

1. Introduction

Since the last update of September 2006, UNHCR Tanzania has carried out two main activities under the SPCP Project. The first was continuation of the implementation of DANIDA funded activities. The second was continued mobilisation of funds for additional SPCP activities.

2. Implementation of DANIDA-funded Activities

The following activities were implemented in the following areas:

Receptive Legal, Political and Social Environment

Promotion of Positive Attitudes towards Refugees

The Southern Africa Human Rights NGO (SAHRINGON) and Radio-Kwizera conducted a number of activities at national and local (North-western Tanzania) level respectively aimed at promoting positive attitudes towards refugees. The activities conducted by Sahrington were:

- A media workshop was organised at Haidery Plaza, Dar es Salaam, on 6th October whose objectives were to sensitize journalists on refugee issues and to explore ways of collaboration between Sahrington and the media on combating negative attitudes towards refugees
- Airing of six TV programmes (6th September 2006, 11th September 2006, 27 & 28 December 2006 and 3rd January 2007) on various refugee topics. Speakers and panellists included eminent persons from the government, NGOs, UNHCR and the University of Dar es Salaam. The programmes were aired on TV stations with nation-wide coverage including TVT and Channel Ten in popular slots including “PAMBANUA” and “Jenerali on Monday”.
- Airing of three radio programmes (13th and 16th September and 27th December 2006) on various refugee topics.
- Printing and distribution of awareness rising materials including 200 T-shirts; 200 Caps inscribed “MKIMBIZI NI BINADAMU KAMA WEWE” (A refugee is a human being like you and me); and 500 brochures explaining who a refugee is and refugee rights and obligations.
- A familiarisation and research tour to refugee settlements for Sahrington-SPCP team was conducted between 13th- 23rd November 2006.
- A workshop for Sahrington member organisations in Kigoma on 20th November 2006
- Participating in the school visits programme conducted in collaboration with other UN Agencies such as UNICEF, UNIC, UNHCR and members of the UN Youth Club.

- Participation at the UNHCR Stand, during the Annual UN Exhibition at Karimjee Grounds on 26 and 27 October 2006. The main visitors included primary, secondary, and post primary students; journalists and the general public.

In conducting these activities, Sahringon worked very closely and received guidance from the External Relations/PIs Unit of UNHCR RO, Dar es Salaam as well as in the field, setting a good example of mainstreaming SPCP activities with related regular UNHCR functions.

JRS-Kwizera on its part carried out the following activities in Ngara:

- Research to identify stereotypes regarding the presence of refugees in Tanzania
- A Choir/Festival whose theme was to correct the perception that refugees are immoral and spread HIV/AIDs
- A seminar on the impact of the presence of refugees on environment (29th August 2006)
- A cycling competition involving 88 people including 31 refugees from Lukole Camp (10th September 2006). The race was won by a refugee, who received a prize in front of a 500 strong cheering crowd.
- A Seminar on refugees and security (3rd October 2006) attended by 15 persons from the host community and 30 refugee leaders.
- A Seminar on the impact of the presence of refugees on infrastructure and other resources, facilitated by the SPCP Consultant (28th October 2006).
- Publication and distribution of 3,000 leaflets in Kiswahili and English on topics covered in the Seminars (August to December 2006).

Improvement of Policy, Legislation and Standard Operating Procedures

- A very successful Refugee Policy Workshop was organised Kigoma in November 2006. It was attended by the new Minister for Home Affairs, Regional and District Commissioners in refugee hosting regions and districts; Parliamentarians as well as other senior government officials handling refugee matters.
- A Retreat was held in Bagomoyo in January 2007 at which a new Refugee Bill was drafted as well as the supporting Cabinet Paper.

Improvement of Physical Infrastructure and Provision of Equipment for Government Partners

- Construction of office premises for the Kigoma Zonal Officer for the Refugee Department completed. The building was handed over by the UNHC Representative in Tanzania to the Minister of Home Affairs at a ceremony held in January 2007.
- Construction of living quarters for the Settlement Officer at Lugufu completed.
- Rehabilitation of living quarters for the Settlement Officers at Makere completed.
- Rehabilitation of living quarters for the Settlement Officer at Lugufu near completion.
- Land for construction of office premises for Immigration, Police and Customs at Kibirizi entry/departure port has finally been secured. Construction will start soon.
- Office equipment including computers, photocopiers and printers were received and delivered to various offices of the Refugee Department and the Immigration Departments.

- The five vehicles ordered for the SPCP project were received and have been allocated to SPCP IPs.

Admission

- The last training session for Village Executive Officers, Ward Executive Officers and Divisional Secretaries on Access to Asylum was conducted in Ngara in November 2006.

Equal Benefit and Protection of the Law

The National Organization for Legal Assistance (NOLA), which is executing this project carried out the following activities:

- Camp based legal aid clinics in Ngara and Lugufu camps
- Legal awareness campaigns in Lugufu
- Stock taking of refugees in prisons in Kigoma, Kagera, Mwanza and Tabora Regions.
- Training of Judicial Officers (Magistrates, Prosecutors, State Attorneys, Police, Immigration and Prison Officers) from Kigoma and Kagera regions, Bukoba, November 2006.

3. Mobilisation of Resources for Other SPCP Activities

UK-Home Office Funding

In October 2006, the UK Home Office and UNHCR signed an Agreement under which the former would support a number of SPCP activities in Kenya and Tanzania. In Tanzania, the supported activities are: (i) Women Craft-a Social Enterprise; (ii) Engaging Youth in Meaningful Activities; and (iii) Enhancing Health Services in Refugee Hosting Areas in Kasulu and Kigoma Rural Districts. UNHCR is now processing these projects for implementation.

AENEAS 2005

On 19th December 2006, the EC and UNHCR signed an Agreement whereby the former will provide EUR 1,565,145, 26 to support SPCP activities over three years commencing 1st January 2007. As per the AENEAS rules, that amount represented 80% of the total budget for the action which is EUR 1,956,431,58. Thereafter, Belgium and Netherlands pledged EUR 60,000.00 and 45,000.00 respectively towards meeting the 20% co-funding requirement.

UNHCR is now processing the funding ready for the implementation of the projects.

AENEAS 2006

On 3rd November, UNHCR RO Dar es Salaam forwarded a Concept Note on funding under the AENEAS Programme for 2006. The proposal was duly submitted to the EC. We are awaiting the outcome. If the Concept Note is accepted, then a fully developed proposal will be submitted within the time frame set by the EC.

4. Change in the SPCP Staffing

In October 2006, Janet Pima, the SPCP Senior Programme Clerk left for Namibia to assume the post of Associate Field Officer (Protection) as a UNV with UNHCR. In December 2006, Ms Ancillah Nyanjige Manning, assumed the post of SPCP Programme Assistant and assumed the functions of MS Pima. Before joining SPCP, Ms Manning was a Protection Assistant with the UNHCR Field Office in Kasulu.

5. Achievements

It is only six months since when the SPCP effectively entered the implementation phase but a lot of tangible achievements have already been recorded. A new draft refugee law has been produced which, if adopted by the Government, will be among the best on the continent.

As a result of the well targeted training workshops, virtually all Government personnel, dealing with refugees at all levels have been exposed to the general principles of refugee protection as well as norms that govern their specific functions. This has contributed to the significantly enhanced compliance with international refugee law. This may be demonstrated by citing a few unprecedented actions in refugee practice in Tanzania. In one incident a Ward Executive Officer who attended the Access to Asylum Training used his on mobile phone to call UNHCR Dar es Salaam to request for assistance for a new arrival who was seriously sick. He cited the norm he had been taught not to reject any asylum seekers including those in destitute condition. In another land mark event which occurred in January 2007, the Minister for Home Affairs, who attended the Policy Workshop, ordered the return to Tanzania a number of Burundian refugees who had been rounded up in Ngara and deported to Burundi.

In his Statement to the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner for Refugees of October 2006, the then Minister for Home Affairs strongly commended the training component of the SPCP and extended the Government's gratitude to Denmark for funding the SPCP project.

The construction/rehabilitation of the physical infrastructure and provision of equipment has improved the working conditions and therefore the effectiveness of the beneficiary government offices.

Through access to justice project, refugees have been educated about their rights and obligations under national and international law. For the first time, judicial officers, including magistrates, prosecutors, state attorneys and police in North-western Tanzania received a tailor-made training on access to justice and refugee protection. Also, a status report on refugees in prisons in four regions has been prepared laying ground for ensuring their protection both as prisoners and as refugees.

The project on promotion of positive attitudes towards refugees has brought greater awareness about refugees among the media, policy makers and the general public. Although negative reporting on refugees in the media continues, there is a significant increase of positive reporting. For example, the very influential THISDAY Newspaper had been writing critical articles about refugees {See e.g. "Refugees and the Environment:

The Other Side of Tanzania's' Generosity, Monday 28 August 2006-attached} But after their journalists attended a number of sensitisation sessions conducted by Sahrignon, their reporting has changed significantly, becoming much more refugee friendly. [See "Workshop Offers Positive Side of Hosting Refugees, in THISDAY, 7th October, 2007, and "Now that the Refugees are Going back home, Can we Sustain the Good Things They are Leaving Behind?", in THISDAY, Saturday 27th January, 2007-attached]. There has been positive reporting in other papers as well. For example in UWAZI of 16th October 2006, it was reported that "Wakimbizi Wana Faida" (Hosting Refugees is Beneficial to the Host Country). Journalists have also been coming to the UNHCR office to request for information to report on the refugee operation in Tanzania.

6. Challenges and Constraints:

Some activities could not be implemented as planned due to a number of constraints. It had been planned to construct an office complex for Immigration, Police and Customs at Kibirizi entry/departure port in Kigoma. However, the implementation of this activity could not take off because the local authorities could not identify the land on which to build the office. Every effort was made to resolve this problem including involving the then Regional Commissioner and the former Minister for Home Affairs. However, this came to no avail. Every spot of land that was identified as suitable was contested and at some point UNHCR was asked to buy the identified land pay huge compensation for the minimal development thereon. This activity has been shifted to 2007 when, hopefully, the Government will be able to find the land. UNHCR has informed the Government that if land is not identified the funds will be reallocated to another related activity.

Another project that has faced similar obstacles is issuance of documents confirming civil status. Under the current law, the issuance of birth certificates to all persons born in Tanzania, irrespective of their nationality, is mandatory although the recipients have to pay the specified fees. Accordingly, UNHCR had planned only to pay the applicable fee for birth and marriage certificates issued to refugees. However, when the district registration offices were approached to issue certificates to refugee children, they demanded a number of things including hire of additional staff, vehicles, computers, overtime payment etc. Not only were these not budgeted, UNHCR did not find them to be reasonable requests. UNHCR is consulting with other actors, including UNICEF as to the alternative ways of implementing this project.

Also, a number of workshop based activities were not well attended because participants demanded to be paid sitting allowances even where this had not been budget for. This was particularly so with government officers.

Further, many SPCP implementing partners are (deliberately) local and new to refugee programming. As a result, they had overlooked a number of issues that were necessary to the effective implementation of projects. This had to be addressed through project revisions, which will continue into 2007.

A delay in the procurement of some equipment, caused by the obtaining of the money after the first UNHCR procurement cycle, also affected the effective implementation of some projects.

Since the conception of the Project, there has been significant developments such as the shifting of the focus of the Tanzania refugee programme from care and maintenance to repatriation and the ongoing operation to round up and deport illegal immigrants in Tanzania. These developments have necessitated a constant reassessment of the project plans and specific activities to ensure that they remain consistent with the overall aim which is to enhance refugee protection in Tanzania.

Finally, the SPCP 'establishment' in Tanzania consists of two staff, a Consultant and a Programme Assistant. This level of staffing, which was reasonably adequate to support the Gaps Analysis and National Consultation Phases of the SPCP Project, is increasingly overwhelmed by the activities of the Implementation Phase, which include playing a leading role in the implementation of a number of activities (training workshops, reform of legislation, proof reading and legal editing of translated materials etc.); advising and monitoring several and ever increasing number of projects implemented by the mostly new partners who thus need close support; processing funds from donors as they come in; report writing and continuing to mobilise funds for the yet unfunded projects.

This has necessitated considerable utilisation of the already stretched staff in other Units at RO Dar. This problem may ease when a Training Officer is recruited in Kigoma to assume most of the training functions (which this year occupied nearly 50% of the time of the SPCP Consultant) but there is still a need to look into how to augment the management structure of the SPCP project in Tanzania.