

Ethiopia

Main Objectives

- Provide international protection and material assistance to refugees in Ethiopia (fostering self-reliance whenever possible).
- Implement a plan of action in relation to the declaration of the cessation clause for the Eritrean refugees.
- Promote the voluntary repatriation of 20,000 Somali refugees to northwest Somalia and facilitate the return of Ethiopian nationals (of ethnic Somali origin) currently living alongside refugees.
- Rehabilitate areas in and around the refugee settlements.
- Promote the well-being of the most vulnerable refugees (women, children and elderly).



Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2003	Dec. 2003
Eritrean Refugees	4,780 ¹	6,460 ¹
Somali Refugees	31,942	11,942
Sudanese Refugees	91,977	101,477
Urban Refugees	550	525
Total	129,249	120,404

¹ Projection is based on the current number of asylum-seekers, which is approximately 140 per month.

Total Requirements: USD 19,149,457

Working Environment

Recent Developments

With the repatriation of the Somali refugees to northwest Somalia, the refugee population in Ethiopia has decreased considerably, from over 1,400,000 in the early 1990s (mainly Sudanese and Somalis), to some 140,000 in 2002 (Sudanese, Somalis and Eritreans).

The Machakos Peace Process may provide a chance for Sudanese refugees, who have been living in Ethiopia since 1983, to voluntarily repatriate, and to this end, UNHCR will co-ordinate contingency planning for a possible repatriation with other offices in the region. Of the 35,000 refugees whose return UNHCR planned for in 2002, some 25,230

had been repatriated by the end of September. This rate is fairly encouraging, but unfortunately continued reports of fighting may have an adverse effect on the rate of returns in the coming months. Further contingency plans for a new influx of refugees will therefore have to be drawn up even as preparations are made for voluntary repatriation.

Constraints

Chronic political instability in southern Somalia and southern Sudan have impeded voluntary repatriation to these areas. The ongoing conflicts in these areas directly affect security in Ethiopia's border regions where refugee camps are located. On account of

deteriorating security conditions in Gambella, current conditions in the Somali National Regional State and the Tigray National Regional State have been classified by the UN Security as phase III. This has necessarily restricted the movement of UN staff and implementing partners and consequently affected the delivery of material assistance to refugees.

Despite Ethiopia's history of hospitality towards refugees, lack of refugee legislation has hampered the development of asylum practice that might empower refugees. Thus, obtaining refugee status is not a viable option for most of the refugees. In terms of durable solutions, constitutional constraints on the allotment of land restrict refugees' prospects of local settlement and integration. Frequent drought has aggravated food insecurity in some of the refugee hosting areas. In addition, the limited capacity of national NGOs restricts the delivery of services to refugees. Ethiopia's reservation under Article 17(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention on the right of employment of refugees also limits their prospects of local integration. Furthermore, a lack of available resettlement experts has slowed down the processing of resettlement cases and this too has led to limited opportunities in finding durable solutions for refugees.

The refugee programme in Ethiopia has been hampered by financial constraints, affecting the smooth hand-over of infrastructure to the Government. Moreover, owing to insufficient numbers of protection officers, UNHCR has at various points been hard pressed to deliver a high standard of refugee protection activities.

Strategy

Protection and Solution

Ethiopia acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention, its 1967 Protocol and the 1969 OAU Convention. UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Government on the adoption of national refugee legislation, and will conduct workshops for government officials and implementing partners on international refugee protection principles and refugee status determination. Particular attention will be paid to the protection of refugee women, refugee children and other vulnerable persons.

UNHCR estimates that some 20,000 of the 32,000 Somali refugees remaining in eastern Ethiopia will repatriate by the end of the year 2003. The remaining 10,000 refugees from southern Somalia would all be housed in a single remaining camp, following a revalidation/screening exercise.

With regard to the Sudanese refugees, UNHCR will work on preparations for voluntary repatriation if the Machakos Peace Agreement holds and ends the conflict. At the same time, UNHCR will pursue local settlement opportunities. It is also envisaged that some 2,000 refugees will submit applications for resettlement in a third country.

Assistance

The provision of vocational training to refugees will be given priority in 2003, with a special focus on increasing literacy among female refugees. Women's committees will be supported by the provision of informal adult literacy education, vocational skills training and workshops. Existing centres for women in five camps will be encouraged to actively pursue special education programmes for women. The High Commissioner's five commitments to improve the status of refugee women will be implemented and in keeping with these commitments, UNHCR will ensure the direct participation of refugee women in all management and leadership committees in the camps, especially in the management and distribution of food and non-food items. A crucial part of the assistance programme will be the provision of sanitary materials to all women and girls.

The Office will develop an integrated country-level strategy to address SGBV and give priority to programmes to prevent sexual exploitation and violence against refugee women and children. UNHCR and UNFPA will continue to implement the 18-month reproductive health project that was started in 2001. In all the camps, information campaigns against FGM will be reinforced.

Children's rights will be advocated through Action for the Rights of the Child (a rights-based inter-agency training project to increase the capacity of UNHCR, governments and NGO staff to protect children of concern to UNHCR), peace education workshops, recreational activities and family tracing.



Providing clean drinking water for refugees is of primary importance to UNHCR. Sudanese refugees in Bonga camp at a water source in Gambella region. UNHCR / B. Neeleman

UNHCR will support management of schools by the refugee community, and will build awareness amongst parents of the adverse effects of child labour, in order to reduce the number of children who are hired to herd animals or to work as domestic helpers. A special programme which was designed in 2000 to tackle the problem of child labour in Kebribeyah will be adopted in all refugee camps.

In 2003, UNHCR will fund programmes such as those for school meals and the provision of school uniforms, in order to raise the level of school enrolment (to at least one third of the school-age population) and in particular to encourage more refugee girls to attend secondary school. Sports and recreational activities will also be promoted to encourage higher enrolment rates.

Environmental awareness programmes will be strengthened and traditional forest protection methods will be used. Some concepts from the "Roots and Shoots" programme will be introduced to provide young refugees with the chance to participate in environmental and community-based activities. According to a study conducted by the Ethiopian Mapping Authority in 2001, the prolonged presence of refugees in eastern Ethiopia has resulted in the destruction of natural resources in the area. Forest resources have been depleted as a result of heavy use by refugees and host communities. To counter this situation, a multi-component strategy will be adopted; this will entail the raising of tree seedlings in nurseries estab-

lished by UNHCR, promotion of energy-saving stoves and construction of ovens from mud bricks. The environmental rehabilitation of previously closed camps will also continue in 2003.

UNHCR and the Tigray National Regional authorities will promote the use of energy-saving stoves and plant nurseries (for tree seedlings). An environmental education programme (formal and non-formal) will be implemented for local communities in the vicinity of the Wa'ala Nhibi

camp (northern Ethiopia).

Urban Refugees

UNHCR will aim to process all asylum applications still awaiting RSD. At the same time, resettlement opportunities will be pursued for those who are eligible, particularly for women at risk. A subsistence allowance will be provided for food, housing and clothing expenses, as well as for medical services. School-age children will continue to be enrolled in primary schools. Vocational skills training and income generation schemes will continue if sufficient financing can be found.

Desired Impact

This can be summarised as: some degree of self-sufficiency in food for the Sudanese refugees; continuation of the voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees, especially to north-west Somalia, and the relocation of all remaining Somali refugees into one camp; better humanitarian assistance and protection for the remaining 12,000 refugees (following the consolidation of several camps into one); nationality screening of persons who remain in the camp to ascertain whether they are Ethiopians or Somalis; consolidation of camps, environmental rehabilitation, and hand-over of infrastructure to the Government (after the planned closure of the Aisha and Hartisheik camps takes effect in 2003) and assistance for the UN Country Team in the adoption of a Comprehensive Development Plan for Refugee Affected Locations.

Organisation and Implementation

Management Structure

UNHCR's Regional Directorate in Addis Ababa was closed in September 2001, following the centralisation of the Africa Bureau at Headquarters in Geneva. Consequently, as of June 2002, the Branch Office has become the Regional Liaison Office (RLO) with the same status as it had prior to

Offices
Addis Ababa
Assosa
Gambella
Jijiga
Mankush
Shire

Partners
Government Agencies
Administration of Refugee and Returnee Affairs
Bureau of Education
Bureau of Health
Bureau of Water Resources and Development
Ethiopian Road Authority
Livestock, Environment and Crop Development Bureau
Natural Resources Development (Gambella and Assosa)
Tigray National Regional Bureau of Agriculture
Zonal Bureau of Agriculture
NGOs
Hope for the Horn
Hugh Pilkington Charitable Trust
International Rescue Committee
Integrated Service for AIDS Prevention and Support Organisation
Jesuit Refugee Service
Maternal and Child Care Development Organisation
Opportunities Industrial Centre (Ethiopia)
Organisation for Rehabilitation and Development in Amhara
Refugee Care (Netherlands)
Refugee and Returnee Affairs Department
Rehabilitation and Development Organisation
Relief Society of Tigray
Save the Children (Sweden)
Save the Children Fund (UK)
Save the Children (USA)
Society of International Missionaries

1999. The RLO is headed by a Regional Liaison Representative who has assumed additional responsibilities for follow-up to and implementation of the Comprehensive Implementation Plan (CIP), follow-up on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and ensuring that transitional issues of concern to refugees are incorporated into the agenda of the Africa Union (AU) and the broader humanitarian community. In 2003, the programme will be supported by 21 international, 112 national staff and four JPOs.

Co-ordination

In 2003, UNHCR will work closely with the Government of Ethiopia, international and national NGOs, UN agencies, IOM, AU, ICRC and IGAD. UNHCR will continue to participate in all fora and mechanisms set up by the UN Country Team to ensure that development and humanitarian issues of concern to refugees and host populations are included in relevant relief and development strategies. The Office will urge donors and development actors to contribute to the rehabilitation of areas where refugees will be reintegrated.

Budget (USD)	
Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	2,732,339
Community Services	896,800
Crop Production	149,937
Domestic Needs	996,358
Education	1,936,372
Fisheries	1,168
Food	58,040
Forestry	690,258
Health	2,150,508
Income Generation	94,881
Legal Assistance	290,767
Livestock	56,672
Operational Support (to Agencies)	1,950,542
Sanitation	246,341
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	350,840
Transport / Logistics	3,246,210
Water	907,506
Total Operations	16,755,539
Programme Support	2,393,918
Total	19,149,457