



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

FINAL REPORT
TO
USAID

ON FUNDING PROVIDED FOR

**Grant to replenish UNHCR Non-Food-Items Stock after
the natural disasters of 2002 in Afghanistan**

Amount Contributed: US\$ 437,445 Operational Year: 2002
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Submitted by
UNHCR Geneva

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

At the end of March and in mid April 2002, the area of Nahrin in the Province of Baghlan in Northern Afghanistan was affected by two subsequent localised but devastating earthquakes, which destroyed most of the provincial capital and several surrounding villages causing significant casualties and leaving more than 30,000 individuals homeless. During the month of April of the same year, the Western region of Afghanistan, particularly the area of Qala-I-Now in Baghdis Province, was hit by spring flooding that destroyed several houses and other infrastructures.

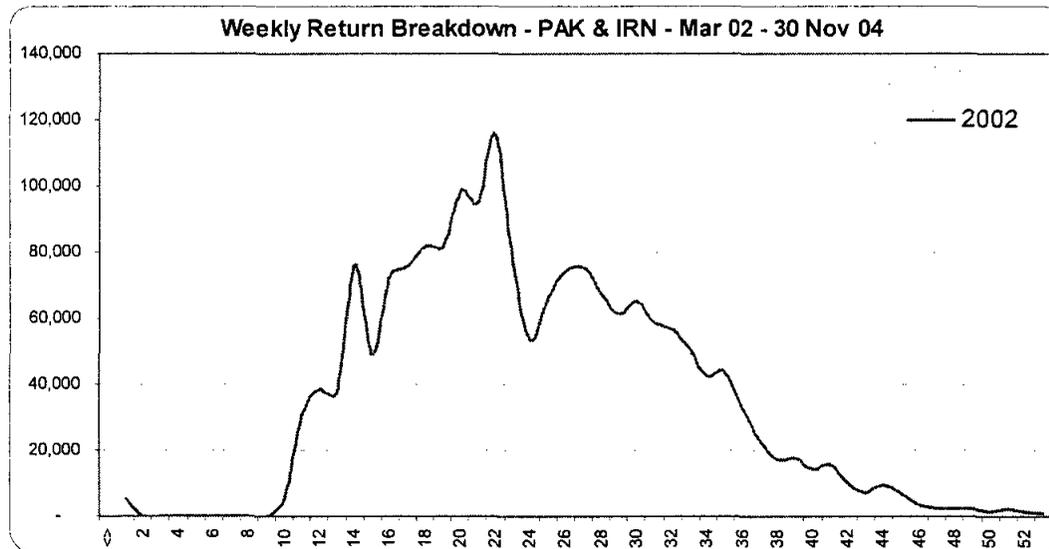
After both events, UNHCR took part with other UN agencies and several other humanitarian actors to the relief efforts for the victims of these natural disasters. UNHCR immediately sent its personnel to the earthquake-affected areas of Nahrin and sent some 12 tons of aid. This included some 2,500 tents, some 4,000 kitchen sets, some 5,000 jerry cans and plastic sheeting. The total value of such items was estimated at almost 300,000 USD, but additional shelter material for roughly the same amount was also dispatched to alleviate the conditions of those people who had lost their shelters in Nahrin. Later in April, UNHCR sent other non-food items (hereinafter referred to as NFIs) such as blankets and sleeping bags to the flood-affected populations in the Western regions.

All NFIs that were distributed during these emergencies were drawn either from UNHCR local stocks in Afghanistan or from UNHCR regional warehouse in Dubai. Such stocks were maintained for emergency purposes, but also to support the assisted repatriation process. As widely known, the process started officially in March 2002 and during the late spring and summer of that year reached its highest peaks (with more than 100,000 returnees per week).

A necessity thus emerged to replenish the depleted stockpile with items that were necessary to the operations of assisted returns and as contingency in case of future emergencies. Hence, after the distribution of the NFIs to Nahrin and to the West, UNHCR appealed to the generosity of donors to support the process of replenishment of the stocks. The Government of Norway and USAID were the first Governments to respond to this call. USAID agreed to support UNHCR with an amount of 437,445 USD directed to the purchase of NFIs and partially to cover the transport costs incurred in the transport of the items from the regional warehouse in Dubai to Kabul.

II. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED AND LOCATIONS

During the period immediately following the two natural disasters, UNHCR purchased a series of items locally and internationally to replenish its stocks. Variations in nature from the items distributed to the areas affected by the natural disasters and the items subsequently purchased necessarily occurred. The immediate needs of the assisted repatriation brought about the necessity to privilege in quantity some particular items that were distributed during the mentioned emergency situations but that were also part of the essential package distributed to support the sustained process of return, which immediately appeared to exceed the initial expectations and planned figures.



Source: UNHCR Afghanistan Operation Information section

During the year 2002, in co-operation with the Implementing Partner GTZ, UNHCR was assisting the return of refugees through 13 Encashment centres and 23 Distribution Centres across Afghanistan, in order to bring the assistance as close as possible to the places of return. At the Encashment centres, returnees were receiving a grant to cover the costs incurred for the journey and the transportation of their belonging from Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran. At the Distribution Centres, assisted returnees were provided with food rations and a set of non food items.

REGION	ENCASHMENT CENTRES	DISTRIBUTION CENTRES
Central	Pul-I-Charkhi, Ghazni	Pul-I-Charkhi, Charikar, Logar, Bamyan, Ghazni
South	Daman, Zaranj, Delaram	Daman, Zaranj, Delaram, Lashkargah, Zahre Dasht
South-East	Khost, Gardez,	Khost
East	Touklam, Jalalabad	Jalalabad, Mehterlam
North	Mazar, Kunduz, Pul-I-Kumri	Mazar, Kunduz, Pul-I-Kumri, Sar-i-Pul, Maimana, Samanghan, Shiberghan
West	Hirat	Hirat, Farah, Qala-I-Now

Source: UNHCR Afghanistan Operation Information section and GTZ 2002 Annual Report

At the distribution Centres, aside a food ration (largely wheat and rice), the returnees were receiving a NFIs package with essential items necessary for the immediate reintegration and resumption of their life in the areas of origin/chosen destination. Although the composition of the package was changed during the year, a series of items were part of the repatriation assistance throughout most of 2002. The NFIs package

was reduced only in the last three months of the year. Yet, such reduction did not affect the utilisation of the USAID contribution, as all the items purchased were distributed during the summer months.

The initial standard NFIs package that UNHCR provided to returning refugees in 2002 was composed of:

- plastic sheets (1 each family of five members)
- blankets (2 each family of 5)
- soap (1 Kg per family per month)
- hurricane lamp (1 per family)
- hygiene cloth
- sleeping mat (1 or 2 per family where available)
- bucket (1 per family)
- jerry can (1 per family)

In addition, and if available, UNHCR distributed small quantities of kitchen sets, clothes, other hygienic items, heaters/stoves and some clothing. Tents were not in the standard package, but were included in the assistance that UNHCR provided to the Internally Displaced Persons within Afghanistan, mostly in the Southern Region.

The purchasing of the items continued throughout the year, along the pace of the return trends, in line with the distribution in the 23 centres, some of which never interrupted their activity in the entire 10 months-period of the UNHCR repatriation operation. In addition to the 37.2 Million USD that UNHCR provided in form of transport grant to the returning refugees, some 5,763 MT of NFIs were distributed in 2002 as follows:

**Total UNHCR Distribution of NFIs in Afghanistan – year 2002
(Excluding winterisation activities)**

Item	Quantity
Plastic Sheets (pieces)	640,288
Blankets (pieces)	511,414
Sanitary Material (meters)	577,547
Buckets (pieces)	209,645
Jerry Cans (pieces)	244,075
Detergent Soap (Kgs)	1,261,655
Body Soap	90,756

Source: UNHCR Afghanistan Fact sheet 2002-2003

The USAID contribution was directed to the purchase of the most essential NFIs to support the initial reintegration of returnees by replenishing the stock after the distribution to the affected areas of Nahrin and the flooded Western regions.

The purchase was done almost entirely on an international basis, except some selected items that were available on the market and purchased locally. According to the necessity, the items were purchased between May and the beginning of July. With the

funding provided by USAID, the following items were purchased:

- 63,000 Blankets for USD 201,600;
- 42,747 Jerry cans for USD 41,037;
- 65,000 buckets, locally purchased for USD 130,000;
- 12,718 Hurricane Lanterns for USD 15,261; and
- 8,723 Plastic Sheeting for USD 49,547

Given that the total amount of NFIs purchased significantly exceeded the amount of USAID contribution, the associated transportation/freight costs were paid from other sources.

The items, discharged at UNHCR/GTZ central Warehouses were subsequently transported to the Distribution centres where they were entirely distributed to the returning refugees during roughly the same period from May to July 2002. As visible from the above repatriation trends graph, the mentioned period in fact coincided with the highest peak of the return process in 2002. More specifically:

- Blankets were distributed in the Kabul, Charikar, Logar, Ghazni (Central Region) from 27 May to 19 June;
- Jerry cans were distributed to returnees in Bamyan, Logar, Kabul, Charikar, Ghazni and Bagram (Central region) from 28 May to 2 July;
- Buckets were distributed from 29 April to 1 June, largely through the Distribution centres in Kabul, Charikar, Logar, Ghazni and Jalalabad;
- Lanterns were distributed to returnees mainly in the Eastern region (Jalalabad) at the end of May; and
- Plastic sheeting was delivered to returnees through the Distribution Centres in the Kabul area during the second week of July 2002.

III. BENEFICIARIES

As the first year of the assisted repatriation, the year 2002 saw the highest number of returns to Afghanistan. From the start of the operation, in March 2002 from Pakistan and in April 2002 from the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1,824,887 Afghan refugees returned to their country of origin. It is estimated that the number of assisted families was 348,997, with a ratio of approximately 5.2 members per family. The refugees returned mostly to the Central Region (41%), the Northern region (23%) and the Eastern region (18%). The distribution of the NFIs purchased through the USAID contribution reflects largely these trends.

Considering the standard NFIs package provided during the initial months of the repatriation operation, it can be asserted that the USAID contribution benefited cumulatively:

31,500 families with blankets
8,723 families with plastic sheeting
65,000 families with buckets
12,718 families with hurricane lanterns
42,747 with jerry cans

IV. IMPACT AND CONCLUSION

The generous contribution provided by USAID in 2002 after the tragic events of Nahrin and the serious flooding in Western Afghanistan was essential for the uninterrupted continuation of UNHCR assistance to the voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees. In allowing for the prompt replenishment of the regional and local stocks of NFIs previously distributed to the population affected by the natural disasters, the funding contributed to assist the initial reintegration of returnees. It is evident that the sustained repatriation trends called for a continuous process of distribution, which eventually resulted in the full utilisation of the entire amount of the USAID contribution and the completed distribution of the NFIs purchased through these funds.

Although the NFIs distributed were nothing but a small support to the returnees, they proved to be essential in helping the most vulnerable families to restart their lives in Afghanistan. In this sense, USAID contributed to achieve UNHCR's goal to ensure a dignified repatriation.

USAID Donation - Replenishment of Stocks and related distribution after the Nahrin Earthquake and the Flooding in West Afghanistan (Spring 2002)

ITEM	Quantity (out)	Price per unit (USD)	TOTAL (USD)	Freight	PO (in)	Date arrival	Date out (distributed from warehouse)	Destination
Blankets	63,000	3.20	201,600	39,995.00	HHD 004D PO 20991	27 May	27 may to 19 June	Distribution/Encashment centres for returnees in Kabul, Charikar (Central region), Logar, Ghazni
Jerry Cans	42,747	0.96	41,037	12,540.00	HHC 002C PO 20971	From 20 May to 26 May	28 May to 2 July	Distribution/Encashment centres in Bamyan, Logar (Central region), Kabul, Charikar (Central region), Ghazni, Bagram Transit Centre)
Buckets	30,000	2.00	60,000	Local purchase	HHC 005G PO 0013	From 4 May to 1 June	From 5 May to 19 June	Distribution/Encashment centres in Kabul, Charikar (Central Region)
Buckets	35,000	2.00	70,000	Local purchase	HHD 005F PO 0011	From 02 May to 06 June	From 08 May to 19 June	Distribution/Encashment centres in Kabul, Charikar (Central Region), Logar (Central Region), Jalaabad, Ghazni
Hurricane Lanterns	12,718	1.20	15,261	Included in other portion	PO 201109 (unearmarked)	19 May	26 and 27 May	Distribution/Encashment centres in Jalalabad area
Plastic Sheeting	8,723	5.68	49,547	Included in other portion	STTS 007D PO 2177 (partial)	07 July	07 July	Distribution/Encashment centres in Kabul area
TOTAL			437,445					

