

Africa

Working environment

Determined leadership and sustained international support in 2006 helped several African countries move towards peace and political stability after years of strife. As a consequence, whether in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) or Liberia, opportunities have arisen for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). Conditions have also improved in Angola and South Sudan.

At the same time, tense situations with a high potential for conflict persist in many other parts of Africa. The steady deterioration in security in Darfur (Sudan), Chad and northern areas of the Central African Republic (CAR) has triggered forced displacement both within these countries and across neighbouring borders.

In Darfur, the lack of security jeopardizes humanitarian operations. Thousands of people in the region continue to be displaced by conflict and serious violations of their human rights. The Darfur Peace Agreement, which was signed in Abuja, Nigeria, in May 2006, did not result in an expected cessation of hostilities. On the contrary, it was followed by an increase in armed confrontations, particularly between the rebel factions which signed it and those that did not.

In Chad, the dramatic escalation in fighting between government and rebel forces threatens refugee security, with some camp-based refugees forcibly recruited into warring groups. The fighting also endangers IDPs and humanitarian staff, besides causing new displacements. Some 15,000 Chadian nationals have fled to west Darfur; another 63,000 of their compatriots have fled to other parts of Chad.

Meanwhile, growing insecurity in the northern areas of the CAR forced more than 30,000 people to cross the border into Cameroon, and another 5,000 into Chad, by October 2006. That brought the total number of CAR refugees in southern Chad to 43,000. In addition, an estimated 50,000 people have been forcibly displaced in the north of the country.



Armed confrontations and violence have also continued to drive people from their homes in Côte d'Ivoire, the DRC, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Somalia. In Somalia, fighting between the militias of the Union of Islamic Courts, warlords and the Transitional Federal Government, combined with drought in the Horn of Africa, has displaced tens of thousands of people. At the time of writing, more than 32,000 Somali refugees had sought refuge in the Dadaab region in north-eastern Kenya.

Meanwhile, secondary movements and migratory flows, particularly in the Southern Africa region, but also from West and East Africa to Europe and the Arabian peninsula, have heightened concerns about the impact of mixed population movements on the institution of asylum.

Ensuring a more timely and effective response to the plight of IDPs was a major thrust of humanitarian reform in 2006, especially through implementation of the inter-agency "cluster leadership approach". In this context, UNHCR consolidated its role in internal displacement situations as cluster lead for areas under its responsibility.

As endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), four countries were selected for the initial launch of the "cluster leadership approach": the DRC, Liberia, Somalia and Uganda. In these countries UNHCR has been instrumental in leading advocacy efforts and in developing strategies and projects aimed at improving IDP protection. In late 2006, the IASC endorsed the establishment of a protection cluster in Côte d'Ivoire



UNHCR has rehabilitated wells for IDPs and the local population to use in El Geneina in West Darfur, Sudan. *UNHCR / H. Caux*

under UNHCR leadership. UNHCR offices in the CAR, Chad and Sudan were also involved in activities for IDPs.

UNHCR cooperates with regional bodies and other partners to strengthen partnerships at the regional and sub-regional levels. The Office contributed to the African Union Ministerial Conference on Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Burkina Faso in June 2006. UNHCR and UNDP have reviewed their cooperation in Burundi, Liberia, the DRC, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda to improve the reintegration of returnees and early recovery projects. Similarly, ILO supported reintegration in Angola, Burundi and Liberia by deploying technical experts under the ILO-UNHCR Joint Technical Cooperation Programme. The Executive Heads of WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR undertook a joint mission to the Great Lakes in early 2006 to raise awareness of the needs of displaced people.

Along with protection and assistance, the search for durable solutions is at the top of UNHCR's agenda for Africa. Voluntary repatriation has remained the main option for most of the refugees from Burundi, the DRC, Liberia and Sudan. In February 2006, UNHCR shifted from facilitating to promoting the repatriation of Liberian refugees, in particular from Guinea and Sierra Leone.

In Benin, UNHCR is helping Togolese refugees to return voluntarily to their country. In June 2006, UNHCR began promoting the voluntary repatriation of Burundian

refugees. Notwithstanding pockets of insecurity in the eastern parts of the DRC, a lack of reintegration opportunities and uncertainty surrounding the electoral process, some 25,000 Congolese refugees returned to safe areas with UNHCR assistance. Repatriation to South Sudan in 2006 included movements from the CAR, the DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda — although sporadic insecurity in return areas and along repatriation routes has hurt operations.

Though some 14,500 Sudanese have repatriated, there are concerns for the sustainability of their return due to security risks, lack of educational opportunities, food shortages and poor or non-existent infrastructure. In Southern Africa, following the March 2006 agreement of the Zambia-Angola-UNHCR Tripartite Commission to resume the repatriation of Angolans from Zambia, more than 2,000 refugees have returned home. Another agreement between Angola, the DRC and UNHCR in October 2006 allowed the Office to help vulnerable Angolan refugees who had spontaneously settled in the DRC to return home.

UNHCR and host governments discussed options for the local integration of refugees opting to remain in asylum countries, especially Angolans in the DRC, Zambia and Namibia; DRC refugees in Angola; Sierra Leoneans in Guinea and Liberia; and Liberians in Guinea and Sierra Leone. Resettlement was also pursued strategically as a protection measure and a durable solution. Between

January and the end of September 2006, resettlement submissions were made for more than 14,400 people; these included group submissions of Kunama Eritreans from Ethiopia, Burundians from the United Republic of Tanzania, and Congolese (DRC) refugees who survived the massacre at the Gatumba camp in Burundi.

Under its mandate, UNHCR helps governments strengthen national protection systems in line with international instruments. In 2006, Uganda passed national refugee legislation and Djibouti acceded to the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. Another positive development was the accession of Senegal to the two international conventions relating to statelessness.

Specific initiatives to improve the delivery of protection and assistance to refugees and others of concern have made progress in the past year. By September 2006, the age, gender and diversity mainstreaming programme had been launched in all operations in Africa. In West Africa, at least a quarter of the membership of refugee committees was comprised of women. In Burundi, the DRC and Liberia, all returnee women received sanitary materials upon arrival — though budgetary constraints sometimes limited supply.

UNHCR continues to focus on HIV/AIDS prevention, especially through training, capacity-building and awareness activities. New programmes have been initiated in voluntary counselling and testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, post-exposure prophylaxis, antiretroviral therapy and care for the vulnerable.

Still, significant gaps have to be filled before UNHCR standards are attained in many sectors of assistance, including nutrition, health, education, water and sanitation. Many refugees in protracted situations endure the cumulative effects of recurrent shortfalls in basic protection and assistance. These constraints make it difficult to safeguard even core activities; for instance, impact reports cite an inability to print refugee identity cards and cuts in the construction of shelter and sanitary facilities.

Strategic objectives

UNHCR has established the following strategic objectives for Africa for the period 2007-2009:

- Develop comprehensive strategies to achieve durable solutions for urban, rural and camp-based refugees.
- Maximize the efficient use of allocated resources.
- Help develop government capacity to protect refugees and others of concern.
- Ensure the full participation of refugees and others of concern in the design of protection and assistance

programmes through age, gender and diversity mainstreaming.

- Promote the involvement of civil society in the protection of the displaced.
- Achieve a 100 per cent rate of registration, documentation and profiling of refugees and others of concern.
- Intervene in a timely manner to prevent or mitigate the impact of communicable diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS and malaria.
- Reduce acute malnutrition rates and improve educational facilities for children.
- Protect and assist IDPs in line with international standards and UNHCR's newly assigned responsibilities within the inter-agency response to internal displacement.
- Increase UNHCR's image and visibility.

Challenges

The main challenges UNHCR is expected to face in 2007 are as follows:

Political instability and insecurity: Despite UNHCR's determination to help as many refugees as possible to go home, persistent political instability and insecurity in parts of Africa make it difficult to implement durable solutions. Commitments to peace and good governance need to be translated into concrete action to bring an end to displacement. Access to refugees and others of concern is difficult in some areas; the cooperation of all concerned is needed to ensure unhindered access to the displaced.

Secure predictable funding at an adequate level: Inadequate funding for durable solutions, particularly for protracted situations, hampers UNHCR's ability to help refugees enjoy their basic rights, particularly to education. Such situations also thwart refugees' prospects for self-reliance and could hinder the strategic reorientation of UNHCR's activities from assistance to self-sufficiency.

Garner the international community's support for reconstruction and rehabilitation: Inadequate reintegration opportunities force many refugees to remain in exile or return to locations where their children can have access to better education and health care. For instance, the pace of returns to Burundi, the DRC and South Sudan can be sustained only if, in addition to improved security, funds are available for reintegration projects.

Create self-reliance and local integration opportunities: The lack of economic opportunities, food shortages, droughts and the disruption of farming cycles hamper refugees' efforts to become self-reliant. So does the reluctance of some asylum countries to support them: some politicians' negative attitudes towards refugees hurt prospects for local integration.

Address the root causes of displacement: Insufficient focus on (and political will to resolve) the root causes of forced displacement in Africa can jeopardize peace processes and provoke further displacement.

Preserve asylum in the face of mixed migration flows: Inadequate recognition of the situation of refugees and asylum seekers within migratory movements can have a negative impact on asylum systems.

Budget (USD)		
Country	Annual Programme Budget	
	2006	2007
Burundi	37,234,162	23,792,407
Central African Republic	5,428,940	2,013,589
Chad	74,337,462	69,368,365
Congo, Republic of the	6,817,537	4,947,726
Democratic Republic of the Congo	18,336,569	11,520,750
Gabon	3,620,963	2,274,905
Rwanda	6,724,352	4,927,870
United Republic of Tanzania	27,998,719	24,357,957
Regional activities ¹	9,659,400	8,775,000
Sub-total Central Africa and the Great Lakes	190,158,104	151,978,569
Djibouti	3,326,894	2,565,751
Eritrea	9,212,440	4,357,237
Ethiopia	15,332,397	14,835,859
Kenya ²	35,068,412	32,338,766
Somalia	7,155,371	6,103,812
Sudan	12,860,950	13,676,273
Uganda	16,250,358	17,949,014
Regional activities ³	0	6,008,000
Sub-total East and Horn of Africa	99,206,822	97,834,712
Benin	1,512,089	1,991,092
Cameroon	2,338,327	2,036,177
Côte d'Ivoire	9,682,813	7,013,640
Gambia ⁴	726,099	0
Ghana ⁵	8,531,345	9,642,754
Guinea	15,413,060	9,559,914
Liberia	39,084,990	32,265,201
Nigeria	3,440,989	2,983,129
Senegal	1,845,745	2,007,213
Sierra Leone	17,281,205	11,971,696
Togo	0	252,774
Regional activities ⁶	4,044,042	6,253,013
Sub-total West Africa	103,900,704	85,976,603
Angola	23,568,521	14,836,616
Botswana	2,295,356	2,396,276
Malawi	2,581,443	2,557,089
Mozambique	2,847,320	2,589,488
Namibia	2,243,872	2,364,818
South Africa	5,181,084	6,725,028
Zambia	11,836,159	9,794,885
Zimbabwe	2,303,349	2,120,621
Regional activities ⁷	3,300,000	2,000,000
Sub-total Southern Africa	56,157,104	45,384,821
Total Africa	449,422,734	381,174,705

¹ Includes assistance to refugees in the Central Africa and Great Lakes region, such as resettlement, repatriation, care and maintenance, as well as support costs for UNVs and consultants, and light aircraft charter costs.

² Includes the Regional Support Hub in Nairobi.

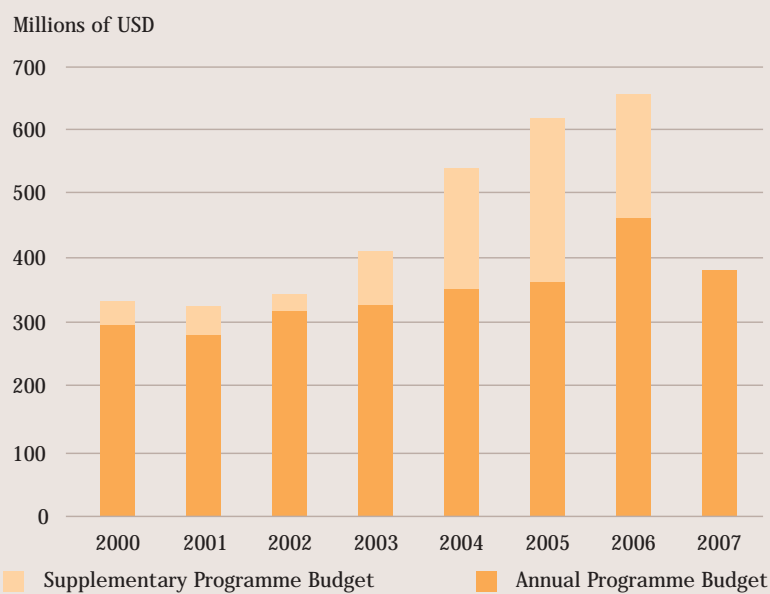
³ Includes provisions for regional activities in East and Horn of Africa to cover individual voluntary repatriation and intervention for malnutrition and malaria.

⁴ At the time of writing financial requirements for the Gambia were being finalized following the decision to maintain UNHCR's presence in 2007.

⁵ Includes the Regional Support Hub in Accra.

⁶ Includes basic assistance, voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement assistance for urban refugees in Benin and Senegal, as well as assistance to Togolese refugees.

Annual and Supplementary Programme Budgets 2000 - 2007



Note: The figures for 2000 to 2005 represent the final revised Annual and Supplementary Programme Budgets as presented in the Global Reports 2000-2005. For 2006, the revised Annual and Supplementary Programme Budgets as at 1 September 2006 have been used. For 2007, the initial ExCom-approved Annual Programme Budget has been used.