

SPCP-Kenya

Update

September, 2006

Background

The Strengthening Protection Capacity Project began in Kenya in October 2004, with an initial grant of money from the European Commission, and three co-funding states: Denmark, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The initial project money enabled the SPCP to: (i) conduct and publish a comprehensive analysis of protection gaps in Kenya; (ii) undertake a comprehensive assessment of present livelihood strategies of refugees and propose means to improve self-reliance (iii) convene a national consultation with all concerned stakeholders to prioritize the gaps identified and recommend measures to remedy them; (iv) subsequently work with partners to develop projects necessary to implement an agreed upon Plan of Action for the coming years; (v) implement a number of quick impact projects and; (vi) continue to engage donors in the funding of initiatives necessary to fully implement the Plan of Action.

Achievements

The SPCP-Kenya initial project funding ended in April 2006, by which time all the objectives noted above had been achieved. The National Consultations resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive plan of action, and subsequently the development of projects to remedy the gaps identified. A number of these projects were implemented from the SPCP pilot project budget. Moreover, an initial contribution of \$82,645 from the Swiss Federal Office of Migration, enabled UNHCR to implement a number of training initiatives developed within the comprehensive plan and a further recent grant of \$150,000 from the Swiss FOM will ensure that the training on international protection and refugee law for police trainers, government officials and the judiciary will be able to continue into 2007. In addition, the United Kingdom- Home Office has indicated its willingness to financially support \$850,000 worth of SPCP follow-up projects including Strengthening Refugee Status Determination Capacity; Provision of Refugee Identification Cards, Support and Training for Community Paralegals and Technical Support.

To date the following SPCP projects have commenced:

Legal, Political and Social Environment

Information

- Development and publication of an information kit for asylum seekers on services available to them by NGOs and UNHCR Nairobi.

Training

- Peacekeepers: A number of training sessions were held to groups of 30 to 40 peacekeepers on UNHCR's Mandate and role, the rights of refugees under international law and the operational links between DPKO and UNHCR in the field.
- NGO: 30 worldwide international staff from Danish Church Aid were trained in the role of NGOs in refugee protection, particularly focusing on field partnerships with UNHCR to enhance the quality and scope of protection activities. (March 2006)

- Paralegals: A 3 day residential workshop for paralegals working within the Kenya Paralegal Network countrywide (training of trainers) was organised in March 2006. Participants were those working at grass roots level in their communities, as well as those who live close to Kenya's borders (and thus refugee movements) and others who work with the urban refugee caseload. In addition, 16 prison paralegals and 25 paralegal trainers received trained on 4 and 5 July 2005
- Immigration Department officials: BO Nairobi further facilitated trainings for two groups of 80 and one group of 40 new recruits to the immigration department in June, August and October 2005. The training covered the mandate of UNHCR, an introduction to international protection and the coordination and management of refugees by UNHCR and the GoK. Trained officers were deployed countrywide shortly after completion of the course.
- Refugee Department staff: The Refugee Department of the Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons has increased its staffing and has presently 13 positions. In July 2006, UNHCR began a series of training programmes to the staff of the Refugee Department.

Outreach

- Kenya National Commission on Human Rights has agreed to ensure that refugee concerns are incorporated within the broader human rights agenda in Kenya and is now part of the UNHCR legal assistance working group.
- Contacts established with universities to introduce refugee awareness into the curriculum. Although the Kenya Refugee Bill has not yet been enacted, the draft is presently being discussed at the Parliament and UNHCR is participating in lobbying efforts in coordination with the Refugee Department and civil society to have it passed before the general election of December 2007. One workshop for MPs (members of the Parliamentary Committee which will debate the Bill) is being organized at the end of September followed by a visit of the same MPs to the Kakuma refugee camp.

Working Groups

- As part of UNHCR's efforts to expand the protection network in Nairobi, working groups on legal assistance, community services and health care, have been established and are meeting regularly. Working groups include UN agencies, government and NGOs working with refugees in Nairobi.

Protection from Violence, Coercion or Deliberate Deprivation

Child Protection

- Child Protection Services for Children at Risk in Nairobi. Participation of Kenya Child Services, UNICEF and other partners. Assistance provided to four children's homes that receive unaccompanied minors from UNHCR. Incentives purchased to encourage unaccompanied minors to renew their mandate letters.

Food Health Shelter and Education

SGBV Response

- Enhanced medical care for SGBV survivors, including the construction of drop-in centres for women. (Kakuma)

Education

- Enhancing Access to Public Education: Funding provided to purchase desks, toilets for girls and access to clean water. In addition, funding was provided for English/Kiswahili classes to assist new arrivals in integrating into mainstream public education. One meeting held with school officials to discuss integration of refugee children; further trainings planned. Community-based campaign planned

for last quarter of 2006 to encourage refugee families to enrol their children in public primary education in the next academic year.

- Development/refinement of educational tutoring programme for girls in upper primary grades. (Dadaab)

Self-Reliance

Kakuma

- Training of Trainers to identify income generation opportunities relevant but not restricted to camp life. Emphasis on business linkages and understanding market realities in hosting areas and areas of return. Two groups of 35 refugees selected. Initial training focusing on carpentry and masonry.

Dadaab

- Training in traditional henna, manicure, and hairstyling for refugee women.
- Training of a core group of refugees in catering and cooking in Dadaab who will in turn provide training to young refugees in appropriate and healthy ways of cooking, catering and food hygiene. Course syllabus developed and training commenced.
- Skills upgrading in the tailoring sector.

Kakuma/Dadaab

- Provision of Posho (staple food) grinding mills to refugees in camps thereby making this service available to all refugees and creating employment for refugee youth and women. In Kakuma four groups of ten members each received training on bookkeeping and financial management and six Posho mills purchased for Kakuma and three for Dadaab, with community participation in the financing, construction and maintenance.

Challenges

Close to 8 million dollars worth of projects were developed as part of the initial SPCP initiative for Kenya, and over one million have received the financial support needed for their implementation. There remain many others, however, that are central to the collective capacity building efforts that are in need of financial support which would improve the protection situation in Kenya markedly. These include projects to improve access to health, education and social services; projects to combat and prevent sexual and gender based violence; and projects to improve refugee self-reliance in ways which would also benefit local communities.

The political process linked to the enactment of the Refugee Bill can also be dramatically enhanced by investing resources in capacity building activities. Training programmes for government and state institutions are being planned in cooperation with the Refugee Department which could reach up to 1000 officials who are dealing on a daily basis with refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya.

Renewed funding under the SPCP framework could also help in our response to the emergency situation developing in Dadaab, where thousands of refugees from Central and Southern Somalia continue to arrive. Camps services and structures are being stretched by the new arrivals and additional resources are necessary to maintain the capacity to provide protection services in refugee camps.