

# **COUNTRY OPERATIONS PLAN**

## **UNHCR LIAISON OFFICE IN BOTSWANA**

**Planning Year: 2003**

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## **Part I: Country Level**

### **1.1 Executive Summary**

In honour of his outstanding political leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS, the President of Botswana, Festus Mogae was awarded the Howard Institute Leadership Medal. This was the culmination of the President's relentless efforts to curb the national pandemic that has brought about devastating consequences on many aspects of life in Botswana. Prior to the award, the nation held a peaceful referendum on the suitability of certain aspects of the constitution.

- 1.2 The campaigns in favour of the legitimacy and investment value of Botswana's diamond were well received internationally. With a favorable political environment and sufficient funding, the already robust economy recorded a 5.2% growth in 2001. The situation was less stable and vibrant in countries neighboring Botswana. In Angola, the ageless conflict continued to empty refugees into Botswana whilst Zambia ended the year with a change in its Government.. In Zimbabwe, political intolerance and a run away economic decline were pre-occupying issues.

The main focus of this 2003 Country Operations Plan are as follows:

- i) to reinforce through training and cross Country visits, the capacity of Government officials and implementing partners to discharge their respective functions. This will also include the promulgation of a new law on refugees consistent with international standards and practice.
- ii) to make optimal use of the two main avenues of attaining durable solutions. These are local settlement and voluntary repatriation;
- iii) to enhance the integrity of refugees pending durable solutions through involvement in credible income generation activities and educational programmes.

#### **a) Context and Beneficiary Populations**

##### **1. Angolan Refugees:**

- i) At the close of 2001, they were 984 Angolan Refugees in Botswana.

This represented an increase by 243 from previous year statistics. The sex ratio is in favour of males (499:525) though there are more female under five (80) compared to boys (69). The ratio balances at 149 persons in the age bracket 5-17 years.

- ii) The reasons for fleeing Angola are identical between those who arrived recently and those in Botswana for prolonged periods of time. The catalogue of reasons for flight is limited to generalized insecurity and accusations by warring factions that they aid either one or both belligerents. Most Angolan refugees are uprooted as a clan and the need of social support is therefore visible even in exile.
- iii) The 2003 programme provides for a one-time contribution to the project of integration of Angola refugees pending formal naturalization. It is hoped that the success of the scheme will encourage authorities to admit more Angolans in the same project. Newly arriving Angolans will have access to the Care and Maintenance Support Services including Income Generating Activities and Community Support Services. Recent developments in Angola suggest possibilities of peace. The design of the 2003 programme is therefore mindful of the chances for possible Voluntary Repatriation.

## 2. Namibian Refugees

- i) Namibians constitute the largest group of refugees in Botswana with 2,387 persons registered by December 2001. The population is predominantly male (1534) as opposed to female (322). The pattern of population distribution is the same with all age brackets. The only exception is in the category of those above 60 years in which, by comparison, there are more female than male. The difference is however insignificant.
- ii) Those Namibians who continue to trek into Botswana attribute their flight to victimization by security personnel and some for purposes of family reunification. About half of the Namibian refugees are Basarwa who because of their very traditional lifestyles constantly require exceptional support.
- iii) In terms of programme goals and objectives, the option of voluntary repatriation will be pursued for those who may sign up for it. The programme also assumes the reluctance by a larger part of the population to repatriate due to strong political views. For this sub-group the goal is to assist them with self-reliance projects which will include Income Generating Activities, education and to a lesser extent job placement. The resettlement of the leadership of the “Caprivi People” if not attained in 2002 will remain a priority goal in 2003.

### 3. Somali Refugees

- i) Botswana hosts 568 Somali refugees of whom 321 males and 247 females. They are accommodated in Dukwi Refugee Camp. A striking feature of this group is the outstanding presence of male refugees (161) in the age bracket 18-59 years.
- ii) Because of the geographical location of Botswana, most Somali asylum seekers passed through a third country at least before reaching Botswana. The reasons for leaving Somalia have remained known for decades and the lawlessness in that country is degenerating with time. The reasons for not seeking asylum in countries bordering Somalia include conflicting clan membership and relief or integration programmes that do not incorporate their special needs.
- iii) The continued promotion of resettlement of Somali refugees has in previous years enticed the arrival of many new cases. The training of Government officials in International Refugee Law will continue in order to obtain a better appreciation of their plight. It is hoped that this will reverse the strict application of the principle of first country of asylum. The 2003 programme will beyond this, support the self initiated enterprises in “sole trading”. Somali refugee children are enthusiastic with education and will be encouraged to pursue this sector under Care and Maintenance arrangement. Those Somalis who elect to repatriate will be assisted in consultation with concerned parties.

### 4. Urban Refugees

- i) The group of urban refugees comprises 16 different nationalities. Refugee men make up 80% of the caseload while women represent 15%.The remaining 5% accounts for the accompanying minors.
- ii) The reasons for running away from their respective countries centre on very personalised security incidents. Because of their youth, these persons were very active in politics and it was either a direct or indirect involvement in such activities that they were compelled to flee. Because the reasons of flight are unresolved in their countries of origin, it is unlikely that voluntary repatriation is feasible.
- iii) The main options to which this group has shown interest include lucrative business (IGA) ventures, education and job placement. Those who have the will shall be encouraged to set up Income Generating Projects with the professional guidance of a local NGO

in the country. Others will be enrolled in educational institutions to pursue programmes, which are in demand, and therefore chances of job placement will be higher.

b) **Selected Programme Goals and Objectives**

**Name of Beneficiary Population: Angolan Refugees**

Main goals (s)

- Introduce IGA's as an activity for self reliance
- Provide support to expedite local integration
- Facilitate documentation towards naturalization

Principal Objective	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the civilian character of Dukwi Camp is upheld</li> <li>• to obtain citizenship for Angolan refugees 10 years in Botswana</li> <li>• to facilitate the local integration of newly arriving Angolans</li> <li>• wean off "old Angolans" from relief</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• asylum seekers with military background are screened appropriately</li> <li>• Old Angolans are issued with Botswana citizenship documents.</li> <li>• Integration process takes into full consideration all environment concerns</li> <li>• Old Angolans weaned off relief.</li> </ul>

**Name of Beneficiary Population: Namibian Refugees**

Main goal (s)

- To upgrade Tripartite Agreements on voluntary repatriation
- To promote voluntary repatriation
- Facilitate local integration through selected schemes
- Resettle those who can not repatriate or integrate.

Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•insert new concerns in repatriation agreement</li> <li>• place in appropriate activities, refugees according to skills and background to ensure accelerated integration.</li> <li>• ensure organized and dignified voluntary return.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•repatriation bottlenecks are addressed</li> <li>•integration appreciated as fits in ones interests and background.</li> <li>• permanent solution to the problem is obtained</li> <li>•durable solution is attained for mandate refugees.</li> </ul>

•recommend for resettlement “mandate” refugees	
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**Name of Beneficiary Population: Somali Refugees**

Main goal (s)

- Sensitise local authorities on the demerits of the strict application of the principle of first country of asylum
- Resettle those mandate refugees.
- Create an enabling environment for local integration

Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-evaluate how to effectively install Somali refugees in Dukwi</li> <li>• intervene and influence at various political levels on the principle of first country of asylum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• willingness to participate in programmes they have contributed to set up.</li> <li>• reduction in the number of asylum applications.</li> <li>• less pressure on the resettlement programme.</li> </ul>

**Name of Beneficiary Population: Urban Based Refugees**

Main goal(s)

- wean-off from material assistance all graduating students.
- ensure that the career educational path will bring about lasting solution
- to promote the exclusive application of the Refugee Act in documentation as opposed to the Immigration Act

Principal Objectives	Related Outputs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• educational programmes should lead to gainful employment or self sufficiency</li> <li>• to promote better understanding between Refugee and Immigration Acts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational programme brings about value of its relevancy to other refugees.</li> <li>• Refugees are issued only with Work and not Resident permits.</li> </ul>