

Media Update-2

2 March 2016

United Nations - Pakistan

Press Release

Japan Contributes US\$16 million to Benefit FATA Returnees and Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

Islamabad, 2 March 2016: The Government of Japan today announced a contribution of US\$16 million in total to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN World Food Programme (WFP) to support Returnees in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

The Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Japanese Embassy in Pakistan, Mr. Junya Matsuura, and UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Neil Buhne, made the announcement at the WFP office in Islamabad. Joint Secretary of SAFRON, Captain Retired Muhammad Tariq Hayat, UNDP Country Director (a.i.), Ms. Tracy Vienings, UNHCR Representative, Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, UNICEF Chief of Field Operations, Mr. Rahama Rihood Mohammed, and WFP Representative, Ms. Lola Castro, also attended.

The US\$ 16 million consists of \$US3 million for UNDP, \$US 4 million for UNHCR, \$US3 million for UNICEF and \$US6 million for WFP. The details of these projects are as follows.

UNDP will help reinforce the local governance capacity to manage the recovery process while providing direct assistance to the affected people in the return areas of FATA by creating livelihood opportunities through vocational and business management trainings in order to provide the necessary skills to access employment opportunities after return. Furthermore, small scale cash for work activities to help rehabilitate



community infrastructure and improve access to basic services will be undertaken along with technical support to returning communities to ensure safe rehabilitation practices.

UNHCR will provide protection assistance and support the returnees to FATA as well as education, livelihoods and vocational training opportunities for Afghan refugee youth in the country along with protection and legal assistance interventions and health programmes. Pakistan has been the home to millions of Afghans for over 35 years. More than 3.9 million Afghan refugees have returned since 2002, 58,000 in 2015 alone. Some 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees still live in Pakistan.

The overarching objective of the UNICEF interventions is to provide an improved and equitable delivery of multi-sectoral interventions to support early recovery needs of returning population with special focus on women and children, in areas of their origin in FATA. The assistance will ensure that girls, boys and women have reliable access to safe drinking water and sanitation, knowledge of appropriate hygiene behavior, is improved, enrolment and retention of out of school children (girls and boys) in safer schools environments is enhanced and the nutritional status of girls, boys and women (pregnant and nursing) is protected from the effects of humanitarian crises.

WFP will assist FATA returnees during the initial stage of resettlement to enable a rapid start of livelihoods and nutrition activities for sustainable food security and to avoid nutrition deterioration and will support children's access to education, especially of girls, enhancement of the learning environment and reduction of gender disparities, which will contribute to an increase in literacy rates in FATA. The social benefits of female education are substantial and are reflected in delaying marriage and pregnancy, improved nutrition for pregnant and nursing women as well as infants, and improved infant mortality rates. The assistance will further contribute to the re-establishment of communities thus creating social stability, a prerequisite for lasting peace in Pakistan overall and particularly in the border areas with volatile Afghanistan.

The Government of Japan has been supporting sustainable return of Temporally Displaced Persons (TDPs) and FATA rehabilitation as a part of its efforts to support the stability of the region near the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In 2015, Japan also had granted 18.4 million USD to assist TDPs in KP, their host communities and returnees in FATA. Japan has been supporting Afghanistan including Afghan refugees in Pakistan since 2001.



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Note: Hi-res Photos of the event can be downloaded from:

Download link

<http://we.tl/BwbbnQnLc>

