

CHECHNYA EMERGENCY

The Context

Following an incursion by Chechen fighters into Dagestan in September, UNHCR provided emergency assistance for about 17,000 displaced people, at the request of the authorities of Dagestan. When fighting erupted inside Chechnya, some 200,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) sought safety in Ingushetia. A further 12,000 fled to Dagestan and tens of thousands were displaced within Chechnya itself. While UNHCR continued to assist the displaced, a broad-based UN approach was initiated to the evolving humanitarian crisis. This led to the signature by the Russian Federation and the UN of a Memorandum on Consultations (on 20 October) to establish a framework for co-operation. A rapid inter-agency needs-assessment mission (with the participation of the authorities) concluded that the humanitarian situation would deteriorate rapidly unless urgent assistance and protection were provided.

Soon after the outbreak of the conflict in Chechnya, some ethnic Chechens started crossing into Georgia, to the Pankisi Valley in Akhmeta District, inhabited by ethnic Chechens. In October, UNHCR and the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation undertook an assessment mission to the Pankisi Valley. UNHCR established a field presence there in November, and by the end of the year Georgia had registered 5,000 Chechen refugees.

Protection and Assistance

UNHCR helped to register IDPs, and to ensure their access to humanitarian assistance - including adequate legal information and assistance for family reunion - and protection from all forms of violence. Due to the serious risk of kidnapping, the agency was forced to rely extensively on dedicated national field staff, partly recruited by implementing partners and trained by UNHCR, to monitor the safety of IDPs, their needs, and the distribution of relief materials. UNHCR called on all parties to ensure the protection of IDPs and to avoid endangering the lives of civilian populations caught in the area of conflict.

As part of the overall relief effort, UNHCR provided food

for IDPs and host families, shelter, emergency domestic items (from contingency stocks), and improved access to water and sanitation. The Office distributed rations of wheat, pulses, vegetable oil, sugar, barley, millet, canned beef and salt to 100,000 IDPs. Several hundred winterised tents, stoves, plastic sheets and beds improved the temporary living conditions of IDPs in Ingushetia and Dagestan. Communal buildings housing some 10 per cent of the IDPs were repaired. New arrivals were given blankets, mattresses, jerry cans, kitchen sets, personal hygiene items, winter clothes and shoes. UNHCR installed water tanks in camps and settlements, and procured water trucks and water purification units.

In Georgia, the Chechen refugees were mostly housed with host families and in disused communal centres or administrative buildings. UNHCR monitored the protection of new arrivals, identified their needs and coordinated the distribution of relief. The assistance provided by UNHCR to this group was similar to that for IDPs in Ingushetia (see the chapter on Georgia for further information).

Funding

To cover urgent expenditure, UNHCR made an allocation from the Emergency Fund. By 31 December, donor contributions had replenished this allocation. A UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for USD 8 million was launched late in the autumn (for an initial period of three months beginning on 1 December 1999). The Appeal addressed the requirements of IDPs living in spontaneous settlements, camps and with host families, as well the needs of the host families themselves. Assistance in Georgia was covered under the Special Programme for the CIS.

Partners

NGOs

Danish Refugee Council
Vesta

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects notes	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	1,476,040	
Food	1,346,805	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	22,899	
Transport / Logistics	91,678	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	184,000	
Sub - total Operational	3,121,422	
Sub - total Disbursements/Deliveries	3,121,422	(3)
Unliquidated Obligations	4,878,578	(3)
TOTAL*	8,000,000	(3)
Instalments with Implementing Partners		
Payments Made	184,000	
Reporting Received	0	
Balance	184,000	
Outstanding 1 January	0	
Refunded to UNHCR	0	
Currency Adjustment	0	
Outstanding 31 December	184,000	
Unliquidated Obligations		
Outstanding 1 January	0	
New Obligations	8,000,000	(3)
Disbursements	3,121,422	(3)
Cancellations	0	
Outstanding 31 December	4,878,578	(3)

* Allocated from the Emergency Fund

Figures which cross reference to accounts
(3) Schedule

