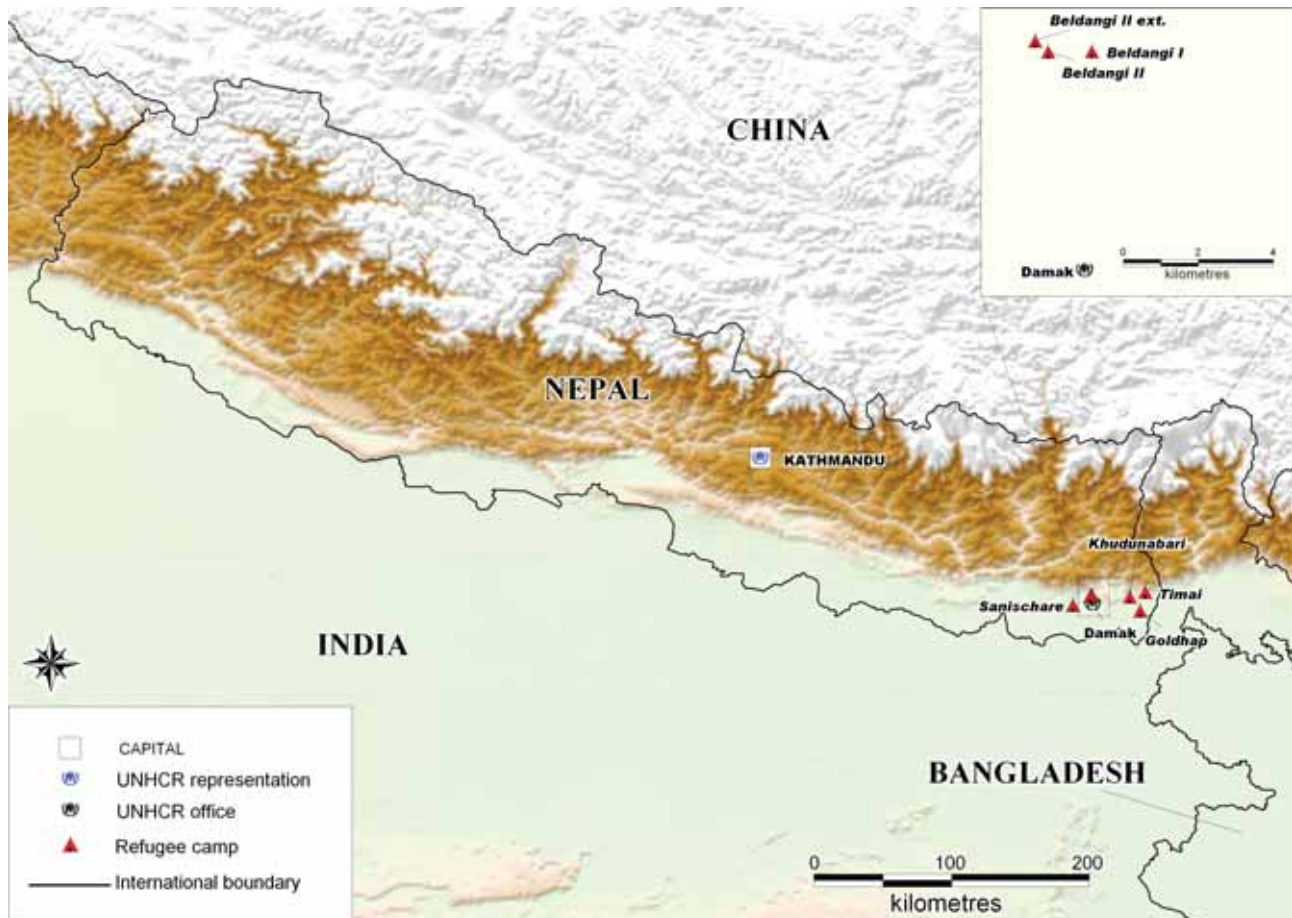


# Nepal



## Operational highlights

- In July, the Government of Nepal and UNHCR reached agreement on a census of refugees in camps in the country.
- UNHCR assisted more than 3,300 Tibetans in transit through Nepal, including approximately 2,400 new arrivals.
- The Office protected and assisted some 350 refugees and asylum-seekers in Kathmandu, including 200 new arrivals, and found durable solutions for them where possible.
- In the first such case, 16 extremely vulnerable refugees were resettled in third countries.
- UNHCR supported the search for solutions for the estimated 100,000 to 200,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nepal.
- The Office prepared for a comprehensive study on statelessness to be carried out in 2007.

## Working environment

At the beginning of 2006, pro-democracy political parties and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists (CPN-M) intensified their confrontation with the King and army. Mass arrests, severe restrictions on freedom of movement, country-wide strikes and protests culminated in what became known as the People's Movement 2. This forced the King to relinquish absolute power and restore Parliament in April.

A new Government was announced on 28 April and an indefinite unilateral ceasefire with the CPN-M followed suit. Negotiations began to bring the ten-year insurgency by the Maoists to an end. At the end of November, a Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed. This foresaw the establishment of a new Interim Government with the participation of all sides to the conflict. In December, an interim Constitution was promulgated, and elections for a Constituent Assembly have been scheduled for mid-2007.

The Citizenship Law was amended and now provides for the acquisition of Nepali Citizenship on the basis of birth and permanent residency. While most stateless people are included, refugees are apparently not viewed

as permanently residing in the country and are not yet subject to this provision.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement also foresaw the demobilization of Maoist fighters under United Nations supervision. With the cessation of hostilities, the security and human rights environment improved significantly. However, at the end of the year, another challenge emerged for the Government in the Terai region bordering India, where the Madhesi community and other groups launched a popular movement to protest their marginalization in national life and called for autonomy. Furthermore, though freedom of movement has improved in the country, security conditions at the local level remain unpredictable.

## Achievements and impact

### Main objectives

UNHCR aimed to provide legal and physical protection to refugees, asylum-seekers and others of concern while pursuing durable solutions. It also sought to contribute to the UN and governmental response to internal displacement by monitoring protection at the point of return. To secure harmonious relations between refugees and host communities, the Office promoted dialogue between them, and initiated income-generating projects of benefit to both groups, and protected the environment around the camps.

### Protection and solutions

The complexity of the changing political environment in 2006 hampered efforts to establish an international protection regime for refugees and asylum-seekers in Nepal. UNHCR continued to advocate for Nepal's accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, besides campaigning for a national legal framework on asylum and refugees.

The Office gained the strong support of a group of countries committed to finding solutions for refugees in Nepal in the negotiation with the Government to re-register camp residents in accordance with international standards. This exercise, to be completed in 2007, is expected to help UNHCR target those with special needs, identify durable solutions and issue accurate personal documents.

UNHCR assessed the individual asylum claims of urban refugees, and worked with an implementing partner to assist them.

A study on statelessness that UNHCR will carry out in the first half of 2007 will help determine the number of stateless people and determine how UNHCR can support the efforts of the Nepali authorities in granting and confirming Nepalese nationality, in liaison with civil society and other international agencies, including the UN mission.

The Office's advocacy for the adoption of an IDP policy emphasized effective implementation of the policy at the point of return.

## Activities and assistance

**Community services:** Targeted programmes addressed the special needs of different groups of refugees. Those affected by sexual and gender-based violence were provided with medical, legal and psycho-social support.

**Domestic needs and household support:** Most refugees in Nepal remained dependent on assistance to meet their household needs. All refugee families received cooking fuel. A shift to alternative fuels such as briquettes from kerosene led to significant operational savings. All refugee women and girls of reproductive age received sanitary napkins. Newborn infants were provided with blankets, and laundry soap was given monthly to all refugee families.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Bhutan	107,800	107,800	49	35
	Tibetans	20,200	-	48	-
Asylum-seekers	Bhutan	1,300	-	-	-
	Various	100	100	20	36
IDPs		100,000	100,000	-	-
Stateless	Stateless	3,400,000	-	-	-
Others of concern	Bhutan	10,000	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,639,400</b>	<b>207,900</b>		



UNHCR/D. Dixit

The census started in November 2006 will allow UNHCR and the Government of Nepal to have better information to serve an estimated 106,000 refugees.

**Education:** Almost all children aged five to 17 were enrolled in refugee-managed primary and secondary schools.

**Food:** UNHCR complemented the basic rations provided by WFP with additional food for refugees with special needs. Effective quality control and distribution monitoring mechanisms were put in place. All refugees were provided with 260 grammes of vegetables per week, and children with severe malnutrition were given therapeutic feeding.

**Health and nutrition:** Health services were rehabilitated to comply with UNHCR standards (one health facility for 10,000 refugees). All refugees were offered courses on reproductive health and assisted with family planning.

**Legal assistance:** Reporting and legal response mechanisms for sexual and gender-based violence were put in place. With the implementation of the census, UNHCR is working to keep systematically abreast of the protection concerns of the camp population through an updated database with information on both registered and unregistered individuals. Refugees will be provided with individual photo identity cards. Thirteen extremely vulnerable individuals were allowed to depart Nepal for resettlement.

**Operational support (to agencies):** Adequate management structures supported planned activities,

and UNHCR contributed towards the operational support costs of implementing partners.

**Sanitation:** Basic hygiene was kept with the repair and maintenance of latrines, regular garbage collection, cleanup campaigns and safe management of the waste from health centres.

**Shelter and other infrastructure:** All families in the camps had adequate shelter, and 19 per cent of huts were renovated over the course of the year. The internal roads in the camps were accessible throughout the year.

**Transport and logistics:** Access to the refugee camps was unhindered, despite a difficult operational environment. Sufficient stocks of relief items and the participation of women in their distribution ensured smooth and fair deliveries.

**Water:** No outbreak of water-borne diseases was reported. The availability of drinking water in the camps was in line with standards and its quality was regularly tested.

## Constraints

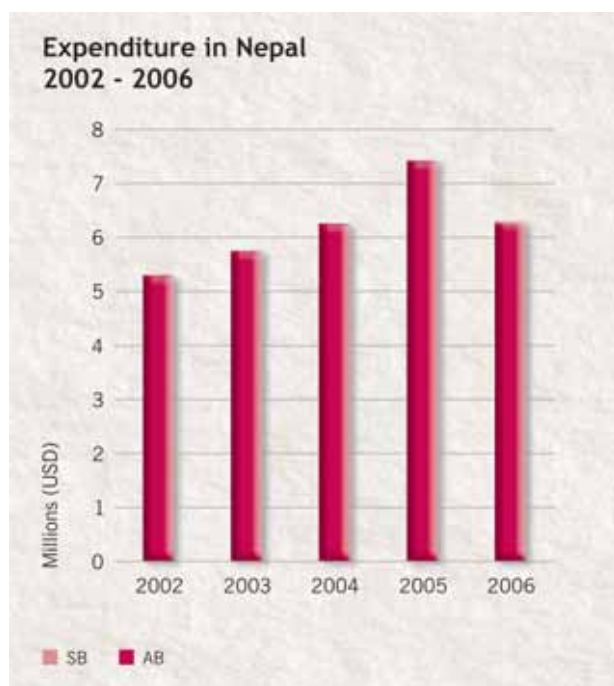
The camps are cramped, and there is almost no room for new construction.

Government restrictions on exit permits for urban refugees delayed durable solutions. As refugees are not allowed to work, they continue to be dependent on UNHCR assistance. For five months in 2006, the Government did not issue exit permits to Tibetan new arrivals, leading to overcrowding at the reception centre and higher costs for UNHCR.

## Financial information

Frequent strikes during the year at times slightly delayed the implementation of programme activities. They also increased operational costs because of the need to organize convoys for security and pay higher market prices for relief items.

The increase in the expenditures from 2002 to 2005 reflects the rise in the price of kerosene. Shifting to briquettes as cooking fuel in 2006 has reversed this trend. In addition, UNHCR operational budgets had to be reduced by 20 per cent in 2006, but the operation managed to make ends meet by changing the type of heating fuel.



## Organization and implementation

### Management

UNHCR operated with 60 staff (17 internationals, including JPOs and UNVs, and 43 nationals, including national UNVs). UNHCR's representation office in Kathmandu was responsible for the overall management of the country operation as well as liaising with the Government, diplomatic missions and other parties.

Operations in eastern Nepal were coordinated by the office in Damak.

## Working with others

UNHCR has consolidated implementing arrangements with nine partners (three international, including UNV, and six national, of which one was governmental). In the context of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee collaborative approach, UNHCR closely cooperated with the other UN agencies involved, namely OHCHR and OCHA, as well as with the Norwegian Refugee Council for issues related to the internal displacement.

## Overall assessment

The main achievements of 2006 were the start of the re-registration in the seven camps in southern Nepal and the resettlement of an initial small number of vulnerable refugees. These achievements were made possible by the cooperation of the Government and the group of countries dedicated to supporting UNHCR's search for solutions for the 100,000 refugees who have lived in the camps for a decade and a half.

Still, implementing those durable solutions will require time and patience. Voluntary repatriation, the preferred option for many, remains elusive. Third-country resettlement has been proposed for a high number of camp residents, but its implementation requires the final clearance of the Government of Nepal.

UNHCR was able to clear most of the refugee status determination backlog in Kathmandu in 2006. Solutions for urban refugees are often difficult to find and to implement due to the lack of options and the complicated exit requirements of the Government, which cause delays in the resettlement process. UNHCR is working with the authorities to ease these procedural obstacles.

### Partners

**Government agency:** Ministry of Home Affairs / National Unit for the Coordination of Refugee Affairs.

#### Implementing partners

**NGOs:** Association of Medical Doctors of Asia, Caritas (Nepal), Lutheran World Federation, Nepal Bar Association, Norwegian Refugee Council, ProPublic.

**Others:** Tribhuvan University – Faculty of Law.

#### Operational partners

**NGOs:** ICMC, IRC.

**Others:** OCHA, OHCHR, UNV, WFP.

## Budget, income and expenditure

	Final budget	Income from contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other funds available <sup>2</sup>	Total funds available	Total expenditure
AB	6,951,181	5,369,150	871,027	6,240,177	6,240,177
SB <sup>3</sup>	2,222,938	233,508	(16,346)	217,162	48,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,174,119</b>	<b>5,602,658</b>	<b>854,681</b>	<b>6,457,339</b>	<b>6,288,749</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

<sup>2</sup> Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

<sup>3</sup> The SB figures apply to the IDP operation. The budget does not include a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

## Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Previous years' projects
	AB	SB	Total	AB and SB
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,693,702	19,902	1,713,605	0
Community services	65,211	0	65,211	8,056
Domestic needs and household support	946,531	0	946,531	242,199
Education	380,939	0	380,939	61,218
Food	202,619	0	202,619	48,477
Health and nutrition	603,834	0	603,834	135,563
Legal assistance	150,475	27,792	178,267	2,135
Operational support (to agencies)	206,165	878	207,042	77,835
Sanitation	11,660	0	11,660	8,505
Shelter and infrastructure	73,781	0	73,781	90,971
Transport and logistics	121,713	0	121,713	35,357
Water	78,150	0	78,150	22,473
Instalments with implementing partners	628,047	0	628,047	(732,789)
<b>Sub-total operational activities</b>	<b>5,162,827</b>	<b>48,572</b>	<b>5,211,399</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme support	1,077,350	0	1,077,350	0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>6,240,177</b>	<b>48,572</b>	<b>6,288,749</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cancellation on previous years' expenditure</b>				<b>0</b>
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Payments made	3,160,644	0	3,160,644	
Reporting received	(2,532,597)	0	(2,532,597)	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>628,047</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>628,047</b>	
<b>Previous years' report</b>				
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Outstanding 1st January				818,809
Reporting received				(732,789)
Refunded to UNHCR				(82,685)
Adjustments				0
<b>Balance</b>				<b>3,335</b>