



## Norwegian Refugee Council's Country programme in Pakistan

Three generations of Afghan families have spent their lives as refugees in Pakistan. Most are just over the border from their home country.

### Humanitarian and political background

Pakistan has the burden of hosting nearly 3 million Afghan refugees – 1.6 million registered, more than 1 million unregistered -- in one of the longest displacement crises of the 21st century. NRC first opened our Pakistan office in 2001.

### A life in displacement and poverty

Afghan refugees in Pakistan face a range of challenges living in protracted displacement. On the fringe of Pakistani society, they struggle to make ends meet. Rampant poverty and underdeveloped social welfare keep them below the poverty line. Government-restricted mobility leaves them clustered in informal refugee villages, imparting a sense of isolation. Earthquakes, floods and other disasters constantly loom in the north of the country. Most Afghan communities have little to no preparations for such hazardous events. Since last year, more and more Afghans are beginning to return to Afghanistan. There, returnees face the same hardships that they do in Pakistan. A large number of the refugees in Pakistan, however, are reluctant to head back into the everyday violence that permeates Afghanistan.

In 2016 NRC reached

**2,082**

Individuals, with education and food security.

### Displaced Pakistanis

From droughts to flash floods, natural hazards plague the northern and western regions of Pakistan. Each year they leave hundreds dead and displace thousands more, with homes, roads, bridges and crops destroyed in their wake. Nearly 159,800 Pakistani families (over a million individuals) are living in displacement, unable to return to their home villages. Around 144,000 families have returned, but are struggling to rebuild their lives.



**Areas of operation:**  
**Country office:**

## NRC activities in the field

Through our programme in Pakistan, we assist impoverished Afghan refugees. We also help Pakistanis forced from their homes as they flee disaster. Should they decide to stay in Pakistan, voluntarily return to Afghanistan or settle in another country, we prepare Afghan refugee men and women so they can provide for their families.

We help uprooted Pakistanis through the shock and uncertainty of living in displacement. NRC has offices located in Islamabad and Quetta. Our Pakistan team collaborates with our Afghanistan and Iran operations to address the cross-border problems that Afghan refugees face. Together, we are conducting research to assess the socio-economic effects that take place when Afghan refugees return to Afghanistan.

In Pakistan, we work to give vocational training and education to Afghan refugees, so they can pull themselves out of poverty. We help Pakistanis displaced by natural disasters to stay afloat while

they prepare to return to their homes.

### Education

For Afghans and Pakistanis alike, continuing children's schooling throughout displacement is crucial. Our education teams make sure they don't fall behind.

NRC's education activities:

- Run accelerated education programmes so children can catch up on lost years of schooling.
- Repair schools damaged by floods and earthquakes.
- Provide school supplies to students and teachers, including pencils, notebooks and whiteboards.
- Conduct training for teachers.

### Contact:

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### **Food security**

For Afghan refugees in Pakistan, the ability to feed their families depends on their own meagre incomes. NRC's food security teams help Afghans build their livelihoods.

Our food security activities:

- Conduct agricultural and vocational trainings.
- Distribute toolkits to help develop new ways of earning money, including farming tools and seeds.
- Give emergency food supplies to refugees and displaced Pakistanis during disaster-induced displacement.

### **Water, hygiene and sanitation (WASH)**

Water is a basic human right. In Pakistan, NRC is planning to provide refugees with clean water.