

EGYPT

IN SHORT

Main Objectives

- Assist the Government of Egypt in ensuring the protection of refugees by carrying out status determination.
- Assess needs of vulnerable cases and provide assistance as required.
- Assist with resettlement to third countries or voluntary repatriation.
- Ensure capacity-building of local authorities and NGOs in order to help them assume greater legal and administrative responsibility for refugees.
- Supervise UNHCR operations in Syria and Lebanon and coordinate activities in the region, particularly in the fields of external relations, information and training.
- Develop regional strategies for public awareness and private sector fund-raising.
- Strengthen cooperation with the League of Arab States through cooperative agreements and joint activities.

Planning Figures		
Population	Jan. 2000	Dec. 2000
Urban Refugees	7,000	7,000
Total *	7,000	7,000

* As of September 1999, there were 6,215 refugees in Egypt. This number includes 2,566 Somalis, 2,413 Sudanese, and 679 Yemenis as well as various other refugee groups.

Total Requirements
USD 3,977,010



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WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

Continuing regional instability has led to an increase in the number of asylum-seekers approaching UNHCR. At present, some 3,500 asylum-seekers, mostly Sudanese, are awaiting determination of their status. In view of the limited prospects for local integration or voluntary repatriation, resettlement in a third country remains the only lasting solution for a large number of refugees in Egypt. In 1999, UNHCR enhanced its resettlement efforts through the Middle East Resettlement Project, providing additional protection staff in the Cairo Regional Office, who have helped reduce the backlog of cases awaiting refugee status determination and resettlement processing. These activities are now covered in the programme budget for 2000.

Constraints

Despite increased opportunities for third country resettlement from Egypt, the total number of refugees in the country has increased gradually. A mounting cost of living, combined with a restriction on the refugees' right to work, has meant that needy refugees have been forced to depend more on UNHCR than previously. This trend, combined with the increased needs associated with refugee status determination and resettlement processing, has led to expanding operational and administrative expenditure.

STRATEGY

Protection and Solutions

In the absence of national refugee legislation, refugee status determination is carried out by UNHCR. In cooperation with the competent authorities, UNHCR closely monitors the regularisation of the legal status of refugees, adherence to the principle of *non-refoulement*, and respect for other basic rights of refugees and persons in need of international protection. Refugee women, children and other vulnerable persons will continue to receive special attention in line with UNHCR's policy priorities. Since local integration is currently not a lasting solution for refugees in Egypt, UNHCR will continue to facilitate voluntary repatriation for a small number of refugees willing to return to their countries of origin, but resettlement to third countries will be the main durable solution for refugees in Egypt. Furthermore, UNHCR will also

seek local integration for a group of some 160 elderly stateless persons through naturalisation or long-term residence permits. Some 2,750 refugees were resettled from Egypt during 1999. Another 3,500 refugees are expected to be resettled during 2000. Particular attention will be paid to vulnerable groups among the refugee community: they are eligible for resettlement under current criteria.

Assistance

The majority of refugees cannot meet their essential daily needs. As they have no access to national health facilities, government schools and subsidised housing, their cost of living is higher than that of the average Egyptian citizen. UNHCR's assistance therefore includes the provision of monthly subsistence allowances, education grants, health care treatment and vocational training. Refugee women, particularly women heads of household, will be trained in reproductive health and will be given priority to participate in vocational training such as small-scale handicraft activities. UNHCR will continue to cover the tuition costs for refugee children at the primary and secondary school level. Selected adolescents with good academic records will continue to be helped through post-secondary and vocational training programmes.

Desired Impact

UNHCR activities will ensure protection, essential assistance and lasting solutions for refugees in Egypt and in the region. The Regional Office's training and external relations activities will strengthen the capacities of regional governmental authorities, implementing partners, and NGOs involved in refugee related work.

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Management Structure

The Regional Office in Cairo has seven international and 16 national staff, of whom eleven also have regional responsibilities. In addition, eight national United Nations Volunteers are hired under an operational project mainly for work generated by the increase in asylum-seekers. Under the Middle East Resettlement Project, four additional national staff have been hired in 1999.



Coordination

The Regional Office in Egypt works closely with the Egyptian Government through the Refugee Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Contacts are also maintained with the Ministry for the Interior and State Security in respect of matters concerning the protection of refugees. A coordination network has been established with NGOs dealing with refugees within the PARinAC framework. A separate coordination network has also been established with the traditional resettlement countries within the framework of the UNHCR-led inter-agency group on refugees. Regular contact is made with other UN

agencies under the umbrella of the Resident Coordinator. With the adoption by the Council of the League of Arab States in September 1999 of the Cooperation Agreement with UNHCR, additional cooperative arrangements will be worked out with the Arab League to cover common areas of concern relating to refugees and persons in need of international protection in the Arab region.

Offices	
<u>Cairo</u>	
Partners	
NGOs	
Caritas	
Family Planning Association	
The Refugee Ministry of St Andrew's and All Saints Churches	
Other	
International Organisation for Migration	

Budget (USD)	
Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Coordination	133,600
Community Services	14,130
Domestic Needs/ Household Support	1,432,047
Education	440,000
Health/Nutrition	202,038
Income Generation	58,287
Legal Assistance	3,561
Operational Support (to Agencies)	303,577
Transport/Logistics	20,360
Total Operations	2,607,600
Programme Support	1,369,410
Total	3,977,010

