

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN

Country: Japan

Planning Year: 2002

Executive Summary

a) Context: Beneficiary Population(s) and Theme(s)

Both Japan and the Republic of Korea are parties to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Japan acceded in 1982 and adopted national legislation the same year, while the Republic of Korea acceded to the Convention in 1992 and amendments to the immigration law to allow for refugee status took effect in 1994. Except for the earlier period when both countries were also affected by the arrival of Indo-Chinese refugees, Japan and the Republic of Korea continue to host a small population of urban refugees and asylum-seekers of various nationalities, numbering a few hundreds annually. The number is inclusive of those in the process of applying for refugee status as well as those who had claims rejected some of whom were accorded mandate status by UNHCR. In comparison with other industrialised nations, both Japan and the Republic of Korea have yet to satisfactorily fulfil their obligations in relation to international protection standards.

Japan and the Republic of Korea have been most supportive of UNHCR, both politically and financially, through their active participation in EXCOM deliberations and through their annual contributions to UNHCR programmes. For years, Japan has consistently ranked as the second largest government donor to UNHCR. The country's contribution totaled US\$ 135 million in 1999 when two high-visibility emergencies (Kosovo and East Timor) occurred. In 2000, in the absence of any new major emergencies, the total contribution of Japan still exceeded US \$ 100 million. The Republic of Korea has recently emerged as a new donor with potential, having maintained its annual contribution of over US \$ one million during the past few years. Additionally, private-sector donations to UNHCR in Japan have totaled some US \$ 3-4 million, annually on average, for the past five years, constantly placing the country amongst the top donors from the private sector. Although private sector contributions in the Republic of Korea have been virtually non-existent for a number of reasons, the vibrant private sector in that country is considered a source of great potential to which UNHCR will devote greater attention from the end of 2001 and throughout 2002.

The above context provides the rationale for UNHCR's presence and involvement in Japan and the Republic of Korea. The Office's role in these two countries also derives from the Organisation's over-arching strategies and the operational objectives in the Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific. The objectives which are of relevance to this sub-region include promotion of asylum and the provision of international protection to refugees, the pursuit of durable solutions, mobilisation of resources and support for UNHCR activities, and improved emergency preparedness and response. On this basis, the overall objective of UNHCR operations in 2002 in Japan and the Republic of Korea will continue to be threefold; (a) the provision of international protection to persons of concern and (b) the promotion of relations with the Governments, public information and public awareness with a view to maintaining and/or broadening support of both public and private sectors towards the work of UNHCR and its programmes of assistance world-wide and (c) the provision of capacity-building in the field of emergency preparedness and response management for the direct benefit of targeted beneficiaries within the Asia and Pacific Region.

With the departure of the former High Commissioner, a major challenge for the Office will be to sustain the current level of support from the Government of Japan

and of interest for the Japanese public. On the other hand, for both Japan and the Republic of Korea, continued efforts will be needed in the area of refugee protection where substantial improvements are still required.

In light of the above the Country Operations Plan for 2002 foresees the implementation of four inter-linked operational themes i.e. (1) provision of international protection, (2) mobilisation of support/resources, (3) public information, and (4) emergency preparedness and capacity building in Japan and the Asia-Pacific Region, in addition to the ongoing provision of support, both protection and assistance, to the small beneficiary population of urban refugees and asylum-seekers. Operationally, efforts in respect of the first two themes will need to be synchronised to ensure that while global refugee situations continue to enjoy attention and support from both the Governments and the public, domestic asylum situations are not neglected. Implementation of the third theme of public information, through introduction of a more comprehensive public awareness strategy integrating public information activities with protection goals, is expected to provide an essential means to help underpin this delicate balance.

Pursuit of the fourth and most recently added theme of emergency preparedness and response will be realised through capacity building for the benefit of NGOs, Government officials, UN staff and others in Japan and the Asia-Pacific Region. This theme foresees the consolidation of the e-Centre (the Regional Centre for Emergency Training in International Humanitarian Response, based in Tokyo), implementing a range of complementary emergency preparedness activities for the region. Ultimately it is intended that the work of the e-Centre will devolve to organisations and institutions in Japan and in the region and much of the activities of the e-Centre will be empowering such organisations to take on these tasks with the goal of achieving sustainability in 2003. This multi-year UNHCR programme is financed primarily by the Government of Japan. However, support from other governments in the region, in the forms of cash contributions and in the form of in-kind support through the use of government institutions is also expected.

b) Main Programme Goals and Principal Objectives

Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme Urban caseload of asylum seekers and refugees in Japan and the Republic of Korea	
Main Goal(s) <i>Ensure the respect of basic human rights of asylum-seekers and refugees in Japan and the Republic of Korea</i>	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Improve the conditions of the urban caseload</i> ▪ <i>Ensure legal support for asylum applicants</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asylum-seekers and refugees do not face hunger, lack of shelter and lack of medical services • The Governments of Japan and Korea and national NGOs take a proactive role to cater for the existing needs • Applicants receive legal counseling and representation

Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme Ensure the quality of asylum in Japan and Korea and fulfil responsibilities towards the supervisory Mandate of Art. 35 of the 1951 Convention	
Main Goal(s) <i>Comply with the supervisory Mandate of Art. 35 of the 1951 Convention</i>	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure the quality of asylum in Japan and the Republic of Korea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The procedures for refugee determination and the criteria used comply with the 1951 Convention ▪ UNHCR maintains close contacts with the Ministry of Justice officials in fulfillment of its advisory role ▪ Transparent statistical reporting by the respective Governments
Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme <i>Public Information and Public Awareness activities in Japan and the Republic of Korea</i>	
Main Goal(s) Public understands and supports refugee cause as promoted by UNHCR	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public awareness of goals and objectives of UNHCR is raised through publications and by strengthened relationship with the media in Japan and the Republic of Korea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PI/PA materials regularly produced and disseminated to key decision makers, the media and the public at large ▪ Media interest increased in non-emergency period ▪ Increased interest in domestic as well as international issues
Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme <i>Private sector fundraising in Japan and Korea</i>	
Main Goal(s) Enhance Private Sector Fund Raising (PSFR) in Japan and the Republic of Korea	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Private Sector contributions are significantly increased in Japan and Korea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Japan for UNHCR implements active PSFR in Japan ▪ Modest but effective PSFR activities implemented in ROK

Name of Beneficiary Population/Theme <i>Emergency preparedness and capacity building in Japan and the Asia-Pacific Region</i>	
Main Goal(s) <i>To improve the level of preparedness within the region for a response to refugee emergencies. To increase the level of Japanese expertise and resources applied to assist refugees</i>	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There will be improved emergency preparedness in the Asia-Pacific region. ▪ Japanese NGOs and other institutions will have an improved ability to assist in refugee operations in terms of manpower and resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional training workshops and seminars. • Distance learning courses. • Systems of Information sharing through a Website, email and other means. • Institutions in the region capable of undertaking training for emergency response. • A regional network of organisations mutually supportive for emergency response • Reference documents on emergency preparedness and response easily and widely available