

## **DJIBOUTI: Implementing the 10- Point Plan of Action**

Djibouti has always been a favoured destination for migrants and refugees from countries in the region, notably Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. The migrant population is estimated to represent 20 per cent of the total population of the country. The Djiboutian population shares strong ethnic links (Somali, Afar) with Somaliland, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Yemen, which explains the migratory movements between these countries. Djibouti has been described as an oasis of peace in a stormy desert, in a sub region rife with insecurity: the ongoing threat of a border war between Eritrean and Ethiopia, the continuing battle between supporters of the Government in Somalia and the supporters of the opposition Islamists, and the recent turmoil in Kenya. The economic and political stability in the country has attracted thousands of impoverished people in search of better economic prospects. The situation took a new twist over the past two to three years with the increased use of Djibouti as a transit country by smugglers and traffickers en route to the Arab Gulf States and to Europe. The country's proximity to more prosperous countries in the Arab Gulf and the hope to continue their journey to more developed western countries has therefore equally worked as a pull factor for migrants.

During the first months of 2008, a large number of migrants and refugees chose the route by boat to Yemen via Djibouti as an alternative to exposure to reckless smugglers in Bossaso, Somalia. Since January 2008, 2,213 new arrivals from South/Central Somalia have been registered by UNHCR, the peak being in February with 1,100 persons (Jan: 251; Mar: 862). A continuous flow of migrants and refugees was regrouping in the no man's land between Somaliland and Djibouti, trying to cross the border. Smugglers started to roam the "no man's land", taking asylum seekers by boat from Zeila (Somaliland) to the North of Djibouti and then on to Eritrea or Yemen. In March, the Government reacted by arresting approximately 200 migrants and refugees mainly from Somalia and Ethiopia each week. They were picked up at the Eritrea border, on the northern shores of Djibouti (Obock and Khor-Angar) or after having been intercepted at sea while trying to cross the straight between Djibouti and Yemen. Those arrested were detained in Obock for weeks, after which 80 who expressed the wish to claim asylum were transferred to Djibouti, the rest were deported.

UNHCR's activities in Djibouti are aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Eligibility Office and the National Eligibility Commission regarding reception of asylum seekers, provision of adequate information and assistance, refugee status determination, providing protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees in Djibouti and giving technical support to the Government for the drafting of comprehensive refugee legislation that will provide better protection for the populations of concern to UNHCR.

**10 POINT PLAN**  
**1. Cooperation**  
**among key**  
**partners**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Achievements</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Actors</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Constraints</b>
Institutionalize regular contacts with Government authorities and decision makers.	A high-level coordination mechanism with monthly meetings between UNHCR, WFP, the Executive Secretary of ONARS and the Minister of the Interior has been functioning since April 2008.	Monthly meetings to share information and find solutions to challenges on security matters, malnutrition and other humanitarian concerns.	UNHCR, WFP, ONARS, Minister of the Interior	Already established, meetings on a monthly basis.	Availability of the Minister.
Identify and establish contact with potential governmental partners (e.g. American, German, French troops belonging to the anti-terrorism coalition forces), who would be crucial cooperation partners on mixed migration issues with the aim of getting material support.	Contact established with the coalition troops – jointly and individually with the US and French contingents.	Hold regular briefing sessions on movements and trends.	UNHCR, anti-terrorism coalition, IGAD	Contact established, follow-up short term.	Among the US contingent regular six months' changes of personnel; difficulties to maintain contacts/ links with rotating personnel.  Different programming/ planning cycles of the agencies might be a pose challenges to tap into resources.
Build a network of partners working on mixed migration issues for regular information exchange and data collection (IGAD, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, EU Commission, Caritas, Djiboutian Red Cross, UNESCO-PEER, AMDA and	Meeting with Executive Secretary of IGAD held on 27 April 08 to discuss Yemen Conference and UNHCR's partnership with IGAD.	Forge partnerships in main areas of arrival and departure where UNHCR has no presence to get information on movements of people.  Engage IGAD focal points	IGAD, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, EU Commission, Caritas, Djiboutian Red Cross, UNESCO-PEER, AMDA,	Short term: By end June 2008	Absence of potential partners in many locations out of the main towns. Faulty or non-existent communication tools (telephones, radios or others.)

APEF, the later three IPs are working in the camp).		for migration/ humanitarian affairs to provide support for UNHCR's activities in the sub region.	APEF, IOM		
Without IOM present in Djibouti – is this feasible? The above objective may have to suffice for this jurisdiction.	Meeting held with IOM representation on mission from Ethiopia in late 2007 on whether to establish presence in Djibouti.	Encourage IOM through UNHCR's offices in Ethiopia and for Somalia based in Nairobi to establish presence in Djibouti.	IGAD, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, EU Commission, Caritas, Djiboutian Red Cross, UNESCO-PEER, AMDA, APEF, IOM	Long term	In Djibouti, limited presence of international organizations and international/ local NGOs.  Absence of key player, IOM
Strengthen partnership with UN agencies/ UNCT. Establish working group on mixed migration with the UNCT.	Held every two weeks consultations within the UNCT for updates on refugees, asylum seekers and mixed migration movements. A weekly situation report is disseminated.	UNRC will assist UNHCR in lobbying the Government to ratify and implement international refugee/ human rights instruments.	UNRC, UNCT	Ongoing	Limited resources.
Strengthen partnership with UNHCR offices and establish partnership with agencies in the sub region on mixed migration.		Hold periodic sub-regional and regional meetings with UNHR offices and partners.  Cross border meetings with UNHCR and partners in Somalia. Hold regular	UNHCR Offices, IOM Ethiopia, IOM Nairobi, MMTF Somalia	Second half of 2008	Limited resources.

			meetings and plan joint activities to be implemented to benefit persons of concern.			
			Integrate the topic of mixed migration on agenda of coordination meetings with UNHCR offices in the sub region.			
	Advocate for donor support amongst the Government, inter Governmental and private donors operating in the country and the Sub-region.	Sitreps, factsheets statistics and other information shared with embassies, consulates, coalition forces as a fund-raising strategy.	Regular briefings, field trips to arrival departure points as well as to the refugee camp.	US Embassy French Coalition forces, EU, IGAD	Ongoing	No UNHCR staff dedicated to these efforts.
<b>2. Data collection and analysis</b>	Enhance own data collection to have reliable updated information at hand, which can be shared with partners.	ProGres database was set up at the end of 2006, facilitating the identification of groups with special needs.  A verification/ re-registration exercise of Ali Addeh camp was undertaken in 2006/2007 in order to get a clear understanding of the number and profile of the people receiving protection and assistance.  More reliable figures as obtained through the	UNFPA will collaborate with UNHCR to make sure refugees are taken into account in the 2008 general population census.  Regularly update statistics based on accurate registration entries.	UNHCR, UNFPA	Before end 2008.	Limited resources.  Database systems to accommodate and support registration and updates at the same time at different locations, e.g. at the border, in town and at the camp.

registration operation provide basis for improved protection and search for durable solutions for refugees in Djibouti.

Enhance accurate data reporting and planning from concerned partners.

Information from Caritas provided from time to time on migrants on the north shores, desperately in need of assistance.

Share know-how on data collection and come up with reporting plans.

IPs and potential data collectors (different Ministries, academic institutions)

Long term

Most partners lack capacity to adequately collect and manage data pertaining to refugee populations.

Maintain regular visits to detention places and organize border monitoring missions on a more regular basis in order to detect new refugee arrivals.

Regular ONARS missions to Loyada to check the border, informing UNHCR of new arrivals.

GoD: allow and facilitate access to persons in detention for possible referral to organizations.

UNHCR, GoD, ONARS

Ongoing

Limited access to persons in detention needs follow up with the Ministry of the Interior.

UNHCR Protection mission to Obock in March 13-15 to better understand the phenomenon of mixed migration flows.

Enhance information exchanges with UNHCR offices in the region.

Participation in teleconferences.

Regular participation in teleconferences. Regular sharing of updates.

UNHCR HQ and in East & Horn of Africa

Ongoing

Difficulties with internet access and telecommunications. Limited financial resources.

### 3. Protection-sensitive entry systems

Establish a registration system for new arrivals including on the north shore of Djibouti (Obock), where the majority of

A high-level coordination mechanism with monthly meetings between UNHCR, WFP, the Executive

Actively search for and identify a potential partner to represent the Office's interests and provide

UNHCR GOD

Long term

Need for qualified staff knowledgeable in regional geopolitics, country of origin

Ethiopians are detained, and support local authorities in their endeavours to provide assistance to them.

Secretary of ONARS and the Minister of the Interior has been functioning since April 2008. Matters discussed include UNHCR having access to intercepted migrants at detention centres.

Undertook a joint field mission to Obock to observe surveillance points being put in place on northern shores.

On 16-17 March 2008, UNHCR/ ONARS undertook a joint mission to Tadjourah, Obock, and Khor-Angar to observe surveillance points, main departure points to Yemen and visited 270 detainees in Obock.

Screening and registration of over 1,000 South Somali asylum seekers in Ali Addeh refugee camp in April 08, of whom 143 cases were rejected.

Use the existing joint UNHCR/ ONARS registration Committee until the setup of the national asylum procedure (EO and NEC). In the longer

Ongoing processing of new arrivals.

assistance to persons of concern to the Office at registration site.

Undertake regular joint field missions to departure/ arrival points of asylum seekers and migrants.

Advocate and lobby the Government to draft a comprehensive refugee law. For the time being all refugee matters are

UNHCR, GoD Ongoing

information, dialects and language. Identifying a qualified potential partner

Persons intercepted in the Red Sea are held in deplorable detention centre in Obock. ONARS/local authorities have no means to transport them to the camp and UNHCR has no means to do the profiling. Detainees do not claim asylum are most likely to be taken to Loyada and deported/ refouled.

No comprehensive legal framework on migrant/ refugee issues.

RSD for many deserving

term, put in place a comprehensive legal framework on refugee issues.

addressed through Presidential decrees with limited scope.

asylum cases put on hold indefinitely.

Strengthen UNHCR's relationship with security forces/ police/ law enforcement staff involved in regular round ups targeting illegal migrants, security measures at check points) to improve access to detainees.

Police and immigration officials often contact the Office when they round up migrants and any of them claim asylum or show refugee identification cards.

Train and brief border guards, police and immigration officials on refugee law, asylum and basic human rights.

UNHCR, security forces, police, law enforcement staff

From June / July 2008.

Lack of human and material resources. Absence of persons qualified to do formal training.

Border officials briefed on rights of persons seeking asylum.

Access to detainees discussed with Minister of the Interior on 23 April, during a high-level coordination meeting.

Maintain regular visits to detention places and organize border monitoring missions on a more regular basis in order to detect new refugee arrivals.

Regular ONARS missions to Loyada to check the border, informing UNHCR of new arrivals.

GoD: allow and facilitate access to persons in detention for possible referral to organizations.

UNHCR, MoI, ONARS

Ongoing

Limited access to persons in detention, needs follow up with the Ministry of the Interior.

Setting up a border monitoring mechanism in order to guarantee immediate access to asylum procedures.

Border officials at the main border point (Loyada) were sensitized and are now aware of the different treatments that should be offered to asylum

Install an efficient border monitoring system.

Ministry of the Interior, UNHCR and partners

To become operational at the end of 2008.

Human and financial resources.

#### 4. Reception arrangements

Strengthen the Government's capacity regarding reception and registration services to avoid maintaining concerned populations in situations of vulnerability for extended periods.	seekers/migrants.  A high-level coordination mechanism with monthly meetings between UNHCR, WFP, Executive Secretary of ONARS and the Minister of the Interior has been functioning since April 2008. Matters discussed included the setting up of a reception centre at the Loyada border to ensure proper screening and processing of new arrivals.  In February 08, UNHCR assisted the GoD to set up a temporary shelter at the main border, some 3.5 km from Djibouti-City.	The GoD is planning to set up a reception centre and put mechanisms in place to offer profiling, protection and medical screening at Loyada border between Djibouti and Somaliland.	UNHCR, WFP, ONARS, Minister of the Interior	Second half of 2008.	Lack of adequate reception facilities and orientation mechanisms for newly arriving asylum seekers, leading to accommodation of new arrivals within the ONARS compound (with no proper facilities) at as an ad-hoc solution. Current resources do not meet the needs of the stream of new arrivals.
Enhance registration and screening at Loyada (DJI/SOM border), where authorities are overwhelmed by the stream of new arrivals, to avoid backlog of profiling / screening and registration.	The high-level coordination mechanism with UNHCR, WFP, the Executive Secretary of ONARS and the Minister of the Interior's functioning since April 2008. Matters discussed included the setting up of a reception centre at the border to ensure proper screening and processing of new arrivals.	Strongly encourage the establishment of reception Centre at the main border.  GoD: establish permanent presence of ONARS at the border and organize coordinated transfer process towards the camp.  Strengthening of the reception and orientation mechanisms for newly	UNHCR, GoD Partners Eg. AMDA	By the end of 2008	Financial and material resources.



		arriving asylum seekers/ refugees through strengthening the existing joint UNHCR/GoD Committee.			
Establishment of UNHCR presence in Obock.	Ad-hoc monitoring mission to Obock in March 08 to verify information on major influx of migrants/ refugees departing from the northern shores of Djibouti to Yemen.	Ongoing efforts must be pursued with the GoD to come up with a strategy regarding the official treatment of populations coming from Region 5 of Ethiopia (Ogaden).	UNHCR, Ministry of the Interior local authorities	Long term	Ethiopian Ogadenis are currently not recognized as refugees, which leads to them misrepresenting themselves as Somalis from South/Central Somalia – to obtain prima facie refugee status.
Setting up a border monitoring mechanism in order to guarantee immediate access to asylum procedures.	Border officials at the main border point (Loyada) were sensitized and are now aware of the treatment that should be offered to asylum seekers.	Strongly encourage the establishment of reception facility at the main border.  Install an efficient border monitoring system.	UNHCR	To become operational at the end of 2008.	Lack of human and financial resources.
Use the existing joint UNHCR/ ONARS registration and screening system until the setup of the national asylum procedure (EO and NEC). In the longer term, put in place a comprehensive legal framework on refugee issues.	Ongoing processing of new arrivals.	Advocate and lobby the Government to draft a comprehensive refugee law. For the time being all refugee matters are addressed through Presidential decrees with limited scope.	UNHCR, ONARS	Ongoing	No comprehensive legal framework on migrant/ refugee issues.  RSD for many deserving asylum cases put on hold indefinitely.

	Strengthen protection against violence, abuse, intimidation, and exploiting, including SGBV.	Counseling provided by UNHCR's local community services IP APEF and international IP AMDA.	Systematic medical screening of new arrivals. Regular counseling by trained/ qualified medical staff.	ONARS, APEF, AMDA, and UNHCR	By end 2008.	Refugees and asylum seekers have unhindered access to report grievances and to seek redress.
<b>5. Mechanisms for profiling and referral</b>	Set up systematic profiling and referral of new arrivals	Ongoing processing of new arrivals	New arrivals are registered at the border, at ONARS & at the camp. Profiling is ad hoc.	ONARS, APEF and UNHCR	By end 2008	Identification of durable solutions not focused & done on an ad hoc basis
<b>6. Differentiated processes and procedures</b>	Strengthen the asylum institutions and mechanisms in Djibouti, as the eligibility mechanisms are not fully functional yet.	UNHCR financed four additional posts for the Eligibility Office starting in January 08, but that Office is not yet adjudicating cases (task of the National Eligibility Commission).  Secretary General of ONARS attended the San Remo Refugee Law Course (07-11 April 2008) to build up his capacity on international protection issues.	UNDP and UNHCR will coordinate activities designed to build the capacity of ONARS.  GoD: adopt a new decree or law on the designation of members of the National Eligibility Commission (NEC). Members of the NEC appointed/ selected by the GoD and trained on adjudication of asylum claims. Additional and competent national eligibility staff (EO) recruited through a competitive and transparent selection procedure. Capacity of EO staff strengthened on how to efficiently conduct RSD.	UNHCR, UNDP, GoD (NEC, EO)	Long term	The Eligibility Office has been receiving asylum seekers but it is not yet fully functional. The members of the National Eligibility Commission have not been appointed yet. Absence of sufficient competent eligibility staff at ONARS leads to postponement of RSD indefinitely.  Absence of a mechanism for appeals.

			Put system for appeals in place.		
	Capacity-building of ONARS and NEC staff to carry out individual RSD.  Capacity building of staff from the judicial system to provide legal assistance.	Regular sessions of the joint UNHCR/ ONARS registration/ profiling team.	Formalize the setup and functioning of the NEC and the Office of the Eligibility Commission.  Border guards and immigration officers trained on refugee law and international refugee protection.	UNHCR, ONARS, border guards, immigration officers	Long term  Absence of a legal framework for RSD and related responsibilities.  Limited resources.
	Strengthening the legal protection of people of concern to UNHCR, more specifically by facilitating their access to adequate identification documentation, so that all refugees 13 years and older have refugee ID cards.	Attestations are given to all recognized refugees (prima facie and those under UNHCR's mandate).	Replace all Attestations with proper identification cards.  Conduct RSD for all refugees and asylum seekers on hold for years. Promote resettlement for identified cases.  SOPs developed for the issuance of ID cards and birth certificates. SOPs developed for the continuous updating of the registration database.	UNHCR and Government	Shortage of financial, human and material resources.  Waiting for ordered refugee identification documentation (ID, cards).
<b>7. Solutions for refugees</b>	Reinforce the search for durable solutions, especially	A high-level coordination mechanism with monthly	Resettlement will be offered to Ethiopian,	UNHCR, GoD	Durable solutions found mainly through voluntary

	resettlement opportunities and prospects for local integration.	meetings between UNHCR, WFP, Executive Secretary of ONARS and the Minister of the Interior functioning since April 2008. Matters discussed include durable solutions for refugees.	Eritrean, and South/Central Somali refugees as a durable solution, a protection tool and as a burden/ responsibility sharing mechanism.			repatriation. Identified resettlement cases were not referred due to staff shortages and lack of technical and material support.
		Repatriation of 1,853 Somaliland refugees to NW Somalia in late 2007.	In 2008 and 2009, emphasis will be put on the promotion of repatriation for remaining Somaliland refugees in Djibouti.			
		Implementation of the self-reliance strategy for Ali Addeh based refugees.	Development of local integration strategy for residual Somali and Ethiopian caseloads.			
<b>8. Addressing secondary movements</b>	Get a clear picture of migratory trends and be able to predict developments through constant sharing of data and information exchanges.	None.	Compare ProGres data with UNHCR offices in other countries using ProGres, - cases of secondary movement.	UNHCR offices in the Sub region		Lack of comprehensive data collection.
<b>9. Return arrangements for non-refugees and alternative migration options</b>	Return is arranged properly and in dignity with the persons involved being fully aware.	None.	Provide rejection documentation and inform rejected applicants systematically.	UNHCR and Government	By end 2008	Lack of IOM presence to advise and counsel on voluntary return.
<b>10. Information strategy</b>	Introduce the topic of mixed	ONARS and several of the	Communicate the 10PP to	UNHCR	By end 2008	Limited interest of

<p>migration to the government counterpart (ONARS and MoI) and the national asylum institutions (Eligibility Office, EO, and National Eligibility Commission, NEC).</p>	<p>officials in coastal areas are aware of the phenomenon.</p>	<p>the GoD at different levels and to other key partners.</p> <p>Workshop on Mixed Migration/ debriefing on discussions held at the Yemen Conference.</p>			<p>Government officials in new UN initiatives - more interested in the activities that would provide financial, human and material support to their endeavours.</p>
<p>Sensitization and information sharing on the phenomenon of mixed migration.</p>		<p>Provide material and financial support for transportation and dissemination of information to dissuade would-be migrants from taking the treacherous boat crossing to Yemen.</p>			<p>Limited human and material resources of the Government to respect/ live up to their commitments under international law.</p>
<p>Ssensitize and lobby the delegation of the EU Commission for Frontex-related activities/ projects (similar as to what was done e.g. in Senegal and Libya).</p>	<p>Met with and gave information on the trends to EU officials in Djibouti.</p>	<p>Provide updates on the trends of movements. Present the needs and the gaps in the Office's current resources.</p>	<p>UNHCR, EU Commission, (Frontex)</p>	<p>By end 2008</p>	<p>Perhaps seen as a long term perspective by the key players.</p>
<p>Public and targeted information campaigns in Djibouti: awareness-raising among migrants and asylum seekers on the dangers of crossing the Gulf by airing of radio spots</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>Adapt radio spots used for awareness-raising campaigns in Somalia and Ethiopia to the situation/ target groups in Djibouti.</p>	<p>UNHCR (DJI, ETH, SOM)</p>		<p>Free access to the media to disseminate such information. Financial and human resources.</p>