

COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN

Country: SUDAN

Planning Year: 2002

Executive Committee Summary

(a) Context and Beneficiary Population

Within the scope of its overall mandate, the rationale for the continued presence of UNHCR in the Sudan is to protect and provide humanitarian assistance to the majority of refugees who have been in Sudan for three decades. The majority of the refugees are Eritreans who fled their country during the war of independence. The Government of Sudan does not however, favour the local integration of refugees, despite the fact that many have been in the country for many years. This stance of the Government continues to affect the prospects of durable solutions for those refugees for whom voluntary repatriation has not been an option, and has necessitated the continued provision of care and maintenance assistance. UNHCR's efforts to pursue the issue of local integration with the Government constitute as a major part of the exit-strategy of the Office.

One of the primary objectives of UNHCR Sudan is the promotion of voluntary repatriation and the eventual phase out of the program. However, the framework for the protection of individual asylum seekers and refugees has to be maintained. With the repatriation of Eritrean refugees underway, and with the successful conclusion of the repatriation of the residual pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees during the first quarter of 2001, the number of refugees enjoying prima facie refugee recognition will dwindle. The protection and assistance to individual asylum seekers and refugees in Sudan will only be maintained through a system of individual status determination. UNHCR has no role in the Government of Sudan (GOS) refugee status determination process but works towards the goal of a joint refugee status determination body. The current policy and practice is one of a parallel system - where the GOS conducts individual refugee status and provides refugee identification documents for each asylum seeker, while UNHCR conducts refugee status determination under UNHCR's mandate. Refugees of various nationalities who are recognized in Sudan by the GOS and UNHCR following individual status determination will continue to enjoy international protection and assistance. UNHCR will remain active to ensure protection and assistance, including realization of durable solutions, for those who have been granted refugee status. Many of the individual asylum seekers are based in urban areas and do not require care and maintenance assistance. Once recognized as refugees, they require temporary and partial assistance from UNHCR as they develop their links in the country and become self sufficient.

The current major caseload that UNHCR continues to assist are Eritreans, who are located in 23 refugee settlements in eastern Sudan and the Red Sea State. There are other minority groups benefiting from international protection and assistance. These include Chadians, Congolese (DRC), Ugandans, Ethiopians and Somalis. As of December 2000, Sudan was hosting an estimated 401,065 refugees. Of these, 187,395 were residing in camps, while approximately 213,670 (Government figure) were in urban and semi-urban centres in the country.

The Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR), is the Government agency responsible for policy-making and the principal implementing partner of UNHCR in

almost all aspects of camp management and assistance to refugees. There are also a few national non-governmental organisations involved in refugee primary health care and small-scale community development activities.

Assuming that the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia will continue to move forward, and that security will prevail in refugee hosting areas, prospects for durable solutions now seem increasingly promising. UNHCR Sudan plans to assist the **voluntary repatriation** for the majority of Eritrean refugees, which will conclude by the end of 2002. Some 62,000 refugees are expected to return home during 2001.

A Tripartite Commission meeting comprising of the Governments of Sudan and Eritrea and UNHCR was held in Khartoum from 21 – 22 March 2001, and formulated the operational strategy for a large-scale repatriation to Eritrea in 2001 and 2002. In 2002, UNHCR plans to repatriate 90,000 Eritrean refugees.

UNHCR Sudan also plans to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of other caseloads composed of Chadians, Ugandans, and Somalis during the years 2001-2002. Parallel to its efforts towards durable solutions, UNHCR envisages the continuation of care and maintenance assistance to targeted beneficiaries, primarily the vulnerable groups and persons with special needs, most of whom reside in designated refugee settlements, as well as individual protection cases based in urban setting. UNHCR will continue to collaborate with WFP in the provision of basic food rations for the refugees.

Whilst the repatriation operation is in progress, the UNHCR will, within the confines of its mandate and financial means, address the most critical issues arising from environmental degradation and the rehabilitation of Refugee Affected Areas. This will be done in conjunction with Government Line Ministries. Other United Nations Agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations operating in the areas to be vacated by the refugees will also have a crucial role to play in the exercise.

(b) Selected Programme Goals and Objectives

Name of Beneficiary Population: Eritrean Refugees	
Main Goal To promote and facilitate voluntary repatriation for 90,000 Eritrean refugees by end of 2002, and to provide international protection and material assistance during the repatriation process.	
Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eritrean refugees voluntarily repatriate before end of 2002. • Camp and urban-based refugees continue to benefit from international protection and assistance. • Eritrean refugees with compelling refugee-related reasons for not repatriating, continue to benefit from international protection and assistance, as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eritrean refugees voluntarily repatriated from Sudan and reintegrated in Eritrea. • International Protection and material assistance provided to needy camp and urban-based Eritrean refugees. • Cases with compelling reasons not to return screened, and their status determined by screening teams. • Health services provided and the refugee

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugees have better access to preventive, curative, promotive and reproductive health services. • Camp based refugees consume clean and adequate quantities of water for both drinking and hygiene purposes. 	<p>health status maintained both in camps and urban areas. Morbidity and mortality rates remain at an acceptable level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased immunisation coverage. • Water pumping, treatment, storage and distribution systems maintained. Quality of water conformed to acceptable standards.
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<p>Name of theme: Refugees of other nationalities including Ugandans, Chadians, and Ethiopians.</p>	
<p>Main Goal To continue promoting and facilitating repatriation for the residual minority refugee groups to their countries of origin where feasible, and seek resettlement opportunities for those who meet the criteria.</p>	
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<p>Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When feasible, minority refugee groups are assisted to voluntarily repatriate in safety and dignity to their countries of origin. • Refugees with compelling refugee-related reasons not to return home, continue to benefit from international protection and material assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repatriation facilitated for minority refugee groups. • Procedures for obtaining residence permits for those with compelling reasons not to repatriate established and implemented.

<p>Name of theme: Refugee women/gender equality, children and adolescents.</p>	
<p>Main Goal Promotion of gender equality concepts and refugee education in the camps.</p>	
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<p>Related Outputs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee women are empowered and actively involved in leadership structures. • Refugee boys and girls have access to primary education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership workshops and meetings on income generating activities and awareness raising organised and supported. • Primary education activities and needs delineated and supported. • Greater involvement of refugee women in program implementation.

<p>Name of theme: Environmental Rehabilitation and Protection</p>
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Main Goal

To mainstream environmental policies and priorities into all aspects/phases of refugee-related activities to safeguard refugee needs and those of the host communities through the promotion of sound environmental management.

Principal Objectives

- Refugees and host communities benefit from a rehabilitated environment in refugee-hosting areas.
- Host communities benefit from a rehabilitated environment in and around vacated refugee camps.

Related Outputs

- Tree nurseries, fire breaks, fuel efficient stoves, and tree planting tools for the communities established, maintained and operational.
- Refugee camps vacated, environment rehabilitated