- The UNHCR cash programme will mirror the Government's BISP/Ehsaas emergency cash programme, where vulnerable families are receiving Rs.12,000 (approximately \$73) covering a four-month period. Initially, UNHCR will target some 36,000 of the most vulnerable refugee families, pending existing refugee data analysis and a baseline survey. If funds are secured, the programme will be expanded to assist some 85,000 vulnerable households in total.

Funding needs

The funding requirements indicated in the UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 amount to approximately \$2 billion. Currently, UNHCR is seeking \$255 million for the next nine months. As of 17 April 2020, UNHCR had received \$175 million, or 69 per cent of the requirements.

In Pakistan, UNHCR's requirements have been revised and now reach \$9.8 million. Since the launch of the appeal, UNHCR has received the generous contribution of \$2.4 million from the Government of the United States of America and \$1 million from the Government of Japan. UNHCR is immensely grateful for their swift support of the COVID-19 response.

At this time, UNHCR appeals strongly to donors not to deprioritize funding for the regular programmes as it is important that this funding be provided in parallel with the COVID-19 response.

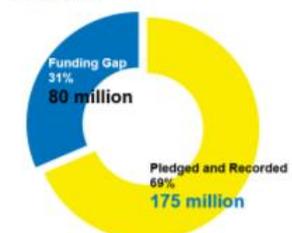
Contacts

Marie-Claude Poirier, External Relations Officer, UNHCR Pakistan, poirier@unhcr.org
Faisal Azam Khan, Associate Reporting Officer, UNHCR Pakistan, khanfais@unhcr.org

Financial requirements

USD 255M

Requested for UNHCR's COVID-19 response globally over the next nine months



Total contributed or pledged:

USD 175M