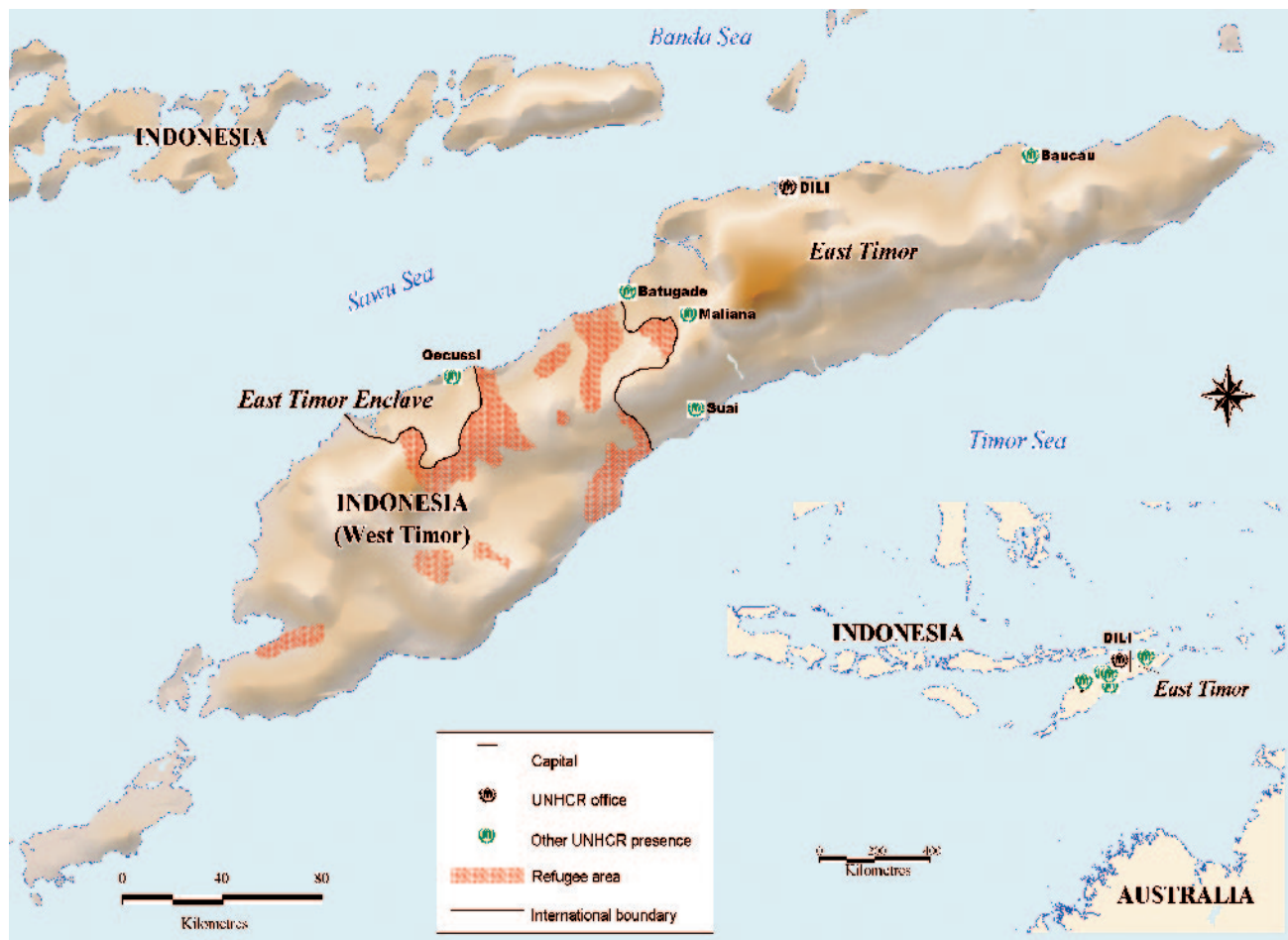


# East Timor



## Main Objectives

UNHCR's objectives were to promote voluntary repatriation to East Timor; ensure safety and dignity during the repatriation and reception process; provide special care and assistance for the most vulnerable returnees; facilitate the reintegration process through protection-based humanitarian assistance; ensure an effective transition from initial reintegration assistance to longer-term community rehabilitation, reconciliation and development; support national and local peace and reconciliation programmes; and prepare a longer-term strategy to ensure that an independent East Timor enacts appropriate refugee legislation and accedes to relevant international refugee conventions.

## Impact

- Some 18,000 voluntarily returned to East Timor in 2001 and benefited from initial reintegration assistance. (Meanwhile up to 70,000 remained in Indonesia, the majority in West Timor, pending a durable solution.)
- By year's end, nearly 193,000 refugees had returned to East Timor since October 1999 and reintegrated into their communities of origin with very little friction reported.
- Materials for almost 35,000 shelter units were distributed to the most needy returnees in East Timor.
- Over the course of 2001, UNHCR implemented 38 QIPs, thereby creating job opportunities and much-needed income for many unemployed East Timorese.

- UNHCR assisted the relevant authorities in developing an interim refugee status determination procedure. It is expected that East Timor will accede to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees soon after its independence in May 2002.
- Although it did not maintain a presence in West Timor, UNHCR continued to promote reconciliation meetings and go-and-see visits for refugees.

## Working Environment

### The Context

In the aftermath of the Popular Consultation held on 30 August 1999, an estimated 270,000 persons fled from East Timor to West Timor. From the inception of the repatriation programme in October 1999, until the end of December 2001, nearly 193,000 persons voluntarily returned to East Timor, the vast majority with the assistance of UNHCR and IOM. Of these, just over 18,000 returned to East Timor in 2001, far fewer than during the previous year. It is estimated that up to 70,000 refugees remain in squalid camps in West Timor and other parts of Indonesia.

From the outset of the operation, security conditions in the West Timor camps were precarious, making it extremely difficult for UN and NGO staff to operate there. Violence and intimidation by pro-Jakarta militia groups continued to impede UNHCR's activities until the murder of three staff in Atambua on 6 September 2000. UNSECOORD then declared West Timor a Phase V area: conse-

quently, all UN staff were immediately evacuated. Although it maintains no presence in West Timor, UNHCR has continued to work with the Indonesian Government to find solutions, as well as to assist ad hoc repatriation and reconciliation activities. UNHCR has supported preparations for registration of refugees by the Indonesian Government and participated in the development of local settlement programmes (outside of West Timor) and a Pension/Severance Payment Fund for East Timorese formerly in the employ of the Indonesian civil service.

UNHCR had expected to phase down the repatriation operations in East Timor by mid-2001. However, following a disappointing drop in returnee numbers, a decision was taken to encourage and facilitate repatriation through the use of mobile teams who undertook various activities. It was decided that this field presence would be upheld until the end of June 2002 (i.e. keeping a UNHCR presence in East Timor through the critical independence period).

### Constraints

The lack of a UNHCR presence in West Timor since 6 September 2000 remained a serious impediment to the maintenance of close relations with local authorities and refugee leaders. As a consequence, UNHCR was unable to counter continued intimidation and misinformation as effectively as required. Reasons cited by refugees for not returning included concerns about security, a lack of shelter, education or employment. Having lived in West Timor – or, in a few cases, other parts of Indonesia – for more than two years, many refugees also have family ties or other commitments that hinder their return. In particular, many of their leaders are cautious about returning, as they are likely to face prosecution and imprisonment for crimes committed in 1999. The unwillingness of leaders to return is often a constraint to the return of refugees who may otherwise wish to do so. Many East Timorese who are entitled to Indonesian pensions or severance payments are reluc-

Persons of Concern				
Main Origin/ Type of Population	Total in Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
Returnees (from Indonesia)	18,200	16,600	63	-

Income and Expenditure (USD) Annual Programme Budget				
Revised Budget	Income from Contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other Funds Available <sup>2</sup>	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
10,479,624	6,188,024	3,507,464	9,695,488	9,695,488

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

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

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.

tant to return until they have received their entitlements, or until a parallel fund is set up in East Timor.

In East Timor, implementing partners distributing UNHCR shelter materials experienced problems relating to land ownership, redrawn village boundaries, the relocation of community hamlets or settlements, intimidation by local youths, and a variety of technical issues including shortages of traditional building materials. The country's unfavourable topography, with its remote mountainous areas and poor road conditions (aggravated by heavy monsoon rainfall), constituted an immense logistical challenge for UNHCR and NGO partners delivering assistance to the rural communities.

## Funding

UNHCR's East Timor operation in 2001 was not fully funded and as a result a number of activities were adversely affected. The community self-help and quick-impact projects were delayed and reduced in number. The shelter distribution programme was to be completed by the first quarter of 2001, but due to a lack of funds, this was not finalised until September. This created difficulties for communities waiting for assistance and led to additional costs, as NGOs had to delay their departure.

## Achievement and Impact

### Protection and Solutions

The primary durable solution sought for East Timorese refugees was their voluntary repatriation to East Timor (the vast majority returning from West Timor). Although no accurate registration has ever been undertaken in West Timor, UNHCR estimates that there were around 70,000 East Timorese refugees remaining in Indonesia, mainly in West Timor, at the end of 2001.



Returnees from West Timor in a transit centre in Dili. UNHCR / K. Ahwil

UNHCR has worked closely with the UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL), UN PKF (Peace Keeping Forces) and Human Rights Officers to check the "returnability" of contentious cases to their communities, making special preparations for their return in a number of instances. The creation of District Returnee Task Forces/District Returnee Committees or District Reconciliation Committees has assisted in ensuring a co-ordinated response to returnee issues in each of the districts. After UNHCR's departure, these committees will be able to keep up much of this work.

Overall, the communities receiving the returnees have demonstrated a genuine desire for reconciliation with their former tormentors. However, there were a few occasions when UNHCR had to intervene with local authorities, returnees having been forced out, subjected to harsh interrogation, had property confiscated, placed under house arrest or forced to undertake community labour. As a part of the community reconciliation process, UNHCR is supporting the establishment of the Commission on Reception, Truth and Reconciliation which is expected to function in the first half of 2002. Working in co-operation with NGO partners, local authorities and church groups, UNHCR continued to follow up on cases of separated children.

UNHCR intensified its efforts to promote East Timor's accession to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol as well as other instruments relating to refugees. In the absence of an appropriate

authority within UNTAET or the transitional government, UNHCR had to undertake refugee status determination under its mandate when necessary.

## Activities and Assistance

**Community Services:** UNHCR focused primarily on addressing the needs of women, young girls and children who had been subjected to physical and mental harassment or both, including sexual assault and rape. UNHCR's psychosocial projects, run by a network of NGO partners and external psychiatrists, assisted such victims. The most vulnerable, particularly women, received assistance in starting up small businesses using very small grants of start-up capital. Together with ICRC, UNHCR has been actively facilitating the tracing and reunification of separated East Timorese children, and some 231 children have reunited with their parents in East Timor in 2001, making a total of 764 children reunited with their families since the beginning of the programme. At the year's end, 1,512 separated children outside East Timor were known to be still awaiting reunion with their families.

**Domestic Needs/Household Support:** UNHCR distributed a variety of non-food items to the returnees and others found to be in urgent need of material assistance. To meet the immediate needs of returnees upon return, each family received a package consisting of a kitchen set, jerry can, sarongs, sleeping mats, blankets, mosquito nets, and plastic sheeting/tarpaulin.

**Income Generation:** UNHCR provided communities and individual beneficiaries with carpentry tools, which they are using for profit-making ventures as well as collective efforts to rehabilitate small community projects and rebuild destroyed homes. QIP interventions included support to fishing co-operatives; women's weaving projects; arts and crafts; production of building materials and components (clay bricks, doors, windows); furniture; manual coffee bean de-husking machines; restaurants and horticulture.

**Legal Assistance:** UNHCR prepared a longer-term strategy to ensure that an independent East Timor enacts adequate refugee legislation and accedes to international refugee conventions.

**Operational Support (to Agencies):** UNHCR provided logistics and communications support to implementing partners and covered the bulk of their administrative costs. These costs included the rental of premises, procurement of supplies, transport and communication equipment, as well as staff salaries and benefits. UNHCR also provided assistance to non-implementing partners on an ad-hoc basis, particularly for the transportation of bulk materials to remote parts of the country. On a number of occasions, UNHCR also provided assistance to UNTAET, in the form of non-food items, to assist local populations affected by natural disasters.

**Shelter/Other Infrastructure:** By the end of 2001, UNHCR and its implementing partners distributed nearly 35,000 shelter kits. A shelter kit comprises construction timber, corrugated galvanised roofing sheets, Portland cement, wood, roofing nails and a set of tools for five families.

**Transport/Logistics:** To ensure the effective distribution of materials to construct 35,000 shelter units in extremely remote and difficult terrain, UNHCR maintained 52 heavy-duty trucks of different tonnage. UNHCR maintained a main warehouse in Dili and four temporary warehouses in Suai, Maliana and Com. In 2001, a total of 16,000 metric tonnes was transported throughout East Timor, either by road, sea (barges or direct shipment from Surabaya) or air (helicopter).

## Organisation and Implementation

### Management

The operation was co-ordinated by the office in the capital, Dili, which also hosted a field office. Field Offices were located in Suai, Oecussi, Batugade, Baucau and Maliana. Due to the slow pace of return of refugees, the planned phase-down of UNHCR offices was postponed until early 2002. Although staffing levels fluctuated during the course of the year, on average over 100 staff were involved in East Timor in 2001; this included 20 international and some 70 national staff. The team in East Timor was supported by up to 15 UNVs, as well as staff seconded from RedR Australia and Redd Barna.

## Working with Others

In East Timor, UNHCR continued to work closely with UNTAET and various international and national entities. During the year UNHCR worked with nine international and four national NGO partners. The largest activity, which involved seven international and one national NGO, was to finalise the shelter distribution programme. In addition, a number of international NGOs were involved in implementing QIPs. In the Community Services sphere, five NGOs (including three national NGOs) were engaged in providing basic social services, paying particular attention to children and victims of rape, forced removal, intimidation and torture. National NGOs effectively provided support and medication for the mentally ill.

## Overall Assessment

In the two and a half years since the arrival of the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) mission in East Timor on 20 September 1999, the country has achieved a great deal. The overarching objective of the humanitarian agencies in East Timor was to get basic services back on their feet while a new administration was being set up under the auspices of UNTAET.

In the last three months of 1999, some 125,930 East Timorese refugees returned, the majority from West Timor. In 2000, the number of returns fell to 48,539. In 2001, repatriation movements continued to decline, with some 18,152 refugee returns recorded, but UNHCR has still demonstrably succeeded in promoting and facilitating returns from West Timor and ensuring safe reception and peaceful reintegration into communities of origin.

Although the vast majority of East Timorese returnees have successfully reintegrated and the emergency phase is now considered to be over, questions remain. Will the development agencies representing the international community be able to ensure that achievements to date are reinforced with effective, targeted assistance? How much longer can East Timor struggle on with a devastated infrastructure, insufficient shelter for returnee communities and few employment opportunities?

A study carried out by the World Bank in 2001 indicated that some 68,000 houses had been destroyed in 1999, of which over 50,000 were reconstructed. The study goes on to estimate that the shortfall of up to 17,000 houses has been made up by local communities and the private sector. However, it is clear that small localised housing crises have yet to be resolved. UNHCR has therefore informed donors and funding agencies of the need for both urgent and medium-term shelter programmes.

### Offices

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#### Dili Liaison Office

Baucau  
Batugade  
Maliana  
Oecussi  
Suai

### Partners

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#### NGOs

*Action Internationale contre la Faim*  
Caritas (Australia)  
Christian Children's Fund  
Communication Forum for East Timorese Women  
CONCERN Worldwide  
*Cooperazione e Sviluppo*  
East Timor Women against Violence  
GOAL (Ireland)  
International Rescue Committee  
OXFAM (Australia)  
Peace Winds Japan  
Psychological Recovery and Development in East Timor  
Redd Barna  
Save the Children Fund  
Timor Aid  
World Vision

#### Others

IOM  
RedR (Australia)  
UNICEF  
UNTAET  
UNVs  
WFP  
World Bank

Financial Report (USD)		
Expenditure Breakdown	Annual Programme Budget	
	Current Year's Projects	notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	605,699	
Community Services	201,318	
Income Generation	282,553	
Legal Assistance	583,816	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	681,134	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	387,451	
Transport / Logistics	1,919,807	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	185,701	
<b>Sub-total Operational</b>	<b>4,847,479</b>	
Programme Support	3,665,511	
<b>Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries</b>	<b>8,512,990</b>	<b>(3)</b>
Unliquidated Obligations	1,182,498	<b>(3)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,695,488</b>	<b>(1) (3)</b>

#### Instalments with Implementing Partners

Payments Made	2,737,679	
Reporting Received	2,551,978	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>185,701</b>	
Outstanding 1st January	0	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	
Currency Adjustment	0	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>185,701</b>	

#### Unliquidated Obligations

Outstanding 1st January	0	
New Obligations	9,695,488	<b>(1)</b>
Disbursements	8,512,990	<b>(3)</b>
Cancellations	0	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>1,182,498</b>	<b>(3)</b>

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

(1) Annex to Statement 1

(3) Schedule 3