

Pakistan

July 2020

Overview

The spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan declined during the month of July. The total number of cases as of 31 July was 279,146, and sadly 5,970 people have died from the highly infectious disease. According to the Government, 248,027 people have recovered and there remain 31,000 active cases. The number of daily confirmed cases has reduced to less than 1,500 from a peak of 5,000 in June. Seventeen Afghan refugees have so far tested positive; sadly five of them died. Apart from a few isolated cases, there have been no reports of COVID-19 in the Afghan refugee villages in Pakistan.



The UNHCR Representative, Ms. Noriko Yoshida, met with the Federal Minister of States and Frontier Regions, H.E. Mr. Sahibzada Mehmood Sultan, on 28 July. Efforts to support Afghan refugees and their host communities during the COVID-19 pandemic were discussed. ©UNHCR/S. Saad

Social Protection

More than 31,000 vulnerable Afghan families have so far received UNHCR's emergency cash assistance that mirrors the Government's BISP / Ehsaas emergency cash programme, where vulnerable families receive Rs.12,000 (approximately \$77) to cover a four-month period. Those eligible for the assistance include refugees with disabilities or serious medical conditions, as well as single parents and daily wage earners.

31,000 vulnerable refugee families have received emergency cash assistance.



The Head of the UNHCR Sub-Office in Peshawar, Mr. Bernard Inkoom, watches as cash assistance is distributed to vulnerable Afghan refugee families at the General Post Office in Saddar, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. © UNHCR/Z. Saleah

Communication with Communities

UNHCR staff, partners, outreach volunteers and community elders continued to disseminate messages on COVID-19 related awareness, general protection issues and UNHCR's cash assistance programme. Social media platforms were used to reach the community. In all small group meetings, COVID-19 prevention protocols were maintained to help prevent the spread of the disease.

16,300 refugee Outreach Volunteers, community committees and community leaders and 9,700 refugees helped UNHCR reach out to the refugee population.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

With the slight easing of lockdown measures and the resumption of civil construction activities, UNHCR's WASH activities finally picked up pace. UNHCR is strengthening WASH infrastructure in refugee villages and hosting areas and is supporting health and education facilities. In July, work on nine water supply schemes and three boreholes has started in areas populated with refugees in Balochistan. Similarly, WASH-related repair and rehabilitation work is underway in 13 refugee villages in Balochistan. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the repair and rehabilitation of toilets, water supply schemes and washing areas in 13 refugee schools has begun.

Over 130 water, sanitation and hygiene projects have been completed in the COVID-19 response.



As part of UNHCR's COVID-19 response, WASH facilities are being improved in support of refugees and host communities across Pakistan. UNHCR recently completed such work in Ghulam Banda refugee village in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and field staff met with community mobilizers to further discuss hygiene conditions. ©UNHCR/Jamal Khalid



Health

UNHCR continued distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) to government and NGO partners and to community members who are carrying out essential outreach and other activities. After the local procurements and distribution, UNHCR is also procuring additional PPE from the international market, including gloves, surgical masks, protective gowns and thermometers.

So far, more than 53,000 masks, 54,000 gloves and 3,600 gowns have been distributed.



UNHCR-supported Mother and Child Health Centres continued to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing vital health services. A UNHCR team visited the Mother and Child Health Centre in Ghamkol refugee village in Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to meet with partner staff and assess the needs. ©UNHCR/A. Rehman

Funding

In line with the revised UN Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19, UNHCR's appeal amounts to \$745 million. UNHCR has so far received \$448 million, or 60 per cent of the requirements. In Pakistan, UNHCR's requirements amount to \$20.6 million. Since the launch of the appeal, UNHCR has received generous contributions from the Governments of Japan and the United States of America. UNHCR has also received in-kind donations of soap and disinfectants from a private sector partner, Unilever, and in-kind donations of hand sanitizer and reusable sanitary clothes from the private sector in the Republic of Korea.

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