

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN 2002: MOZAMBIQUE

Part I: Executive Committee Summary

a) Context and Beneficiary Populations

Mozambique is party to the 1951 (with reservations to Articles 13, 15, 17, 19, 22, 26 and 34) and 1969 Conventions, and therein, Mozambican Law 21/91 incorporates the essential provisions of these instruments. The Law also establishes the Consultative Commission for Refugees (the Eligibility Commission), which is the principal organ for refugee status determination. The Commission's recommendations are presented to the Minister of Interior for final decision. Rejected cases may lodge appeals with the Administrative Tribunal in Maputo.

On the surface, Mozambique is a stable country in Southern Africa. However, there have been indicators in 2000 that this stability might be fragile. The result of the national elections of December of 1999 led to demonstrations by the opposition party in November 2000, which resulted in the deaths of more than 20 people and hundreds of arrests.

The floods of 2000 and 2001 have had a major impact on all activities in the country. Almost one million people lost their homes, and some 1000 people lost their lives. The main areas affected by the floods were Maputo, Manica, and Gaza Province. New floods have swayed North Mozambique, in the Zambezi Valley, in the first months of 2001.

Although the economic situation has been improving substantially, another factor contributing to the instability of the country is the growing gap between rich and poor, and North and South.

The above factors have led to some social unrest and a growing trend of xenophobia, leading to the assumption that all foreigners are illegal, criminal, and a burden to the country.

Up to August 1999, all asylum seekers entering the country were requested to present their case to the authorities in Maputo, where they were interviewed and referred to the Bobole Transit Center for the provision of basic assistance. However, in 1999, the Government of Mozambique changed its policy and did not allow any movement of asylum seekers into Maputo. Upon request from the Government, a Refugee Center in Nampula was opened at the beginning of 2001. By the end of May 2001, the Center had basic facilities to accommodate a population of about 500 persons.

A planning workshop between the Government of Mozambique and UNHCR was held in Pretoria in February 2001, during which a Strategic Plan for the year 2001 was drafted. It was agreed that as of 01 January 2002, direct assistance would only be provided to refugees and asylum seekers in the Nampula Refugee Center. During the year 2001, the activities in Massaca II and Bobole Refugee Camps will be phased out. Those refugees who have sufficient means to rely on their own income and wish to remain in Maputo Province will be allowed to do so, provided they inform on their place of residence to the "Nucleo de Apoio aos Refugiados" (NAR), which is also UNHCR's government counterpart. It was also agreed to open a reception center in Lichinga, Niassa, the major point of entry in Mozambique, and to arrange regular transport from Lichinga to Nampula and from Maputo to Nampula. Training, information pamphlets, and awareness meetings are as well part of the strategic plan. The implementation of agreed activities is already underway, although facing serious funding problems.

Mozambique is a country of transit for a large number of asylum seekers, who often do not approach NAR/UNHCR or the Immigration Service and may 'disappear' after a while. An average of 2500 individual cases (ICs) remains in the country in the first quarter of

2001. They need protection and assistance towards local integration. As the political situation in the Great Lakes Region continues to be unstable, the number of asylum seekers has steadily increased from 1192 to 2278 (almost 50%) in the year 2000 and to 2621 in the first quarter of 2001 (some 15%).

The applications of asylum seekers take a long time to be resolved as the Eligibility Committee meetings are not held on a regular basis. Some cases have been pending since 1997. No refugee status has been granted since a few refugees received their status on 20 June 1999. The number of urban refugees in the country thus remains at 207 persons.

UNHCR has two Implementing Partners (IPs) in Mozambique: NAR and the NGO World Relief International (WRI). NAR continues to be responsible for the provision of direct assistance in the two camps. It discharges also the function of Secretariat of the Eligibility Commission, which involves joint interviewing of asylum-seekers with UNHCR and Immigration officials, and preparing cases for submission to the Eligibility Commission. WRI is engaged in local integration activities. A third IP, Caritas Lichinga, will be added in mid-2001 for the provision of basic assistance to new arrivals in Lichinga. It is foreseen that in 2002, additional IPs will be chosen for the implementation of sector specific activities in the Nampula Refugee Center.

Even though training activities were undertaken in the past, NAR still has a limited capacity in delivering services to the refugee population. The implementation rate of community and social services is very low. The small UNHCR office in Maputo does not have the capacity to follow up and monitor all the activities on a daily basis. WRI has been able to implement a successful local integration programme despite facing some problems, like the delays in refugee status determination procedures.

b) Selected Programme Goals and Objectives

Beneficiary Population # 1: Refugees and Asylum Seekers outside the Refugee Center	
Main Goal(s): To facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for local integration of refugees in Mozambique	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
Legal protection to the refugee and asylum seekers population outside the Refugee Center.	Decisions on the refugee status application for all cases registered in Maputo Province before July 2001. ID Cards for all refugees. Updated data base for those refugees/asylum seekers outside the Refugee Center.
Economical self-sufficiency for Refugees and Asylum Seekers outside the Refugee Center.	Income generation activities, like micro credit, job searching and vocational training.

Beneficiary Population # 2: Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Nampula Refugee Center	
<p>Main Goal(s):</p> <p>To co-ordinate with the government and NGOs the overall management of Nampula Refugee Center and necessary expansion for increased caseload.</p> <p>To mainstream existing LS project and programme standards and policies on gender, refugee women and children, and environment.</p> <p>To facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for local integration of refugees in Mozambique.</p>	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
Legal protection to the refugee and asylum seekers population in Nampula Refugee Center.	<p>Administrative and technical support to Eligibility Commission.</p> <p>Timely decisions on the refugee status application.</p> <p>ID Cards for all refugees.</p> <p>Declaration cards for all asylum seekers.</p> <p>Accurate statistics on population.</p> <p>Establishment of refugee awareness in the society.</p> <p>Resettlement and Voluntary Repatriation were applicable.</p>
Economical self-sufficiency for Refugees and Asylum Seekers outside the Refugee Center	Income generation activities, like agriculture, animal husbandry, micro credit, job searching and vocational training
Improved delivery of protection and programme assistance	<p>Capacity building activities for government officials.</p> <p>Adequate programme delivery to women, children and vulnerable people.</p> <p>Expansion of Center to accommodate increased caseload.</p> <p>Development of community service activities.</p> <p>Provision of education assistance.</p>