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Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

This report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution [67/150](#) on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa. It updates the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session ([A/67/323](#)). The report has been coordinated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and includes information received from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, the World Food Programme and the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons. It is also based on publicly available reports from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Populations Fund and the World Health Organization.



I. Introduction

1. A series of complex displacement emergencies afflicted Africa¹ during the reporting period. Violence in drought-stricken northern Mali, a resurgence of fighting in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic and ongoing conflict in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile States in the Sudan forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes in search of safety, either within their own countries or across borders. Meanwhile, Somali refugees continued to arrive in large numbers in Ethiopia and Kenya, despite encouraging political developments in Somalia.

2. At the end of 2012,² there were nearly 2.8 million refugees in Africa, slightly more than the previous year, representing one quarter of the global refugee population. While some 267,000 refugees returned home, including many who had lived in exile for a protracted period of time, more than 500,000 people were forced to flee their countries. The five countries hosting the most refugees in Africa were Kenya (565,000), Ethiopia (376,000), Chad (374,000), Uganda (198,000) and South Sudan (202,500).

3. Progress was made in the implementation of comprehensive solutions strategies for refugees in protracted situations, allowing for the cessation of refugee status for Angolans, Liberians and, in some countries, Rwandans. With the support of the international community, some 35,000 Burundian refugees returned home from the United Republic of Tanzania, which enabled the Tanzanian Government to close the Mtabila refugee camp.

4. The number of people internally displaced by violence and conflict in Africa grew to 10.4 million in 2012, an increase of 7.5 per cent over 2011. This reversed a decline in the number of internally displaced persons that had started in 2004. While some 1.3 million internally displaced persons returned home during the year, some 2.4 million people were newly displaced. Africa continued to host nearly one third of the world's internally displaced persons, and the main countries affected were the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2.7 million), the Sudan (2.2 million) and Somalia (1.3 million).

5. In December 2012, the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (the Kampala Convention) entered into force. Efforts by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) continued to support Governments to transform the provisions of the Convention into national law and to develop national frameworks to prevent, manage and find solutions for internal displacement.

6. According to the financial tracking service of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, more than \$3.5 billion was contributed in response to humanitarian appeals for Africa during 2012. This included approximately \$285.1 million allocated through the Central Emergency Response Fund. The bulk of the

¹ In the present report, Africa refers to sub-Saharan Africa.

² Unless specified otherwise, statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers and returnees refer to figures available as at the end of 2012, which have been compiled by UNHCR. Statistics on internally displaced persons are estimates from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Overview 2012: people internally displaced by conflict and violence*, as well as estimates collated by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Statistics are provisional and subject to change.

funds were used for activities to assist Sudanese refugees that entered South Sudan fleeing violence and food shortages in the Blue Nile and South Kordofan States, as well as to address the worsening humanitarian situation in northern Mali.

7. The Fund helped enable a timely response to emergencies in addition to providing resources for underfunded programmes for refugees and internally displaced persons. Of the 51 countries that received support from the Fund, 31 were in Africa. Some 25 per cent of the funding in Africa was allocated to food and 16 per cent to health activities. Operations in South Sudan received more than \$40 million, accounting for more than 14 per cent of the total Fund allocations for Africa in 2012.

II. Regional overviews

A. East Africa and the Horn of Africa

8. East Africa and the Horn of Africa remained the subregion with the largest refugee population on the continent. There were nearly 2 million refugees and asylum-seekers at the end of 2012, compared to more than 1.7 million the previous year. The majority have been living in exile for many years, some for decades, particularly in Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda.

Sudan

9. By mid-2013, an estimated 4.4 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in the Sudan, notably in the South Kordofan and Blue Nile States and Darfur, including some 1.4 million internally displaced persons living in 99 camps. Growing competition over scarce resources, an escalation in inter-ethnic conflict intensified by readily available small arms, and clashes between Government forces and armed groups displaced some 300,000 people in the first five months of 2013. While relative stability in some parts of Darfur allowed some 200,000 refugees and internally displaced persons to return, conflict over a gold mine in northern Darfur displaced some 120,000 people in early 2013. In addition, violence in central Darfur caused 30,000 refugees to flee to south-eastern Chad while nearly 19,000 Chadian nationals returned to their country of origin. In the disputed area of Abyei, some 50,000 people remained displaced as a result of the 2011 violence.

10. Approximately 90,000 Eritrean refugees are living in eastern Sudan, some of whom have been residing there for more than 40 years. Refugees continued to arrive in eastern Sudan from Eritrea, including 400 unaccompanied children. During the first months of 2013, the number of new arrivals dropped from more than 2,000 per month in 2012 to some 400 to 600 per month. The trafficking and smuggling of Eritreans through eastern Sudan to Khartoum, Egypt and other destinations remained a serious concern. During 2012, the number of kidnappings increased significantly. UNHCR recorded 338 incidents, out of which 37 people remain missing.

11. UNHCR and the Government of Sudan established a reception centre at the border to identify asylum-seekers and transport them safely to the refugee camps. The Government increased its presence in the camps and created a security committee to improve the coordination of security forces in the region. The number

of reported incidents dropped in the first five months of 2013 to 46. However, agencies working in the region believe that the reported incidents only represent a fraction of the actual number of people kidnapped or trafficked.

South Sudan

12. By mid-2013, more than 190,000 Sudanese refugees from South Kordofan and Blue Nile States had arrived in South Sudan. Initially, many of them remained close to the border in flood-prone and highly insecure areas. While in Upper Nile State some 18,000 refugees relocated from Jamam to Kaya camp, in Unity State, more than 71,000 refugees remained at Yida. Their presence in the border area exposed them to serious protection risks, including forced recruitment. Despite efforts by the international community to encourage them to relocate to the newly established camp of Ajoung Thok, by mid-2013, only 1,600 had done so.

13. Owing to the remoteness of the refugee sites and the lack of infrastructure, delivering humanitarian assistance remained challenging and costly. In 2013, the pre-positioning of food and basic relief items for some 230,000 refugees prior to the start of the rainy season is expected to cover the needs until the end of the year and help avoid costly airlifts.

14. According to statistics compiled by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) protection cluster, by the end of 2012, there were some 240,000 internally displaced persons in the country. By mid-2013, an additional 59,000 people had been displaced across five states, especially Upper Nile and Jonglei. Security constraints made it difficult to accurately assess the needs of displaced people and to provide them with the required humanitarian assistance. Many people walked long distances through dangerous areas to find refuge in Ethiopia, Kenya or Uganda. By mid-2013, nearly 63,000 South Sudanese had fled to those three countries as a result of the violence in Jonglei.

Somalia

15. The United Nations declared the end of famine conditions in southern Somalia in early 2012, although some 2.7 million people remained in need of humanitarian assistance a year later. Meanwhile, security gradually improved in parts of Somalia. The United Nations common compound was opened in Mogadishu and several agencies moved their offices from Nairobi to Somalia's capital. Nevertheless, humanitarian access remained challenging, in particular in rural areas in south and central Somalia. Twelve aid workers were killed in Somalia in 2012, and attacks on humanitarian staff continued in 2013, including a deadly attack on the United Nations common compound that claimed the lives of eight people.

16. About 1.1 million Somalis remained internally displaced in the first half of 2013, while more than 1 million were refugees in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Yemen. Conditions were not yet conducive for large-scale voluntary return to most places of origin, where the situation remained volatile and livelihood options were limited. From January 2012 to June 2013, UNHCR assisted some 3,500 internally displaced families to return from Mogadishu to their villages of origin, mainly in the Bay and Shabelle regions.

17. Some 20,000 Somalis returned spontaneously, mostly from Ethiopia, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, in the first six months of 2013. A four-phase approach to

return is being proposed, starting with assistance to refugees who return spontaneously. The next step would be a pilot project assisting groups of refugees to return to a number of selected places in Somalia deemed to be safe and stable. As conditions inside Somalia improve, this would be followed by enhanced facilitation and finally the promotion of repatriation.

Ethiopia

18. Ethiopia registered more than 87,000 new arrivals of refugees in 2012, bringing the total number of refugees in the country to 376,000 at the end of the year, most of them from Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan.

19. Coordinated efforts have brought significant improvements in health and nutritional services in all 18 refugee camps. While in the Dollo Ado camps, the health and nutrition situation remains fragile, it has improved considerably compared to 2011. In 2013, the mortality rates were below the emergency threshold, indicating a stabilizing population. Owing to preventive activities and feeding programmes for children under the age of 2, the nutrition situation improved. In Dollo Ado, a sixth camp has been set up to accommodate new arrivals from Somalia.

20. During 2012, Eritrean refugees continued to arrive in the Tigray region at an average rate of some 800 people per month. In March and April 2013, arrival rates spiked to 1,700 people per month, necessitating the opening of a fourth camp in Tigray. The large number of unaccompanied minors remained a serious concern. As in Sudan, anti-trafficking campaigns were launched in Ethiopia.

21. In 2009, the Government of Ethiopia introduced the “out-of-camp policy” for Eritrean refugees who were able to support themselves. Thus far, approximately 3,250 Eritrean refugees have benefited from this policy, including nearly 1,300 students attending universities around the country. The Government has started to extend the policy to refugees of other nationalities.

Kenya

22. Kenya remained the largest refugee-hosting country on the continent, with more than 607,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly from Somalia, as well as from Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The year 2012 marked 20 years of Dadaab’s existence. It is the world’s largest refugee complex, comprised of five camps, and hosts nearly 500,000 refugees. Violence in South Sudan has led to an increase in the number of refugees in the Kakuma camp to nearly 100,000 people, which is well beyond its maximum capacity of 80,000.

23. In December 2012, the Government issued a directive immediately discontinuing the reception and registration of asylum-seekers in urban areas and requiring them to relocate to the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps. The international community expressed concern about the protection and humanitarian impact of the policy and appealed to the Government to allow refugees to find protection in cities. The lives, education and means of thousands of refugees who had settled and lived lawfully in urban centres would be severely disrupted. Implementation of this directive would affect some 56,000 urban-based refugees and asylum-seekers in Kenya.

24. A non-governmental organization (NGO) working for refugee rights and seven individual refugees petitioned the High Court of Kenya to pronounce itself on the

legality of the directive. The High Court issued an injunction temporarily halting implementation of this directive pending a full hearing. While the reception and registration of asylum-seekers by the Government remained suspended in urban areas, none of the other components, most notably relocation, were implemented. The Court has since decided that the directive was unconstitutional.

25. The relocation and compensation of people displaced by the 2007 post-electoral violence continued, reducing the number of camp-based internally displaced persons to less than 30,000 by May 2013, according to Government estimates. Human rights groups remained concerned about an estimated 314,000 displaced people who settled with local communities outside camps for internally displaced persons, and who are yet to be relocated or compensated. As a result of inter-communal conflict over access to resources, and in several violent incidents leading up to the March 2013 national elections, an estimated 123,000 people were newly displaced.

Uganda

26. During 2012, Uganda received nearly 56,000 refugees fleeing violence and human rights abuses in North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some 33,000 were recognized on a prima facie basis and transferred to refugee settlements; the rest remained in the border area or returned to North Kivu. The settlement of Rwamwanja, which had hosted Rwandan refugees until the late 1990s, was rehabilitated to accommodate the new arrivals. The refugees received a plot of land for establishing their shelters and for farming.

27. Relatively few asylum-seekers from South Sudan arrived in Uganda in 2012 in comparison to 2013. In the first six months of 2013, the annual number had already doubled to more than 6,500 arrivals. The majority of arrivals fled violence in Jonglei State. Uganda requires refugee status determination, and by mid-2013, more than 4,500 of the newly arrived South Sudanese were recognized as refugees.

B. Central Africa and the Great Lakes

28. Despite an upsurge of violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, causing some 90,000 refugees to flee into neighbouring countries, the Central Africa and Great Lakes region saw a net reduction in the number of refugees by some 155,000 in 2012 compared to 2011. This was due to the repatriation of Congolese from the Republic of the Congo, the return of Burundian former refugees from the United Republic of Tanzania and smaller return movements by Angolan and Rwandan refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Chad

29. With some 374,000 refugees recorded at the end of 2012, mostly from Sudan's Darfur region and the Central African Republic, Chad remained one of the main refugee hosting countries in Africa. In 2013, Chad received some 8,500 refugees from the Central African Republic, and more than 30,000 refugees from central Darfur.

30. While some 83,000 internally displaced persons have returned to their areas of origin in eastern Chad since 2008, 90,000 were living in camps by the end of 2012.

Many internally displaced persons expressed a preference for local integration rather than return to their areas of origin. The humanitarian situation in Chad was exacerbated by the Sahel food crisis and heavy flooding during the rainy season. In 2012, some 3.6 million people were considered food insecure in Chad.

Central African Republic

31. The humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic sharply deteriorated following the Séléka offensive in December 2012 and the unconstitutional change of Government in March 2013, both triggering massive unrest and displacement across the country. There have been numerous reports of attacks on civilians, child recruitment, summary executions, rape and other forms of sexual violence, as well as widespread looting and destruction of property, including of humanitarian organizations. By June 2013, more than 200,000 people were internally displaced and some 60,400 had fled to neighbouring Cameroon, Chad, the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

32. In neighbouring countries, refugees were initially hosted by local communities in the border areas. Given the risk of infiltration by armed elements from the Central African Republic, refugee sites were established away from the border and refugees were relocated to these camps on a voluntary basis.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

33. The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was characterized by multiple complex humanitarian operations. Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda received large numbers of refugees fleeing conflict and human rights abuses in the eastern part of the country. Sexual and gender-based violence continue to be used as weapons of war to subject and intimidate the population, leading to a growing number of particularly vulnerable internally displaced persons.

34. More than 42,000 refugees fleeing the Central African Republic found refuge in the Equateur and Orientale Provinces, where new refugee camps were established. Approximately 30 per cent of the arrivals opted to remain in host communities. Some 87,000 Congolese refugees repatriated to the Congo.

35. Ongoing fighting and insecurity continued to cause displacement in the country, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to 2.7 million as of June 2013, compared to 1.7 million at the beginning of 2012. North and South Kivu, Maniema and Katanga were the worst affected due to the intensification of attacks by armed groups, including by the M23 movement and various Mai Mai groups. Some 440,000 people remained displaced owing to attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army, the majority in Orientale Province.

United Republic of Tanzania

36. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) supported the return from the United Republic of Tanzania of nearly 35,000 Burundian former refugees. Support for their reintegration in Burundi continued in 2013. The integration process remained on hold for more than 162,000 naturalized Burundian refugees in the United Republic of Tanzania, leaving them in a situation of legal and socioeconomic uncertainty. In 2012, the Tanzanian Government resumed the naturalization process for some 2,000 Somali refugees in the Chogo settlement, which had been halted since 2011.

37. The United Republic of Tanzania continued to host some 67,000 refugees, mostly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

C. West Africa

38. While the crisis in Mali and the drought in the Sahel received international attention, positive developments in the region included finding durable solutions for large groups of refugees and internally displaced persons. By mid-2013, some 82,000 refugees displaced by the 2010 post-election violence in Côte d'Ivoire had returned home. Numerous internally displaced persons also returned, but the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons found that significant challenges persisted in many returnee areas, including the lack of housing, basic services and livelihood opportunities, as well as concerns over security.

39. Efforts continued to reduce the large number of people at risk of statelessness in Côte d'Ivoire. According to Government estimates, this included some 400,000 descendants of immigrants who had settled in the country without establishing their nationality and 300,000 children who had not been recognized under Ivorian law at birth. In 2012, 55,000 people were assisted, to ascertain their nationality through a joint-project involving the Government, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNHCR and UNICEF.

Situation in Mali

40. By mid-2013, more than 350,000 Malians were displaced internally as a result of violence by armed groups and insecurity, which also imposed constraints on humanitarian operations. Some 175,000 refugees fled to Burkina Faso, Mauritania and the Niger. With stabilization in the number of new arrivals, efforts increased in the areas of health and nutrition, food security, shelter, water and sanitation, and resilience-building for the recurrent droughts.

41. In April 2013, the Security Council authorized the establishment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). In addition to supporting the political reform process, MINUSMA was tasked with creating security environment conducive to the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced people. The Council underlined that the provision of assistance should be civilian-led and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

Nigeria

42. In May 2013, a state of emergency was declared in three states in north-eastern Nigeria in an attempt to curb increasingly violent attacks by Boko Haram. The lack of access by humanitarian agencies made it difficult to estimate the number of people that had been internally displaced by the violence. Inter-agency assessment missions in neighbouring countries found that by mid-2013, some 10,700 Nigerians had fled the country to Cameroon (8,000 refugees) and Niger (2,700 refugees). All refugees were registered and received assistance, and both countries prepared for continuing arrivals. Additionally, some 3,500 nationals of the Niger left Nigeria and returned to their country of origin.

D. Southern Africa

43. All countries in the region were affected by mixed migration as source, transit or destination countries. While there is still a lack of reliable data on irregular migration, anecdotal evidence suggests that movements are on the rise, and that there has been an increase in smuggling and trafficking of undocumented migrants.

44. Stricter border control measures, the application of the “first safe country” principle and growing rates of rejected asylum applications in the region raised concern that people in need of international protection might not have access to territory or asylum procedures. Restrictions on freedom of movement outside of camps were also on the rise.

45. In 2012, South Africa received the third largest number of asylum applications worldwide, with some 61,500 new claims, 42 per cent less than in 2011. As in previous years, the largest number of asylum claims was presented by Zimbabweans.

III. Humanitarian response and inter-agency cooperation

A. Strengthening protection

46. The response of the Governments and peoples of Africa to many of the refugee emergencies has been exemplary. In almost all cases, arriving refugees were recognized on a prima facie basis. For many of the Malian refugees fleeing to Burkina Faso and the Niger, and for the Central African refugees arriving in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, local communities were the providers of first resort, saving many lives while international assistance was mobilized.

47. The increase in smuggling and trafficking and the related abuse of Ethiopians, Eritreans, Sudanese and Somalis in the Horn of Africa and East Africa resulted in a regional prevention and response strategy prepared by several United Nations organizations, Governments and other partners. National strategies were also designed to combat this phenomenon.

48. Efforts to strengthen national refugee protection systems continued. Government officials, including police officers, border guards and local officials in border areas were trained on international refugee and human rights law, in an effort to promote protection-sensitive migration policies and systems.

49. South Sudan adopted a refugee act in July 2012, providing an essential legal and policy framework for the management of refugee affairs. The Government established the Commission for Refugee Affairs, which is responsible for ensuring a timely and adequate response to the needs of refugees and ensuring the civilian character of asylum.

50. Other countries in the region, including Angola, Malawi, Senegal, Togo and Zambia, are in the process of revising their national legislation and policies on asylum.

Registration and documentation

51. Registration and documentation remained key protection tools, particularly in emergency situations. In the Mali operation, UNHCR faced challenges in registering and documenting the nomadic refugee population. Initial registration numbers had to be revised and assistance delivery adapted.

52. Emergency registration was undertaken in Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Niger, Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda. By early 2013, more detailed registration enabled better assessment of individual needs.

53. UNHCR continued training Government officials on registration standards, and provided technical expertise and material support. In the Sudan, a civil registration project was launched which included refugees and asylum-seekers. In Ethiopia, the Government began issuing identity cards for urban-based refugees, providing them with proof of their lawful stay in the country. This project is now reaching camp-based refugees. Refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda also received identity cards. In the refugee settlements in Zambia, mobile birth registration campaigns were carried out, and in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya 80 per cent of newborns were registered.

54. The second Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, held in South Africa in 2012, underscored the necessity of civil registration for all people, regardless of nationality or legal status. The Conference was organized by the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa, with support from UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Promotion of the human rights of internally displaced persons

55. The entry into force of the Kampala Convention on 6 December 2012 was an important milestone. The Convention reinforces and consolidates key international human rights and protection standards, including the 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. It affirms the primary responsibility of States for providing protection of and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their territory or jurisdiction, promotes national and regional action to prevent internal displacement and address its root causes and calls on States to ensure that internally displaced persons are protected and assisted. Of the 54 African Union member States, 39 have signed and 19 have ratified the Convention.

56. The countries with the largest internally displaced populations in Africa are the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2.7 million), the Sudan (2.3 million) and Somalia (1.1 million). Many have endured multiple displacements. During the reporting period, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan and the Sudan saw new large internal displacement movements due to conflict and/or inter-communal violence.

57. In October 2012, the Government of Kenya adopted a national policy on the prevention of internal displacement and protection and assistance to internally displaced persons. This was complemented by an act on the prevention, protection and assistance to internally displaced persons and affected communities, which established an institutional framework.

Statelessness

58. There were a number of developments on the continent with regard to statelessness. While some progress was made with respect to implementation of the 47 pledges³ made in December 2011 by 22 African States to prevent and reduce statelessness and to identify and protect stateless people, overall implementation remained a challenge. Senegal fulfilled its pledge by adopting a new nationality law granting full equality in nationality matters to men and women. Burundi implemented its pledge to identify stateless people with a registration exercise. This resulted in detailed information about the numbers of people of Omani origin and their protection situation. They received temporary renewable residence cards. In May 2012, Burkina Faso acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. Several States that pledged to accede to one or both of the statelessness conventions have taken steps at the domestic level to accede, but have not yet completed the relevant procedures.

59. In October 2012, the African Union held a symposium on citizenship, exploring the nexus between statelessness and conflict. Recommendations included the reform of nationality laws and related legislation to prevent statelessness; the importance of accession to the statelessness conventions; and the drafting of a regional instrument on nationality. The symposium was followed by the adoption of a resolution on statelessness and the right to nationality by the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

60. There is growing recognition by States that statelessness can be prevented by including sufficient safeguards in nationality legislation. The new constitution of Zimbabwe of April 2013 contained a number of provisions on citizenship for foundlings and safeguards in case of deprivation of citizenship which will have a positive impact on reducing and preventing statelessness.

Security of people of concern and staff safety

61. Challenging security situations prevailed in many humanitarian operations in Africa, including in the eastern and southern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan. In northern Mali, much-needed food assistance was delivered through NGO partners as the heightened security situation prevented a United Nations presence. Since April 2013, WFP and other United Nations organizations have been re-establishing their presence in the north.

62. In the Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya, services were interrupted on several occasions because of attacks which resulted in death and injury of refugees, law enforcement personnel and humanitarian workers. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, the rise of new rebel alliances and their control of strategic cities and regions seriously hampered the delivery of humanitarian assistance. In the Sudan, security constraints in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States and access restrictions imposed by the Government remained a challenge throughout the reporting period. In South Africa, incidents of xenophobic

³ This refers to pledges made at the intergovernmental event at the ministerial level of States Members of the United Nations on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, held in Geneva in December 2011 (see www.unhcr.org/ministerial).

violence against foreigners continued, affecting asylum-seekers and refugees and, in particular, Somali and Zimbabwean shop owners.

63. According to the Aid Worker Security Database, 97 humanitarian workers were killed, wounded or kidnapped in Africa during the reporting period, including 34 United Nations staff.

Prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence

64. Sexual and gender-based violence remained a defining feature of many of the armed conflicts in Africa. The causal factors included insecurity, the limited presence or absence of State authorities, gender inequality, extreme poverty, lack of education and harmful traditional practices. The main underlying issue that remains to be addressed, in addition to enhanced access to medical and psychosocial services for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, is widespread impunity.

65. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNFPA reported 11,600 cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence in 2012. Ninety-nine per cent of the victims were civilians, both male and female, and more than half of them were children. Twenty per cent of perpetrators belong to armed militia groups, and a similar percentage of perpetrators were reported among the country's armed forces and national police. Fifty per cent of the reported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence were attributed to civilians and 10 per cent to family members. Activities were implemented in the framework of the Comprehensive Strategy on Combating Sexual Violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and improve the response to victims. These activities included the establishment of community youth networks and neighbourhood watch committees; sensitization campaigns through sports and cultural activities; programmes on good fatherhood; the provision of alternatives to firewood energy; income-generating activities; and the establishment of mobile legal courts. However, limited access to justice leading to widespread impunity remains the critical obstacle in tackling sexual and gender-based violence. In South Kivu, for example, only 2 per cent of the reported cases of sexual violence reached the justice system.

66. Refugees fleeing the violence in northern Mali reported a high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence, including the abduction of "child brides", some as young as nine years old, by militias. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) documented cases in the regions of Gao and Menaka, where care services were established for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in northern Mali. Similar services were made available in the areas of Mopti and Bamako, which are hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons. UN-Women also organized workshops on the rights of women and girls for some 20,000 members of the armed forces prior to their deployment.

67. A growing number of refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas reported incidents of sexual and gender-based violence. In South Africa, over 300 cases of sexual and gender-based violence in urban areas were reported in 2012. The actual number was probably higher, as many of those affected do not report incidents because they fear stigma and retribution or lack information about available counselling, health and legal services.

B. Delivery of assistance

Food and nutrition

68. Three successive droughts and high food prices caused food insecurity and malnutrition in the Sahel region, affecting millions of people. Global acute malnutrition rates remained unacceptably high in many refugee operations, including in Burkina Faso, the Niger and South Sudan. In the Niger, for example, a nutrition survey by UNICEF in August 2012 showed that the global acute malnutrition rates in three refugee camps were alarmingly above the emergency threshold of 15 per cent. In Mangaize camp, a global acute malnutrition rate of 21.2 per cent was recorded. In Abala, the global acute malnutrition rate was 18.7 per cent, and in Tabareybarey, 15.5 per cent. To address the problem, several programmes, including blanket wet feeding for children younger than two years old, were implemented. Such efforts were successful, despite the continuing inflow of malnourished refugees from Mali, and brought down global acute malnutrition rates to 6.9 per cent in Mangaize, 11.7 per cent in Abala and 6.6 per cent in Tabareybarey by the end of 2012.

69. Malnutrition rates stabilized in the refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, where most of the Somali refugees had arrived in 2011. High malnutrition rates had been recorded in Dollo Ado and Afar camps, with global acute malnutrition rates between 28 and 50 per cent, and severe acute malnutrition rates between 10 and 18 per cent in 2011. By 2013, the global acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition rates were below 18 and 10 per cent respectively.

70. During the reporting period, despite resource limitations and security and logistical challenges, WFP continued to provide food assistance in displacement situations involving more than 5,000 refugees, as well as in many situations involving internally displaced persons. WFP is introducing a cash and voucher system in many operations in lieu of traditional in-kind food assistance. UNHCR and WFP conducted feasibility studies in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Malawi, Mozambique, the Niger and Zimbabwe. Burundi and the Niger have already started using vouchers in refugee camps, and a transition to cash or vouchers in other countries is expected in 2013.

71. A study on gender and protection implications of cash and voucher-based transfers in eight countries was carried out during the reporting period. It concluded that gender-related protection risks were not a direct result of the cash and voucher system, but that addressing those challenges should nevertheless be an integral part of the programme design. Beneficiaries indicated that they felt that cash and vouchers were a more dignified form of assistance because they empowered them with choice in situations in which they otherwise have very little control.

Public health and HIV/AIDS

72. An adequate and timely public health response and prevention of communicable disease outbreaks in refugee emergencies remain critical programmatic areas. For the first time, an oral cholera vaccination campaign was conducted, targeting 160,000 people, both refugees and immediate surrounding communities in Upper Nile State in South Sudan. Outbreaks of hepatitis E in South Sudan and the Dadaab refugee camps necessitated substantial intervention in the areas of community-based public health, water, sanitation and hygiene. As no

efficient vaccine or treatment is available for hepatitis E, safe drinking water and improved hygiene are essential.

73. Ensuring access for refugees to national HIV treatment programmes remained a key focus. By the end of 2012, in areas where antiretroviral treatment is available, access for refugees was sustained at 93 per cent, equivalent to the level of access for the surrounding populations. Substantial improvements in women's access to treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV were observed in Burundi (from 43 per cent in 2008 to 98 per cent in 2012) and Uganda (from 56 per cent in 2008 to 93 per cent in 2012).

74. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and its co-sponsors, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and WHO, supported awareness-raising programmes on the risk of HIV/AIDS; training for personnel; and treatment for refugees, internally displaced persons and some returnees in Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Liberia and South Sudan. In South Sudan, recognizing the need to mainstream HIV in emergency response programmes, the Joint United Nations Team on HIV/AIDS organized a series of training initiatives for national authorities and humanitarian actors in the most crisis-prone regions. In southern Africa, the International Organization for Migration, in cooperation with the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa, undertook a study on health risks in mixed migration flows from other subregions to inform and empower Governments to take appropriate action regarding the health of migrants and host communities.

Education

75. Education in a safe environment remained a key protection tool for children which contributed to prevention of forced recruitment, exploitation and forced marriage. Providing child-friendly spaces and organizing activities for children of school age were a standard part of the emergency response in Africa.

76. In Burkina Faso, Malian refugee children were allowed to follow the local curriculum and both refugee and local children benefited from the refurbishing and extension of local schools. A special initiative to provide education for refugee children was launched in 2012, benefiting more than 88,000 primary schoolchildren in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda. Primary school facilities were improved and classrooms were equipped with desks and school supplies. The quality of education was improved through training of teachers, many of whom were previously underqualified.

77. WFP continued its school feeding programme in many parts of Africa, providing a safety net for children and their families, in particular in food insecure areas. In the context of the Mali crisis, emergency school feeding programmes promoted school attendance and helped to reduce malnutrition rates. In the Sudan, school feeding was crucial for internally displaced children in Darfur.

Livelihood opportunities

78. Self-reliance and livelihood opportunities for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees remained a key objective for many of the United Nations organizations working in Africa.

79. In West Africa, the International Labour Organization carried out a local integration and livelihood programme in 14 countries, which included activities for some 26,000 long-staying Mauritanian refugees in Senegal and the Kayes region in Mali. A similar programme was implemented for 16,500 Senegalese refugees in the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, focusing on supplying agricultural inputs for refugees living in rural areas. For urban-based refugees in Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal, programmes focused on facilitating access to savings and loan services through microfinance institutions.

80. An innovative approach was piloted in the Niger, benefiting tens of thousands of nomadic refugees from Mali. The authorities designated an enclave where the refugees and their livestock could continue their nomadic lifestyle and livelihoods. The first caravan of some 800 camels, donkeys and cattle, accompanied by the herdsmen, was moved in May 2013. At the same time, basic services, including primary education, continued in the refugee sites.

81. In the Sudan, WFP and partners promoted resilience-building activities to reduce dependency on food aid, with small projects that promote local production, increase household income and stimulate local markets in Abyei and the States of Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile.

82. In Mozambique, under the Government's flexible arrangements on freedom of movement, an increasing number of refugees have access to economic activities and have become self-reliant.

C. Ending forced displacement

83. As of 30 June 2012, refugee status ceased for Angolan refugees who had fled their country as a result of the conflicts between 1961 and 2002, and for Liberian refugees who had fled their country because of the civil wars between 1989 and 2003. A recommendation was also made to States to cease refugee status as of 30 June 2013 for Rwandan refugees who fled their country between 1959 and 1998. While some countries invoked cessation for Rwandan refugees, several Governments were not in a position to do so by the end of June owing to domestic legal issues and practical obstacles. Those Governments called for a differentiated approach in the implementation of various components of the recommendation.

84. Leading up to the cessation, solutions were found for as many Angolan, Liberian and Rwandan refugees as possible, either in their country of origin or in their country of asylum. Some 49,000 Angolan refugees have opted to return home, of which some 20,000 have already done so. Nearly 70,000 opted for local integration, mostly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. The latter announced its willingness to locally integrate some 10,000 former Angolan refugees. The Democratic Republic of the Congo introduced transitional documentation leading to residence permits for all Angolans who opted to remain in the country after their refugee status ended. Namibia also committed to integrate some 2,000 Angolans.

85. Nearly 30,000 Liberian refugees returned home in 2012 and over 12,000 opted for local integration. In West Africa, local integration is facilitated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Establishment, which allows former refugees from the region to reside and work in any ECOWAS member State.

86. Nearly 11,000 Rwandan refugees returned during 2012, and progress was made in identifying local integration opportunities in several host countries. The decision by the Government of Rwanda to issue passports to Rwandan refugees in countries of asylum is expected to facilitate the local integration process.

87. Between January 2012 and April 2013, 23,560 requests for resettlement of refugees from Africa were submitted, mainly to Australia, Canada and the United States of America. While in previous years Somalia was the country of origin for the largest number of resettled refugees, during the reporting period the majority of refugees submitted for resettlement were originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (43 per cent). More stringent security conditions in some of the asylum countries, most notably Kenya, caused a drop in resettlement interviews for Somali refugees. At the same time, UNHCR launched a comprehensive durable solutions strategy for refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the objective of resettling some 50,000 refugees over three years.

D. Partnership and inter-agency cooperation

88. In 2012, the IASC endorsed the five commitments on accountability to affected people/populations: to improve leadership; to improve transparency; to respond to feedback and address complaints; to encourage participation; and to enhance design, monitoring and evaluation. IASC called on all members to incorporate these commitments into their policies and operational guidelines. IASC also finalized an operational framework on improving accountability to affected people in emergency situations.

89. During the reporting period, the inter-agency protection standby capacity project hosted by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs deployed seven senior protection officers to various United Nations organizations working with displaced people in Africa. They provided expertise in the planning, coordination and implementation of the protection response in Burundi, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Africa and the Sudan. The international emergency response to internal displacement was coordinated through the cluster approach in the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, the Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Zimbabwe.

90. The United Nations continued to strengthen its partnerships at the global, regional and national levels. In partnership with the African regional economic communities, the United Nations has been developing emergency rosters, together with African partners, to strengthen networks of disaster managers, deploy rapid response teams, disburse humanitarian funds and improve crisis-related information management. In Mozambique, the "Delivering as one" initiative continued to create an enabling environment for effective partnership among United Nations agencies, NGOs and the Government to address the challenges posed by mixed migratory movements. The long-standing United Nations partnership with the African Union remained a key element in the ratification and entry into force of the Kampala Convention.

91. The Peacebuilding Fund has been delivering critical funding to 13 African countries emerging from conflict. The Fund supports essential interventions to address the root causes of crises and to ensure the sustainability of solutions in countries emerging from conflict.

92. The Peacebuilding Fund provided direct support to the registration process in Côte d'Ivoire, securing birth certificates for more than 100,000 children in conflict-affected areas, and giving them access to basic services such as education and health care. By assisting the integration of internally displaced persons and supporting local conflict resolution efforts, the Fund supported projects in Somalia that contributed to reducing tensions between host communities and displaced people in Puntland.

93. In the Sudan, the Peacebuilding Fund provided gap-filling support to the reintegration of returning internally displaced persons and peacebuilding efforts in Abyei and the States of South Kordofan and Khartoum. Monthly workshops were held on conflict management, conflict resolution and reconciliation. A team of trained protection staff closely monitored returnee movements.

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

94. In almost all of the emergencies in Africa during the reporting period, neighbouring countries maintained open borders and respected the principle of non-refoulement, despite the significant social and economic implications. At the same time, attitudes hardened in some countries towards long-staying refugees and towards people in need of international protection caught in mixed migratory movements. While recognizing the pressure that the presence of large numbers of refugees can exert on local and national resources, I call upon African States to renew their commitment to ensuring that refugees can seek and enjoy asylum for as long as they need it.

95. Despite progress made in finding durable solutions, with many refugees returning home or integrating locally, the number of new refugees increased for the third consecutive year. The succession of complex emergencies also saw many more people internally displaced than in previous years. Displacement exposes people to greater risk of violence, including forced recruitment and sexual and gender-based violence, which is often used as a weapon of war. I call on States to discharge their fundamental responsibility to provide effective protection for refugees and internally displaced persons, which includes maintaining the humanitarian and civilian character of displacement sites, and to end impunity for acts of sexual violence.

96. I call upon Governments and development, peacebuilding and humanitarian actors to work together to find solutions for the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons on the continent. States should permit freedom of movement, ensuring access, without discrimination, to basic public services, legal and personal documentation, education and gainful employment.

97. The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa is a ground-breaking legal instrument. I commend the States that have already ratified the Convention, leading to its entry into force in December 2012, and urge African Union member States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify this instrument. I further encourage those States that have ratified the Convention to fully incorporate it into domestic law. I urge all States to develop national frameworks for internally displaced persons, as they can serve to prevent, manage and find solutions for all types of internal displacement situations resulting

from armed conflict, general violence, violations of human rights and natural or human-made disasters.

98. I encourage African States that have not yet done so to consider accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. States are also encouraged to work with relevant organizations, particularly UNHCR, to identify stateless populations and those at risk of becoming stateless on their territory and to review their national legislation to eliminate gaps that may cause or perpetuate statelessness.

99. State and non-State parties to conflict should facilitate access by humanitarian organizations to affected civilian populations and ensure the security of humanitarian workers, so that impartial aid can be delivered safely even during ongoing hostilities. Currently, only 12 African countries are party to the United Nations Convention on the Safety and Security of United Nations and Associated Personnel, and only 10 in sub-Saharan Africa. I encourage all African States to sign, ratify and enforce the Convention.

100. Finally, States outside Africa should support the principles of international cooperation, solidarity and responsibility-sharing. This includes ensuring that humanitarian organizations are adequately resourced to meet the needs of affected populations; supporting countries in the aftermath of conflict in implementing durable solutions strategies for refugees and internally displaced persons; and making places available for resettlement.
