

Document Renewal & Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) of Registered Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

Funding Proposal for the Joint Government of Pakistan and UNHCR Exercise



A six-year-old boy holds his first ever identity card – also called the Proof of Registration (PoR) card – at the Rawalpindi PoR Card Modification centre in Pakistan.

Title	Document Renewal & Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) of Registered Afghan Refugees in Pakistan.
Location	Refugee hosting areas across Pakistan.
Objective	To provide all registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan with a new government-issued biometric Smartcard; and, to verify, update and increase the accuracy of population data for Afghan refugees. It has been 10 years since the last full verification of the PoR cards.
Project Period	1 January – 31 December 2021
Beneficiaries	1.4 million Afghan refugees registered with UNHCR in Pakistan will receive a biometric Smartcard; up to 8,000 persons to be verified per day.
Needs	USD 6.96 million required to implement DRIVE in Pakistan in 2021 ¹

¹ In addition, in 2020 some USD 4 million was spent on software development and documentation (including smartcards) in preparation for the exercise in 2021.

Background

Pakistan has generously hosted millions of Afghan refugees for 40 years. In 2006-2007, the Government of Pakistan and UNHCR conducted the largest biometric registration in UNHCR's history at that time, documenting over 2.1 million Afghan refugees and providing them with a Proof of Registration (PoR) card, initially valid for a period of three years. The PoR card has ever since served as an essential protection tool issued by the Government of Pakistan to registered Afghan refugees, enabling their temporary legal stay and freedom of movement in the country.

A verification exercise, conducted in 2010, updated the number of PoR cardholders to 1.8 million. In 2014-15, a PoR card renewal exercise further updated the number of PoR cardholders to some 1.4 million and resulted in the issuance of new cards with an expiry date of 31 December 2015. Although the validity of the PoR cards has been extended administratively several times since then, PoR cardholders may at times face challenges, including in access to rights and services, due to the expired validity of the cards.

Why Now?

The Government of Pakistan and UNHCR will undertake the PoR Document Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) to respond to the increasing need to validate existing data, capture additional information and address the challenges associated with cards showing an expiry date of 31 December 2015. The exercise will provide refugees with the latest format biometric Smartcard – which can be digitally renewed – thereby supporting continuous protection benefits. DRIVE also provides a critical opportunity to strengthen the refugee dataset, allowing for improved efficiencies in refugee management and effective planning and response around protection, assistance and solutions, including voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan.

The joint Government and UNHCR PoR DRIVE will achieve the following objectives:

1. To provide all registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan with new identity documentation in the form of a biometric Smartcard issued by the Government of Pakistan. About 580,000 Afghan women and girls above the age of five will have a card with a name and identity.
2. To verify, update and increase the accuracy and integrity of the population data held by the Government of Pakistan regarding registered Afghan refugees.
3. To record updated information related to Afghan refugees, including their socio-economic circumstances, skillsets, level of education, sources of income, and places of origin in Afghanistan. This will support programmatic interventions in Pakistan including the ability to target health, education and livelihood support to the most vulnerable refugees affected by COVID, as well as for the Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) program. Importantly, the updated and expanded dataset will also inform targeted solutions-oriented interventions in Afghanistan, including the

humanitarian-development-peace investments in the Priority Areas of Return and Reintegration (PARRs).

Overview of the exercise

DRIVE will provide registered Afghan refugees with a proof of identity through a new biometric Smartcard issued by the Government of Pakistan. The Smartcard issued to Afghan refugees will contain the same features as the new Computerised National ID cards (CNIC) issued to Pakistani nationals and will be technologically compatible with national systems used to authenticate the identities of Pakistani nationals to access services. POR cardholders are currently eligible to access health and education facilities and to open bank accounts, following a verification of their identity as a POR cardholder. By aligning the POR cards for Afghan refugees to the new Pakistani smart CNICs, authentication of an Afghan refugees' identity through the Smartcard at points of service provision will be faster, safer and more effective. The Smartcards may also reduce technological barriers for the inclusion of refugees' in other national services in the future. The Smartcard will include a disclaimer that validity of the card will be extended through a gazetted notification by the Government of Pakistan, which can be easily authenticated through the electronic microchip contained in the card.

The improved profiling of the registered refugee population through DRIVE will better inform voluntary repatriation activities and strengthen targeted assistance interventions in Pakistan, including cash-based interventions among others, and solutions initiatives in Afghanistan. As such, the updated and expanded datasets will directly support the objectives of the regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) and the SSAR Support Platform launched in December 2019.

The implementation phase of DRIVE has been carefully calibrated to include measures to mitigate COVID-19 risks such as enhanced hygiene protocols, physical distancing at registration sites, and direct linkages with local health services.

Following the exercise

DRIVE will strengthen the ongoing operation in the existing PoR Card Modification Centres (PCMs) and avoid the need for future large-scale verification exercises. Changes to family composition, including changes in marital status, registration of births and issuance of birth certificates, will be recorded on an ongoing basis. Replacement of lost, damaged, and issuance of new Smart PoR cards, where eligible, will also be conducted at the PCM centers. Similarly, the refugee community will be strongly encouraged to always provide any updated information of their situation and circumstances through the PCMs (address, education, employment, specific needs, etc.) to ensure that accurate refugee data and profiling is always maintained as a basis for analysis and evidence-based response.

Coordination

DRIVE will be implemented jointly with the Government of Pakistan through the Ministry of States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON) / Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CARs) and

the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). UNHCR has been engaged in the entire process from concept, design and technical support through to implementation. UNHCR will mobilize the required resources and will help ensure that global protection and registration standards are met, including necessary anti-fraud measures.

Roadmap to implementation

The joint DRIVE for PoR cardholders is divided into three key phases:



Phase 1 – Planning and Preparation

The planning and preparation phase commenced in 2020 and will continue until implementation begins in early 2021. The first phase includes consultations with all stakeholders, budget preparation, site preparations, software development, staff recruitment and training, mass information campaigns, and scheduling.



Phase 2 – Implementation

The second phase will begin in mid-March with a two-week pilot, followed by a six-months implementation period in 40 sites across the country. Up to 8,000 individuals will be processed per day. An extension of one additional month (grace period) is planned.



Phase 3 – Reporting and Evaluation

The third phase will consolidate, clean and analyse the data gathered during the exercise for reporting, presentation, evaluation and auditing purposes. This will be led by NADRA in close consultation with CAR and UNHCR and will be completed approximately one month after Phase 2 of the exercise. It will result in a comprehensive dataset that will support the delivery of protection, assistance and solutions.

Funding the response

Some USD 6.96 million² is required by UNHCR in 2021 to implement DRIVE in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Activity	Amount
Mass info campaign and call centre	355,000
Registration site infrastructure and furniture	2,650,000
Operational costs for NADRA, CAR and UNHCR	4,000,000

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