

East and Horn of Africa

Recent Developments

During 2000, the East and Horn of Africa region witnessed significant upheaval that caused new population displacements. At the beginning of the year, the region was hosting over 1.2 million refugees and 3.2 internally displaced persons (IDPs); by mid-year these figures had risen to roughly 1.3 million and 4.2 million respectively. The chief causes were renewed fighting between Ethiopia and Eritrea, continuing violence in southern Somalia and Sudan, and severe drought in parts of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

The resumption of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May led to the internal displacement of 1.1 million persons in Eritrea alone, while thousands fled to neighbouring countries, including 95,000 to Sudan, 1,000 to Djibouti and 1,000 to Yemen. Following the signing on 18 June of a cease-fire agreement negotiated by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea ceased. A Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR and the governments of Sudan and Eritrea signed on 15 July paved the way for the return of some 25,000 Eritreans, while others returned spontaneously. According to government figures, some 600,000 IDPs also returned home, mainly to areas in the Gash-Barka and Debub zones. Most of the remaining IDPs cannot yet return to their homes and are accommodated in IDP camps and with host families. Others remain scattered in mountains and valleys.

Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Kenya
Somalia
Sudan
Uganda



In Ethiopia, an estimated 350,000 persons have been internally displaced since 1998 and are still unable to return to their homes. In September, the UN Security Council authorised the deployment of 4,200 peacekeepers (including 220 military observers) to monitor the cease-fire and dispatched the first 59 military observers to both sides of the border. This constitutes a major step forward in the search for durable solutions.

The Reconciliation Conference for Somalia, launched by Djibouti in 1999, was brought to a successful conclusion in September in Arta, Djibouti. The conference was brokered by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which brings together the Governments of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia and Uganda. The conference led to the election of a new President of Somalia and the establishment of a Transitional National Assembly. The initiative, which was hailed as a success by many, was however rejected by the breakaway provinces of north-west and north-east Somalia. The next phase of the peace process will focus on the implementation of a wide range of initiatives aimed at the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country, for which the new President has solicited the assistance of the international community. The task ahead is particularly challenging in view of the fact that violence is still rife in large areas of Somalia, especially in the south, hindering access by humanitarian agencies.

Other countries of the region continued to suffer from the consequences of protracted conflicts. In Sudan, the IGAD-sponsored negotiations for a political settlement made little progress. An upsurge in fighting between government forces and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in eastern and southern Sudan – and internecine fighting – caused new outflows of Sudanese refugees into Kenya (10,000), Uganda (6,000) and Ethiopia (5,000). In the receiving countries, the security situation in and around the refugee camps deteriorated due to rebel activity and inter-clan fighting.

Throughout the region, three consecutive years of poor rains and the onset of drought in April affected an estimated 16 million people. Prolonged food shortages resulted in an increase in cross-border movements as people moved with their livestock in search of food, water and better grazing land. Some turned to the refugee camps for assistance.

A positive development was the relative speed with which the effects of the drought were addressed. One million metric tons of food were rapidly delivered, alongside other emergency services. As a result, in September the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Drought in the Horn of Africa was able to declare that famine had been averted. This achievement can be attributed to major investments in logistics by the international community and the co-operation of governments in the region.



Strategic Objectives

UNHCR will promote refugee law and respect for humanitarian principles through training of relevant government officials and implementing partner staff. The focus will be on the rights of refugees, with the aim of improving their protection, in particular of women and children.

The Office will review protracted refugee situations for Eritrean, Kenyan, Somali and Sudanese refugees to determine their continued need for international protection. UNHCR will also urge the Governments of Kenya and Sudan to regularise the status of pre-1991 Ethiopians who no longer require international protection, but who for various reasons wish to remain in those countries. UNHCR will seek lasting solutions for those who remain in need of international protection.

UNHCR will encourage the voluntary repatriation of refugees in the region to their countries of origin, when conditions permit, and support sustainable reintegration upon return. At present, that means Eritrean, Kenyan and Somali refugees. The voluntary repatriation of Sudanese and Somali refugees to Sudan and southern Somalia respectively is unlikely to become possible in the near future due to insecurity in areas of return. Consequently, UNHCR's main objective for these two groups will be continued protection and assistance. UNHCR will also help them to become more self-sufficient.

UNHCR will continue to elaborate policies, strategies and programmes for women and children, as well as for the prevention of HIV/AIDS, and ensure their incorporation into all programmes and their implementation by all offices.

UNHCR will enhance its capacity for emergency preparedness and response to cope with possible new population displacements. In co-operation with the OAU and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), UNHCR will organise capacity-building seminars for the staff of governments, local NGOs and members of civil society.

UNHCR will continue to contribute to the development of a humanitarian agenda for the IGAD and OAU peace initiatives and ensure that issues related to refugees and their voluntary repatriation remain on the agenda. The Office will provide support to the IGAD initiative – on conflict prevention, management and resolution and the alleviation of humanitarian crises – through the development of plans of action aimed at phasing out humanitarian assistance and bringing in long-term development programmes. Within the IGAD framework, and in collaboration with UNDP, UNHCR will pursue the development of area-based programmes for the rehabilitation of areas affected by the presence of refugees, and for the sustainable reintegration of returnees and IDPs.

Similarly, UNHCR will continue to collaborate with the OAU and its Committee on Human and People's Rights by addressing issues such as the root causes of refugee movements, the promotion of refugee protection, and assistance to areas affected by the presence of refugees. As chair of OAU's Co-ordinating Committee on Protection and Assistance of Refugees, UNHCR will continue to consult with OAU members on issues related to the mandate and membership of the Committee, rules and procedures, and implementation

arrangements aimed at harmonising refugee and other humanitarian programmes, especially during emergencies.

Operations

In addition to the country programmes in **Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan** and **Uganda**, which are presented in separate chapters, the following section provides information on planned activities in Djibouti and Eritrea.

The majority of the refugees in **Djibouti** are from Somalia and are settled in Ali Adde, Hol-Hol and Obock camps, as well as in urban areas. UNHCR's primary objective for these refugees is voluntary repatriation to areas of recovery in Somalia. However, despite the successful evolution of the peace process for Somalia, the security situation there remains volatile. The presence of landmines in the refugees' areas of origin, and the lack of basic infrastructure, are major constraints to their return home. Pending voluntary repatriation, UNHCR will continue to meet the basic needs of over 24,000 Somali refugees, and provide essential services. Because the camps are in arid areas, local integration is not possible. Although opportunities to achieve self-sufficiency are extremely limited, UNHCR will continue to implement income-generating activities, including a micro-credit scheme for refugee women. Given the degradation of the environment in and around the camps, UNHCR will continue to encourage the refugees, as well as the local population, to participate in environmental rehabilitation projects, including tree-planting, gardening and the use of domestic energy-saving methods. Some 1,680 pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees in Djibouti repatriated with UNHCR's assistance in May 2000, bringing to an end UNHCR's voluntary repatriation operation for this group. In 2001, some 250 remaining Ethiopian refugees, predominantly military personnel from the Mengistu regime, will be encouraged to opt for voluntary repatriation.

The implementation of UNHCR's programme for Somali and Sudanese refugees in **Eritrea** was seriously disrupted by the resumption of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 2000. The refugee population before 12 May was stable at 3,050 persons (2,300 Somalis in Harsile camp near Assab, and 750 Sudanese in Elit camp near Haykota). As a result of the war, over 1,200 Somali refugees were temporarily evacuated to Emkulu camp near Massawa, while some 100 chose to remain in Assab. The rest fled to Yemen and Djibouti. A few of the refugees who fled to Yemen and Djibouti have started returning to Eritrea. Furthermore, some 170 Sudanese refugees were evacuated to Hazhaz camp in Asmara, while the rest fled from Elit camp. The Sudanese refugees have returned to Elit camp since the cessation of hostilities. Prospects for voluntary repatriation of the Somali and Sudanese refugees are limited, as the situation in the countries of origin is not yet

conducive to large-scale return. Opportunities for local integration are also limited. Considering the limited prospects of self-sufficiency, resettlement has become the only viable durable solution for many of the refugees. UNHCR will therefore continue to identify resettlement opportunities for those who are eligible. While pursuing durable solutions, UNHCR will continue to protect and provide material assistance to the 1,400 Somali refugees in Emkulu camp and 750 Sudanese refugees in Elit camp. Various options will be explored to relocate refugees whose extended stay in their current location is undesirable. While UNHCR will continue to monitor activities within the camps, the Government's Office of Refugee Affairs (ORA) will be responsible for the purchase and distribution of food and non-food items and for the management of the camps. Refugee committees, some of which include women, will participate in the management of the camps, including solving disputes among the refugees and identifying vulnerable groups and individuals. Parents will be encouraged to send their children to school, especially girls. Additional classrooms, as well as indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, will be constructed. Families will receive kerosene and kerosene stoves in order to prevent environmental degradation. In addition to the assistance programme for Somali and Sudanese refugees, UNHCR will establish a Supplementary Programme to facilitate and, depending on progress in the peace process, promote the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of 62,000 Eritrean refugees from Sudan and a small number from Yemen. The Supplementary Programme will aim to create an environment conducive to the sustainable return and reintegration of returnees and IDPs (including continued relief assistance for the most vulnerable persons who returned in 2000). Furthermore, it will address the humanitarian needs of 100,000 IDPs in and from the Gash Barka Zone who are residing in camps, temporary sites, as well as with host families and, wherever possible, help them return to their homes. Further information on this programme can be found in an addendum to the 2001 Global Appeal.

BUDGET (USD)

Country	Annual Programme
Djibouti	2,949,768
Eritrea	2,839,179
Ethiopia ¹	23,291,648
Kenya ²	29,674,910
Somalia	11,117,133
Sudan	9,494,774
Uganda	18,783,506
Total	98,150,918

¹ Includes administrative costs for the Regional Director's Office of USD 1,512,008.

² Includes administrative costs for the Regional Service Centre of USD 5,319,424.