



Southern Africa

Major developments

Overall political stability in Southern Africa allowed for a sustained shift of focus from crisis management to long-term development priorities and continued efforts to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic. With a return to peace, especially in Angola, and in the absence of any major new refugee emergencies, UNHCR concentrated on the central goal of pursuing durable solutions for the protracted refugee situations in various countries of asylum in the region.

The Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of Zambia formally notified UNHCR of their interest in extending the repatriation operation to those Angolan refugees who had spontaneously settled in these countries. As a result, UNHCR reviewed the plans, timelines and resource requirements to complete the repatriation of Angolan refugees and will call on the international community to fund the operation.

UNHCR launched a regional registration project in mid-2004 aimed at systematically registering all refugees and asylum-seekers in host countries and issuing each person with an identity card. The project was

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



successfully piloted in Malawi, with a view to replicating the experience in other countries and building up a reliable regional database. The project was extended to Mozambique in December 2004.

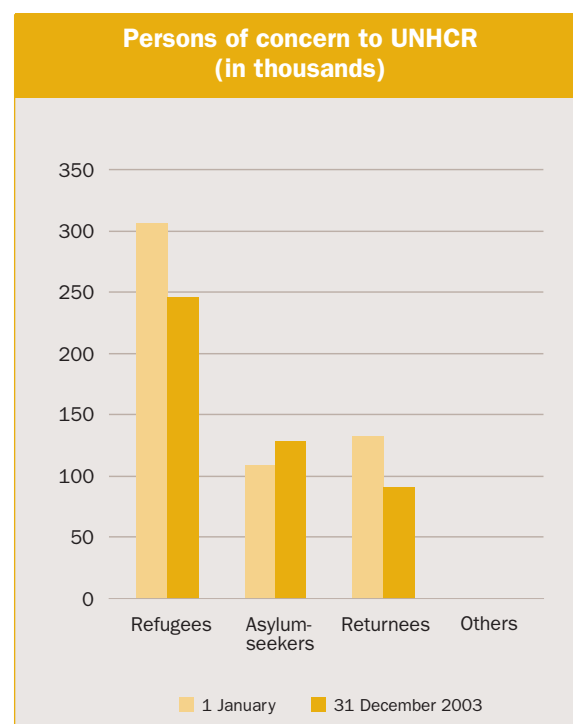
The backlog of asylum applications continued to pose a serious challenge. However, the number of asylum-seekers awaiting status determination declined as a direct outcome of the above-mentioned registration project. Implementation throughout Southern Africa in 2005 is predicted to further reduce the RSD backlog.

As the AIDS pandemic showed little sign of slowing, the integration of HIV/AIDS programmes into refugee operations in Southern Africa remained a high priority. As part of UNHCR's strategy to reduce this vulnerability, important linkages were established with national HIV/AIDS programmes in host countries. Camp-based clinical services were greatly enhanced through training and support provided by host governments, donors and technical experts. In cooperation with UNFPA and others, condoms were distributed in most camps and target figures were achieved.

As an integral part of contingency preparedness for any sudden influx of refugees within the Southern Africa region, UNHCR maintained a regional stockpile of relief items in Zambia. The ready availability of non-food items greatly benefited the large-scale

Angolan repatriation and other operations in the region.

In 2004, a high priority was accorded to the enhancement of rational and effective resource utilization and management. UNHCR's operations in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe were audited and the recommendations implemented.





Angola: In many provinces, refugees and returnees who receive UNHCR assistance live side by side with IDPs.
UNHCR/N. Behring-Chisholm

Challenges and concerns

The situation of Rwandan refugees in Southern Africa remained unchanged. The overwhelming majority of Rwandan refugees remained reluctant to repatriate despite tripartite agreements concluded among UNHCR, the Government of Rwanda and

most of the governments of states hosting Rwandan refugees. The current attitude of Rwandan refugees towards repatriation is likely to persist for the foreseeable future unless some major new development persuades them to repatriate.



In refugee-hosting countries, UNHCR encountered other constraints, such as the outbreak of a meningitis epidemic in Namibia which resulted in the postponement of movements to Angola for almost two months. The general lack of facilities in areas of return in Angola also made refugees who had initially expressed a wish to return more reluctant to go back.

Restrictions imposed by the Government of Angola on the importation of genetically modified food resulted in temporary food shortages in returnee areas. This led to further challenges in the drive to successfully reintegrate returnees in Angola.

Progress towards solutions

Some 90,000 Angolan refugees were repatriated from Zambia, Namibia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of the Congo, Botswana and South Africa. Local integration schemes were initiated in Zambia, Mozambique and Malawi for full-scale implementation in 2005.

The legal landscape remained friendly to refugees and asylum-seekers. States that had acceded to the international refugee conventions and adopted national legislation adhered to their commitments. However, the reservations some of the countries have made concerning the freedom of movement of refugees and their access to certain services continued to limit prospects for self-reliance and sustainable local integration. In consequence, UNHCR engaged in a constructive dialogue with host governments to persuade them to extend to refugees the employment, health care, education and other such opportunities and services enjoyed by their citizens. The efforts of UNHCR country offices made limited headway but awareness levels among decision-makers showed marked improvements.

Operations

In **Botswana**, UNHCR assisted some 3,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, primarily in Dukwi settlement, located in the north-east of the country. Conditions remain difficult in the settlement and local integration possibilities are extremely limited, given the isolation of the settlement and the consequent lack of employment opportunities.

However, significant success was achieved in finding durable solutions for Angolan refugees, with the first organized repatriation to Angola in December and the Government's continued facilitation of citizenship for small groups of Angolans who wish to remain in Botswana. The repatriation of Namibians originating from the Caprivi region remained stalled. However, UNHCR was able to facilitate the resettlement of several members of the Namibian leadership from

there to third countries, and it is hoped that this will smooth the way for a resumption of repatriation early in 2005.

UNHCR was unable to convince the Government of Botswana to reverse its policy of detaining asylum-seekers at a centre for illegal immigrants in Francistown; nor would the Government integrate refugees into national HIV/AIDS initiatives.

In **Malawi**, UNHCR's main objectives were: to ensure that minimum standards in the provision of assistance to refugees were maintained; to guarantee safe asylum for persons of concern to UNHCR in accordance with internationally recognized standards; and to seek appropriate durable solutions for the majority of the refugees, while encouraging the Government of Malawi to adhere to its international obligations to provide refugee protection.

The total refugee population decreased from some 13,000 to 7,000 after the verification/photo capture exercise conducted from August to December. Of these, over 6,000 camp-based refugees received material assistance while another 864 urban refugees received international protection. An estimated 850 new asylum-seekers, mainly from the Great Lakes Region, arrived at the entry point at the Northern Malawi border and a few entered Malawi through the eastern border. Most of the new arrivals settled in the Luwani refugee camp.

The empowerment of women received due attention through rights-awareness sessions and self-supporting activities to enhance their protection. The High Commissioner's Five Commitments to Women were implemented and included participation of women in camp leadership committees and in the management of distribution of food/non-food items, individual registration and documentation, and distribution of sanitary kits.

In 2004 UNHCR continued to lobby the Government to withdraw its reservations to the 1951 Refugee Convention and to adhere to the 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU refugee Convention, though with limited success. However, several improvements were noted. The Government continued to allow refugee pupils to enrol in government schools and permitted some refugees to set up business ventures. Refugees were also allowed to move freely in urban centres with the permission of the camp administrator. The formation of an Urban Residence Committee to manage urban residence of refugees was another

sign of government willingness to moderate its reservations.

For the Rwandan refugees, voluntary repatriation was promoted as a durable solution. A tripartite meeting was held in March and was followed by a "go-and-see/come-and-tell" visit with 12 Rwandese refugees travelling to Rwanda to observe the situation in their country. Following this event, 16 refugees returned to Rwanda. A total of 51 refugees were resettled in Australia, while eight refugees left for Canada.

The reopening of Luwani refugee camp gave refugees sufficient land to engage in farming activities. Baseline surveys were conducted, and the refugee and local Malawian communities were sensitized on the short-term benefits that could in time lead to local integration of the refugees. However, the reservations attached to the 1951 Refugee Convention remain an obstacle to long-term local integration.

Mozambique hosted approximately 6,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in 2004, primarily from the DRC, Burundi and Rwanda. This figure, less than half of the 2003 total, was arrived at following a comprehensive country-wide registration exercise. UNHCR assisted more than 4,000 refugees and asylum-seekers in Marratane settlement in northern Mozambique. The issuance of identification documents to all refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as a reorientation of assistance in the Marratane settlement towards self-reliance, were important first steps towards local integration. Moreover, the Mozambican Government continued its policy of permitting self-reliant refugees and asylum-seekers to reside outside of Marratane. Rather more limited success was achieved with the refugee status determination procedures, and nearly 5,000 cases remained outstanding at the end of the year.

In **Namibia**, the total number of registered refugees and asylum-seekers was estimated at 13,800 at the beginning of 2004. In August 2004, a verification exercise was conducted to update the refugee database for the repatriation operation and to re-issue ration cards. Following the repatriation of some 5,800 individuals, the refugee population fell to just under 8,800 by the end of December 2004. UNHCR's presence in the country was adjusted in light of that decline, and the Office will in future focus primarily on strengthening the capacity of its government counterpart and local NGOs.

In March 2004, a "go-and-see/come-and-tell" visit to Angola was organized for a group of refugee representatives to assess the situation in the main areas of return. A tripartite agreement was signed in November 2003 between the Government of Namibia, Rwanda and UNHCR for the repatriation of Rwandan refugees. The repatriation was scheduled to start in 2004, but did not materialize. Finally, some 30 cases were submitted to resettlement countries for their consideration. Namibia continued to receive asylum-seekers, mainly from the Great Lakes Region, and some 250 individuals arrived during the year. However, the RSD procedures did not function properly and resulted in a backlog of some 1,000 asylum claims at the end of 2004. UNHCR continued to encourage the Government of Namibia to lift its reservation to article 26 of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

UNHCR's policy priorities, the High Commissioner's Five Commitments to Women, environment development and protection, and HIV/AIDs prevention were thoroughly mainstreamed in all ongoing sectoral activities. UNHCR also promoted the empowerment of women and young people.

Local integration prospects for refugees remained a challenge as Namibia is still reluctant to locally integrate refugees, who were still strictly confined to the camps. However, a few skilled refugees were issued with work permits on the condition that they would not displace Namibian nationals.

Zimbabwe hosted a total of 10,600 refugees of whom some 1,500 resided in Tongogara camp. The remaining refugees were spontaneously settled in major cities. While UNHCR continued to provide multisectoral assistance to camp-based refugees, refugees in urban centres continued to live on their own, without material assistance from UNHCR. Vulnerable refugees were assisted on a case by case basis.

UNHCR endeavoured to empower refugees in Tongogara camp, helping them to rediscover societal coping mechanisms through self-sustaining activities, mainly involving agriculture and natural resource management. No repatriation was possible; however, some 60 individuals were resettled in third countries.

The general socio-economic situation in Zimbabwe continued to deteriorate and self-reliance in urban

centres remained problematic. On the whole, refugee protection in Zimbabwe was adversely affected by rising xenophobia, a dire economic context including hyperinflation; the Government's refusal to issue work permits to refugees and the enforced encampment policy. As a result, there was a continued flow of irregular movers from Zimbabwe to South Africa.

Funding

The level of earmarked contributions for the subregion increased quite substantially from 43 per cent in 2003 to 54 per cent, in 2004, of the annual budget. This was mainly attributed to the fact that the Angola operation was included in the annual budget. While smaller programmes in the region generally received little attention from donors, UNHCR's Angola programme formed part of the 2004 Consolidated Appeals Process and received substantial amounts of earmarked contributions. UNHCR continued to lobby governments for increased contributions to UNHCR programmes worldwide and was very pleased to note that the Government of Angola joined the Governments of South Africa and Botswana on the list of donors that provided financial support to UNHCR's operations in Africa.

Restricted voluntary contributions (USD)		
Earmarking ¹	Donor	Annual programme budget
Angola		
	<i>Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe E.V (DEU)</i>	123,967
	Germany	1,184,834
	Japan	1,500,000
	Miscellaneous donors / Private donors in Canada	72,794
	Miscellaneous donors / Private donors in Italy	156,541
	Netherlands	900,000
	Norway	1,579,246
	Spain	1,738,108
	Statoil, Norway	90,000
	Switzerland	396,825
	United Kingdom	1,305,970
	United States of America	3,600,000
	USA for UNHCR	98,757
Sub-total		12,747,045
Botswana		
	United States of America	140,930
Sub-total		140,930
Malawi		
	Australia for UNHCR	50,000
	<i>Deutsche Stiftung für UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe E.V (DEU)</i>	97,442
	Japan Association for UNHCR	17,447
	Miscellaneous donors / Private donors in Canada	50,000
	Miscellaneous donors / Private donors in Italy	19,910
	United States of America	132,198
Sub-total		366,997
Mozambique		
	United States of America	144,062
Sub-total		144,062
Namibia		
	Italy	367,647
	United States of America	200,000
Sub-total		567,647 ▶▶

Earmarking ¹	Donor	Annual programme budget
Southern Africa		
	Angola	296,614
	Canada	763,359
	Denmark	1,317,957
	Finland	1,081,425
	Japan	2,000,000
	South Africa	146,719
	Sweden	3,983,516
Sub-total		9,589,590
Zambia		
	Canada	373,134
	European Commission	30,836
	Japan	1,500,000
	UN Trust Fund for Human Security	738,625
	United States of America	3,039,716
Sub-total		5,682,311
Total		29,238,583

¹ For more information on earmarking, please refer to the donor profiles.

Budget and expenditure (USD)		
Country	Revised budget	Expenditure
	Annual programme budget	
Angola	19,188,432	19,101,960
Botswana	2,384,286	2,339,175
Malawi	2,165,879	2,125,266
Mozambique	2,368,566	2,368,566
Namibia	4,677,801	4,675,015
South Africa	2,852,512	2,808,845
Zambia	16,466,818	16,338,722
Zimbabwe	2,031,187	2,031,187
Regional projects ¹	2,518,516	2,476,708
Total	54,653,997	54,265,444

¹ Includes local integration of refugees, scholarships for refugee students, external relations activities and emergency response capacity in the region (included under the Financial report for South Africa).