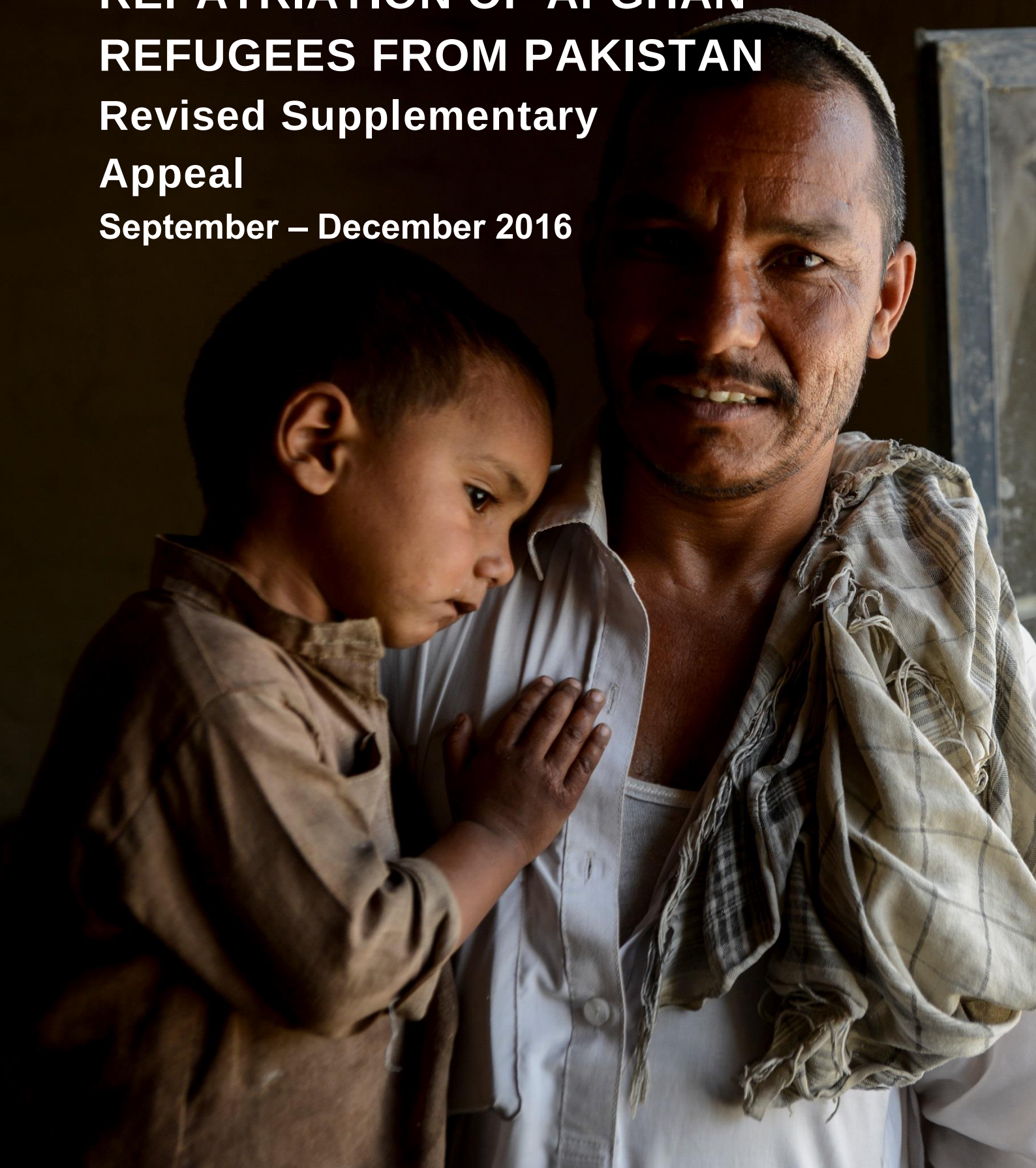


**REPATRIATION OF AFGHAN
REFUGEES FROM PAKISTAN**
Revised Supplementary
Appeal
September – December 2016



28 October 2016



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Cover photograph:

Minadar, 30, has eight children and they have all returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan. He is pictured here with his three-year-old son, Adnan. Minadar had been a refugee in Pakistan since he was one year old.

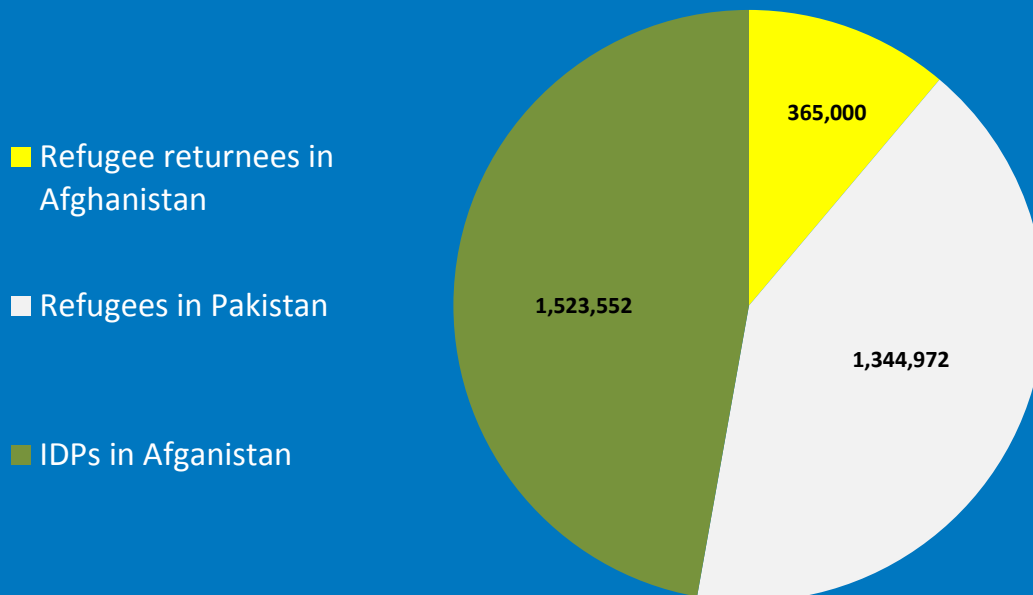
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AT A GLANCE

A total of 3,124,969 people of concern



The financial requirements for the repatriation of Afghans from Pakistan initially presented in September amounted to \$104.7 million, including \$40.5 million reprioritized within the ExCom revised budget for Afghanistan and initial supplementary requirements of \$64.2 million.

These supplementary requirements have been revised up to \$140.7 million (\$130 million for Afghanistan and \$10.7 million for Pakistan), bringing the revised financial requirements for the repatriation to

\$181.2 million¹.

¹ All dollar signs in this document denote United States dollars. This total includes 7% support costs.

INTRODUCTION

THE NEED FOR A REVISED SUPPLEMENTARY APPEAL

The scale and pace of Afghan returns from Pakistan is accelerating to an unprecedented rate, aggravated by the humanitarian challenges of winter months. Refugees are often returning to areas with limited absorption capacity. Combined with increasing levels of displacement and continuing economic difficulties faced by vulnerable local populations, multiple humanitarian needs are outstripping international capacity to assist.

On 19 September 2016 UNHCR issued a Supplementary Appeal for \$104.7 million to support 221,000 refugee returnees from Pakistan with repatriation cash grants and enhanced protection monitoring and interventions, as well as processing at the Voluntary Repatriation Centres (VRCs) in Pakistan. Since the publication of that Supplementary Appeal, the pace of repatriation from Pakistan has accelerated, with the added risks of humanitarian impact on already vulnerable people and communities in Afghanistan ahead of winter.

This revision to the initial Supplementary Appeal reflects the latest developments, and highlights urgent priority actions that need immediate funding. It reflects increased needs as a result of the increased numbers of refugees returning from Pakistan, and to support the most vulnerable returnees, IDPs and local population in Afghanistan. As of 20 October 2016, almost 270,000 refugees had returned to Afghanistan, almost exclusively from Pakistan. This already surpassed the annual projection presented in the initial Supplementary Appeal.

This revised Supplementary Appeal presents the additional financial requirements to support 365,000 refugee returnees and winterization for vulnerable returnees, IDPs and host community population. The revised financial requirements total \$181.2 million, up from the \$104 million presented in September's Supplementary Appeal.

In light of the exponential pace and volume of returns, UNHCR finds itself critically short of the funding to carry on providing repatriation grants to refugee returnees. To make up for this funding shortfall, it has been re-allocating and reprioritizing resources within Afghanistan and from other operations. Unless further resources are made available, UNHCR will be obliged to suspend the provision of repatriation cash grants in the coming days.

While only 7,804 refugees returned to Afghanistan during the first six months of 2016, between July and 19 October nearly 257,000 Afghan refugees returned, 99 per cent of them from Pakistan. This was more than thirty times the number that returned in the first half of the year, and the pace is still accelerating. The second week of October witnessed the highest weekly levels since 2009 and the rate of return is expected to remain high. With this evidence, UNHCR is revising its projections from an estimated 221,000 refugee returnees from Pakistan in 2016 to some 365,000.

The factors influencing the return dynamics remain the same. Enhanced border management measures were introduced at the Torkham border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan, requiring every Afghan to be in possession of a valid national passport and Pakistani visa. Although the validity of Afghan refugees' Proof of Registration (PoR) cards was provisionally extended by three months to the end of March 2017, refugees remain anxious about what may happen at their expiration. The Government of Pakistan has set 15 November 2016 as the deadline for undocumented Afghans to return. Afghan refugees and undocumented Afghans are living in the same communities often within the same families, meaning both groups feel it necessary or are compelled to repatriate together. This, too, may have an impact on patterns of return of refugees. Further, a number of returning refugees continue to cite incidents of harassment, detention, loss of economic opportunities and decreased levels of acceptance by hosting communities. These dynamics underscore the critical differences of the current population flows with return patterns in previous years.

Ahead of repatriation, many Afghan refugees are compelled to sell assets in haste for a fraction of their value or abandon them altogether. The resulting high levels of vulnerability of refugee returnees are

adding to the already overstretched absorption capacity in Afghanistan, especially in urban centres. This is coupled with the challenges returnees face in accessing basic services, securing land tenure, and adequate shelter and job opportunities, particularly for youth. The doubling of the repatriation grant to \$400 per person on average – as foreseen in the Regional Plan and announced by the High Commissioner during his visit to Pakistan in June this year – aims to address these initial challenges and refugees interviewed upon arrival in Afghanistan are confirming the importance of this support.

The Conclusions of the Tripartite Commission meeting between the Governments of the Islamic Republics of Afghanistan and Pakistan and UNHCR in July 2016 reaffirmed the commitment to the principle of voluntary return and the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees. It also further stressed the need to create an environment conducive for voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan, particularly by integrating returnee needs within national development planning processes across relevant line Ministries. The High Level ad hoc Quadripartite meeting in October 2016 further emphasised the need to ensure that returns are voluntary, in safety and dignity as well as gradual, in keeping with Afghanistan's absorption capacity.

Against this background, this revised Supplementary Appeal presents the additional financial requirements to support a total of 365,000 refugee returnees until the winter break, namely an additional 149,000 refugee returnees to the projected figure in the 19 September Supplementary Appeal. The response will continue focusing on monitoring and advocating for safe, voluntary, dignified and gradual returns of Afghan refugees, and supporting the initial phase of their integration/reintegration through the payment of repatriation grants. In addition, the revision also covers the provision of essential, life-saving assistance for the most vulnerable refugee returnees, IDPs and vulnerable host communities in the central, northern and northeastern regions on the eve of winter.

Population data

	CONCERNED POPULATIONS		PLANNED ASSISTED POPULATIONS BY 31 DECEMBER 2016	
	As of 30 August 2016	as of 19 October 2016	as of 19 September	as of 24 October
Category	Afghanistan			
<i>Refugee Returnees</i>	90,573	256,445	221,000	379,052 (including 14,052 for winterization)
<i>IDPs (winterization)</i>		1,523,552		113,688
<i>Host communities (winterization)</i>				22,260
	Pakistan			
<i>Afghan refugees</i>	1,527,657	1,344,972	1,340,162	1,028,162
TOTAL	1,618,230	3,124,969	1,561,162	1,543,162

Financial summary (US\$)

UNHCR's Executive Committee (ExCom) budget for the Afghan situation in 2016 amounts to \$121.4 million for Afghanistan and \$105.4 million for Pakistan. The financial requirements for the repatriation of Afghan refugees from Pakistan amounted to \$104.7, including \$40.5 million reprioritized within the ExCom revised budget and initial supplementary requirements of \$64.2 million. These supplementary requirements have been increased to \$140.7 million, bringing the revised financial requirements for the repatriation to \$181.2 million.

OPERATION	EXCOM- REVISED BUDGET (excluding the Afghan Refugee Situation ¹)	AFGHAN REFUGEE SITUATION			TOTAL REVISED REQUIREMENTS FOR 2016
		EXCOM- REVISED BUDGET ²	REVISED ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	TOTAL	
Afghanistan	16,373,817	121,360,048 (incl. 40,500,00 reprioritized)	121,500,000	242,860,048	259,233,865
Pakistan	21,960,914	105,391,442	10,000,000	115,391,442	137,352,356
Subtotal	38,334,731	226,751,490	131,500,000	358,251,490	396,586,221
Support costs (7%)	-	-	9,205,000	9,205,000	9,205,000
TOTAL	38,334,731	226,751,490	140,705,000	367,456,490	405,791,221

¹ IDPs in Pakistan and refugees in Afghanistan.

² Includes the refugee and refugee-hosting area programmes (Pillars 1 and 3) in Pakistan; and the IDP and returnees programmes in Afghanistan (Pillars 1, 3 and 4).

AFGHANISTAN

Existing response

To respond to the increased returns of Afghan refugees from Pakistan, UNHCR has scaled up the reception and processing capacity at its Encashment Centres in Jalalabad, Kabul and Kandahar. UNHCR provides cash grants to the returnees at the Encashment Centres at \$400 per person on average. Cash grants remain a central part of the assistance to returnees during the critical period of their initial integration/re-integration. UNHCR returnee monitoring documented that the cash grants help cover immediate needs including transport costs, lodging, initial expenses upon return, and facilitate the initial stages of integration.

In addition to cash grants, UNHCR will continue to provide services to returnees at the Encashment Centres, as well as enhanced protection interviews and monitoring. Emergency medical services, vaccinations, nutrition screening, assistance with school enrolment, referrals for legal assistance, as well as mine risk awareness education, are provided at the Centres in collaboration with partners. Given the limited capacity of health infrastructure in Afghanistan, medical services provided at Encashment Centres may be the only opportunity for women and children to receive such assistance.

UNHCR also conducts enhanced interviews with returnees, as well as focus group discussions with returnee groups (men/women, boys/girls), at the Encashment Centres to identify protection concerns, the results of which inform UNHCR's monitoring activities and advocacy in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Strategy and coordination

Based on the recent trends, UNHCR has reviewed its initial projection and adjusted upwards to 365,000 potential refugee returnees until the winter break, with high overall levels of vulnerability. Many have few resources and little time to prepare for return. In addition, many have lost vital community linkages with Afghanistan and are becoming secondarily displaced without access to land, shelter and livelihoods, in particular with the approach of winter.

There is also a significant level of internal displacement in Afghanistan this year. As of mid-October over 323,000 people have been newly displaced by fighting and ongoing conflict, adding to an estimated protracted IDP population of 1.2 million. The UN Humanitarian Country Team estimates that with current trends, it is likely that the numbers of Afghans unexpectedly on the move could reach one million. UNHCR will continue working with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) within the overall humanitarian action addressing the needs of different types of population movements.

UNHCR and IOM as members of Afghanistan's HCT have been advocating for timely support for the needs associated with returns of refugees and undocumented Afghans. The HCT inter-agency Flash Appeal to respond to the humanitarian needs as a result of the sharp increase in returns and internal displacement was issued on 7 September 2016 (Afghanistan Flash Appeal 2016: One Million People on the Move), which included UNHCR's requirements for Afghanistan as presented in the Supplementary Appeal of 19 September 2016. Since then, the dynamics of refugee repatriation have evolved rapidly. The present revision is also of the supplementary nature to the initial Flash Appeal.

There is increasing concern that the sudden wave of return of both registered refugees and undocumented Afghans from Pakistan will stretch local community absorption capacity to the breaking point and precipitate a major humanitarian crisis on the eve of winter. At the same time, given the record levels of internal displacement for the second year, coupled with the high levels of vulnerability within host communities, UNHCR will pursue a vulnerability-based winterization programme to include returnees, IDPs and vulnerable host community families. Moreover, the UNHCR winterization programme will target areas of extreme temperature, particularly the central, north and north-eastern regions of the country, which also host large numbers of returnees and IDPs.

UNHCR's winterization support initiative is designed to complement UNHCR's responsibilities as cluster lead in the overall humanitarian response. The initiative will target support in areas hosting large numbers of IDPs or recent refugee returnees, particularly where other humanitarian actors are not present or cannot sufficiently cover the existing needs, and ensure that the needs of vulnerable host community members are also included. UNHCR will rely primarily on the data and expertise of the protection monitoring partners as well as the partners engaged in the Persons with Specific Needs (PSN) program to quickly identify and target high-risk communities and create credible lists of beneficiaries.

UNHCR may also contribute, on a contingency basis, to joint humanitarian relief efforts in areas outside of the intended coverage, targeting urban poor by supporting them with winterized non-food items.

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_17982

