

UNHCR

2014 - 2015  
GLOBAL APPEAL

- Angola
- Botswana
- Comoros
- Lesotho
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mauritius
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Seychelles
- South Africa
- Swaziland
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

# SOUTHERN AFRICA



Asylum-seekers queue at the Government refugee reception office in Musina, South Africa (April 2012)

UNHCR / L. DANG





# Overview



## Working environment

There are more than half a million people of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa. At the end of 2012 they included some 134,000 refugees, 272,000 asylum-seekers and almost 19,740 returnees.

The socio-political atmosphere in the Southern African subregion is expected to remain relatively calm. In July 2013 Zimbabwe held elections that were generally peaceful. Nonetheless, individuals from Zimbabwe continue to seek asylum elsewhere, and it is not expected that many Zimbabweans outside the country will return home. In Madagascar, where a transitional Government has exercised power for the last four years, elections are scheduled for October 2013. Lesotho and Swaziland have experienced some unrest aggravated by an economic crisis and a prolonged drought.

The large numbers of people moving from the East, the Horn and the Great Lakes regions of Africa to South Africa have led to concerns among the countries of the subregion about national security, trafficking, human smuggling and abuse of the asylum system, resulting in stricter border controls. UNHCR, particularly in collaboration with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), is looking for ways to address the issue of mixed migration.

National asylum systems in the subregion work under severe capacity constraints, and have difficulties in identifying people in need of international protection. While nearly all of the countries in the subregion have signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention, most have done so with reservations regarding freedom of movement and access to employment.

With the exception of Angola and South Africa, countries in the subregion hosting a significant number of refugees maintain encampment policies that restrict the freedom of movement of refugees and asylum-seekers and impede their efforts to become self-reliant. Many of these camps have existed for decades, and the second and sometimes third generations of refugees living in them find it difficult to envision a better future.

Despite sustained efforts to promote voluntary repatriation to Burundi and Rwanda, there is very little interest in return among refugees from these countries. This is so, despite the reluctance of most host Governments to offer these refugees the option of local integration.

Foreign nationals are increasingly seen as competitors for scarce economic opportunities. This fuels xenophobia and

has a negative impact on the protection environment for refugees and asylum-seekers. In South Africa, where most refugees live in urban areas, violence against foreign-owned businesses continues to occur, despite efforts to promote tolerance. Similar factors have led to the deterioration of public and official support for asylum in Angola, Malawi and Mozambique.

As envisaged in the Comprehensive Solutions Strategy for Angolans initiated in 2010, all of the countries hosting significant numbers of Angolan refugees have declared the cessation of refugee status

for Angolans who arrived before 2002. Voluntary repatriation to Angola continues to be promoted. Namibia, South Africa and Zambia have developed systems to grant temporary residence to those Angolans who meet specific criteria.

Statelessness in the region is a concern. None of the countries in Southern Africa have acceded to the 1954 and 1961 Statelessness Conventions. People at risk of statelessness are found mainly in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe; however, exact numbers are not known.

## | Response |

### Strategies

- UNHCR will continue to focus on mixed migration issues, working closely with regional bodies such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to harmonize policies and laws on mixed migration. Governments in the subregion will receive the Office's help to formulate and implement mixed-migration strategies.
- Another strategic priority for UNHCR in 2014-2015 is to strengthen and monitor national asylum systems. The Office will also boost advocacy and capacity-building by establishing a regional high-level refugee law training programme at the University of Cape Town that will promote adherence to international standards of refugee protection and refugee status determination (RSD).
- UNHCR will ensure that the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers in camps are catered for by strengthening relationships with new and existing implementing and operational partners. Special focus will be placed on addressing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and HIV and AIDS. Food and nutrition projects will also be given priority.
- Awareness campaigns, conflict-resolution programmes and other community interventions conducted in partnership with governments and other stakeholders will aim to counter xenophobia.

- UNHCR will advocate for the adoption of the international conventions on statelessness and for relevant national legislation to be updated. It will also collaborate with other UN agencies, civil society and academia to identify stateless people in the region.

### Challenges

Governments in the region have responded to mixed migration challenges by instituting stricter border controls, with a negative impact on access to asylum.

All countries in the subregion have ratified the international refugee instruments. However, implementation needs to be improved, and reservations relating to socio-economic rights make local integration difficult. Local communities tend to see foreigners as competitors for employment and services, reducing opportunities for local integration.

Insufficient funding will mean that populations of concern may not have access to adequate social services, and basic needs will not be met. Lack of UNHCR support for asylum systems could result in reduced access to fair asylum processes, and efforts to promote durable solutions will be impeded.

### Operations

UNHCR's programme in **South Africa** is presented in a separate country chapter.

According to Government figures, over 20,300 asylum-seekers and

## | Implementation |

23,400 refugees reside in **Angola**. This figure includes nearly 12,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who have been in Angola since the late 1970s, as well as others from some 20 African countries. The protection space for refugees and asylum-seekers has been reduced as a result

of stringent immigration policies. UNHCR will work to reverse this trend and conduct regular visits to immigration detention centres.

UNHCR will advocate for durable solutions, including voluntary repatriation, to Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. It will also

seek local integration, particularly for the Congolese who have been in Angola for decades.

UNHCR will continue to work with the Government of Angola on solutions for the more than 100,000 former Angolan refugees remaining in Botswana, the Congo, the DRC, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia. This will include facilitating voluntary repatriation and encouraging the Government to issue identity documents and passports free of charge to all former Angolan refugees.

**Botswana** hosts almost 3,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Namibia, Somalia and Zimbabwe. They reside in Dukwi camp, where the Government provides education and health services. The encampment policy is strictly enforced, compromising the ability of refugees to earn a living and leaving them dependant on assistance. Refugees found outside the camp without valid permits can be detained for long periods. This has led to social problems, including survival sex, SGBV, high school-dropout rates and substance abuse.

Legislative reform remains a key priority for Botswana. The Government has established a working group to review the Refugees Control and Recognition Act of 1967. UNHCR will advocate for Botswana to lift its reservations to the 1951 Convention and intensify efforts to persuade the authorities to find alternatives to detention.

The Indian Ocean island States of **Comoros**, **Seychelles** and **Mauritius** currently do not host significant numbers of refugees. UNHCR periodically monitors these countries and endeavours to find durable solutions quickly when any new arrivals are reported. A small number of refugees and asylum-seekers in **Madagascar** will receive assistance from UNDP under a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR.

**Lesotho** hosts 37 refugees and asylum-seekers, most of whom are self-reliant. UNHCR is pressing for the Kingdom of Lesotho to grant unconditional citizenship to these refugees, who have been in the country for five years or more, in accordance with the existing national legislation.

The approximately 18,400 refugees and asylum-seekers in **Malawi** originate mainly from Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda, and reside in Dzaleka camp. The number of new arrivals from the eastern DRC rose in 2013 to an average of 600 per month, about three times more than had been initially projected. Finding the resources to move asylum-seekers from the border entry point to Dzaleka, which is some 600 kilometres away, is a challenge. Upon arrival at the camp, many women and children are in need of psychosocial support.

UNHCR will support the Government of Malawi's RSD process and try to ensure that the basic needs of refugees living in Dzaleka camp are met. Particular attention will be given to the provision of shelter, health and clean water. Nutritional support is also needed following WFP's reduction of the food basket for refugees by 30 per cent in 2013. The implementation of the strict encampment policy in the country and less supportive attitudes towards refugees among the general public compel UNHCR to dedicate more resources to the preservation of the protection environment.

**Mozambique** hosts more than 4,400 refugees and 9,700 asylum-seekers, the majority of whom originate from Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda and Somalia. About 50 per cent of the population of concern live in Maratane camp, where basic assistance is provided by the Government. Refugees and asylum-seekers largely enjoy freedom of movement, allowing them to work or study outside the camp.

In a change from previous years, a greater proportion of UNHCR's population of concern is now urban, requiring a readjustment of protection and assistance strategies. In this context, the Office will continue to strengthen partnerships to create an environment conducive to local integration and provide new opportunities for self-reliance.

In 2014, UNHCR Mozambique will also focus on strengthening RSD procedures to reduce the risk of statelessness among unregistered people of concern who face difficulties in obtaining Mozambican nationality. UNHCR will press the Government to meet its pledge to ratify the Statelessness Conventions.

With the voluntary repatriation of more than 3,000 former Angolan refugees by July 2013, the number of people of concern residing in **Namibia** has been reduced to some 2,700, most of whom live in the Osire refugee settlement. The Government, UNHCR and other partners have designed a plan for the progressive handover of protection and assistance responsibilities to the Government in 2014 and a phasing out of UNHCR's presence in Namibia by 2015.

Strong advocacy efforts have convinced the Namibian Government to agree to the local integration of some 2,400 former Angolan refugees. UNHCR will continue to provide food directly to the refugees remaining in Osire while gradually handing over other responsibilities to the Government.

To fully realize its phase-out strategy, UNHCR will help the Namibian authorities to expedite the processing of a backlog of some 1,200 asylum applications. Efforts to increase resettlement for more than 2,000 refugees, mainly from the Great Lakes region, will be intensified.

UNHCR covers **Swaziland** from the Regional Office in Pretoria. The majority of the nearly 800 refugees in



the country are locally integrated and live in urban areas. They originate from Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda, Somalia and Zimbabwe. Education, health and other services are provided for the refugees who reside in the Malindza reception centre, by the Swaziland Government, with complementary UNHCR support through its implementing partner, CARITAS. The Office will also work with UNICEF, which will provide water, sanitation and education in Malindza.

**Zambia** currently hosts some 52,200 refugees and others of concern who mostly reside in two refugee settlements, Meheba and Mayukwayukwa. The major focus will be on ensuring people of concern become self-reliant and are able to gain access to basic services.

Vulnerable individuals and new arrivals will receive direct assistance.

In 2014 and 2015, UNHCR will continue supporting the Government with socio-economic projects in the areas identified for local integration. This will ensure access to basic services for people moving to the new areas and encourage peaceful coexistence with the host community.

Following the cessation of refugee status for Angolans in 2012 and Rwandans in mid-2013, the Government of Zambia has agreed to the local integration of an estimated 10,000 Angolans and some Rwandans. The criteria for the local integration of Angolans have been published, and some 4,200 eligible candidates applied for residency permits in 2013. It is also anticipated that UNHCR will support

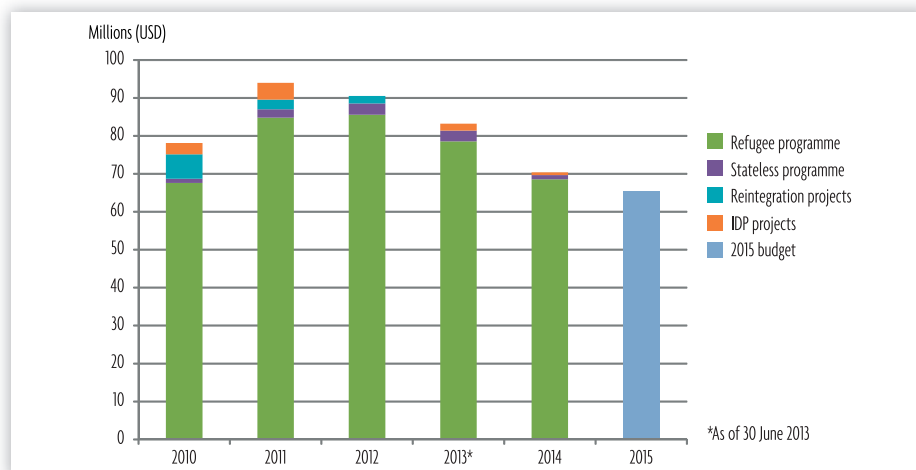
the spontaneous return of some 6,000 Angolans and Rwandans who do not qualify for local integration and opt to return home.

Some 7,500 refugees, mainly from the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa, live in Tongogara camp in **Zimbabwe**. UNHCR will ensure that the basic needs of refugees are met, placing greater emphasis on livelihood support to enhance self-reliance. Agricultural, income-generating and skills-development projects will also receive greater support. Refugees with specific needs will receive food assistance. Efforts to promote voluntary repatriation will continue and resettlement opportunities will be sought for vulnerable cases.

## Financial information

### Budgets for Southern Africa | 2010–2015

The total comprehensive budget for the subregion has grown steadily, from USD 78.1 million in 2010 to USD 90.5 million in 2012. The revised 2013 budget decreased to USD 83.2 million, due to the reduction in the numbers of Angolan refugees following application of the cessation clause in 2012. In 2014, the budget for Southern Africa has been set at USD 70.4 million with the need to support the local integration of Angolans and Rwandans, especially in Zambia, as well as increasing numbers of new arrivals in South Africa, Malawi and Mozambique.



### Budgets for Southern Africa | USD

Operation	2013 REVISED BUDGET (as of 30 June 2013)	2014			TOTAL	2015
		PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 4 IDP projects		
Angola	4,697,332	4,770,320	0	0	4,770,320	4,488,565
Botswana	5,457,590	5,045,679	0	0	5,045,679	4,099,260
Malawi	4,238,716	4,306,906	0	0	4,306,906	4,306,906
Mozambique	5,028,790	5,050,727	363,556	0	5,414,283	5,414,283
Namibia	3,752,034	3,951,101	0	0	3,951,101	2,917,061
South Africa Regional Office	37,641,642	25,594,088	776,385	0	26,370,474	26,355,474
Zambia	14,943,956	13,693,565	0	0	13,693,565	11,119,199
Zimbabwe	7,459,399	6,134,588	0	690,555	6,825,143	6,882,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,219,458</b>	<b>68,546,973</b>	<b>1,139,941</b>	<b>690,555</b>	<b>70,377,469</b>	<b>65,582,898</b>