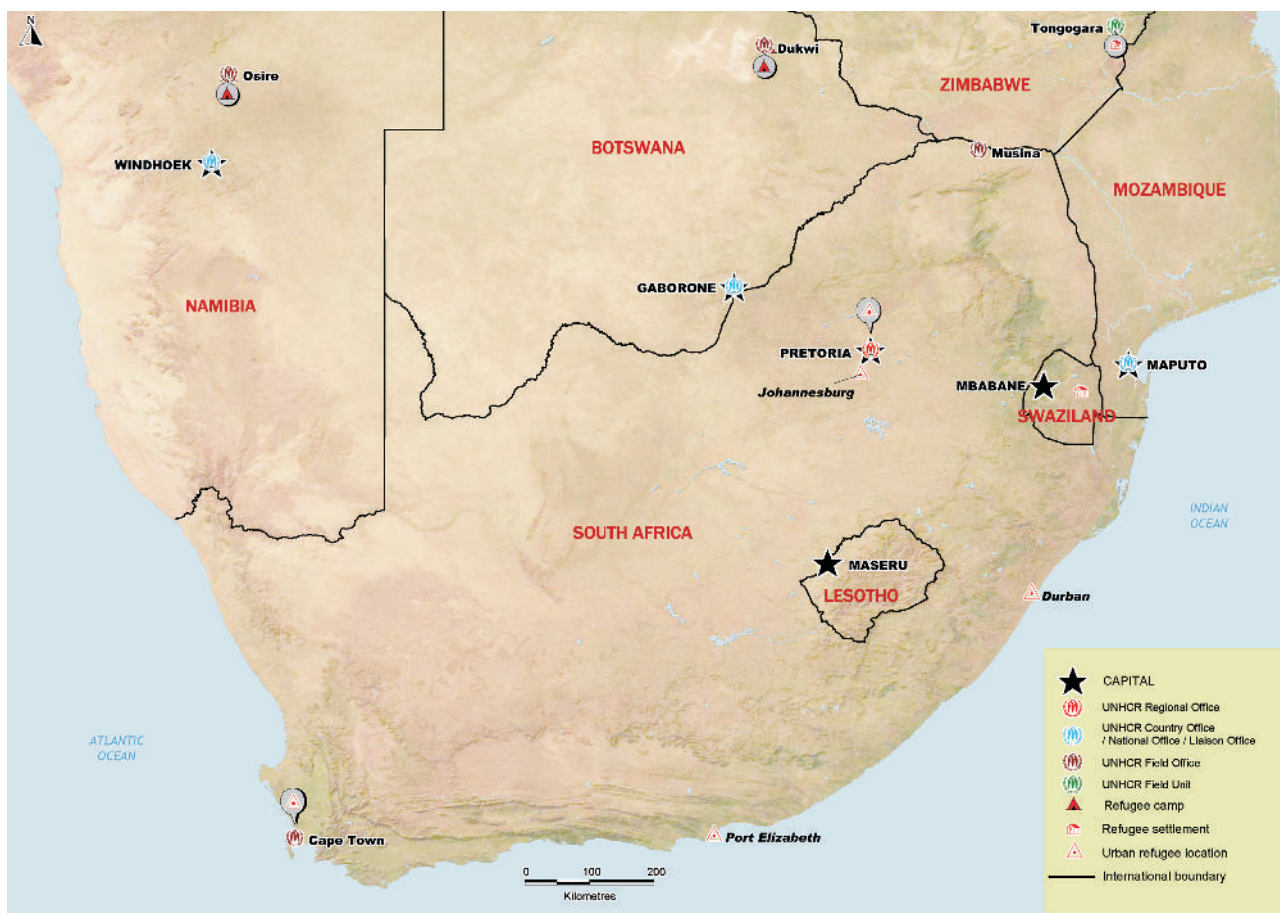


# SOUTH AFRICA



## Operational highlights

- South Africa continued to be the country that received the largest number of asylum applications in the world, with some 222,000 submitted in 2009.
- Zimbabweans comprised the largest number of new asylum applicants, and 300-400 Zimbabweans continued to arrive in South Africa daily during the year.
- The Government of South Africa halted the deportation of Zimbabweans in May 2009, following intense lobbying by UNHCR, other UN agencies and NGOs.

- Access to the asylum system in the country improved, as the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) upgraded reception facilities and increased refugee status determination (RSD) capacity with the help of training offered by UNHCR.
- A series of protests and strikes by South Africans over job losses and poor public services often turned into xenophobic attacks on foreigners, including refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR provided the Government with material and technical support to help it assist those displaced by the attacks.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	DRC	11,700	-	-	-
	Somalia	9,700	-	-	-
	Angola	5,800	-	-	-
	Burundi	2,300	-	-	-
	Republic of the Congo	1,900	-	-	-
	Ethiopia	1,500	-	-	-
	Rwanda	1,300	-	-	-
	Zimbabwe	670	-	-	-
	Various	13,100	-	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Various	309,800	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>357,770</b>	<b>* 41,400</b>		

\* Nationality breakdown not available at the time.



Masvingo helps in the kitchen at the Boy's Shelter, which houses over 200 boys in Musina.

UNHCR / J. OATWAY

## | Working environment |

South Africa has positive and protection-oriented refugee legislation, giving refugees and asylum-seekers the right to live where they wish, move about freely, join the job market and avail themselves of social services. As a result, persons of concern are dispersed widely throughout the country, which poses a challenge for efforts to assess and address their protection and assistance needs.

While the DHA markedly improved its capacity to clear the backlog of asylum claims and process new ones, the ever increasing number of new applications continued to cause delays in the process and to have a negative impact on the quality of RSD decisions.

High unemployment (24.5 per cent), large income disparities, increasing urbanization and the perception among many South Africans that they do not receive adequate services, has often sparked resentment against the large number of foreigners in the country and led to xenophobic violence. Indeed, xenophobia has been one of the main impediments barring the local integration of refugees and asylum-seekers in the country.

## | Achievements and impact |

### • Main objectives

UNHCR set out to ensure that asylum-seekers and refugees in South Africa could have access to asylum procedures and identity documents, and receive protection against *refoulement*. The Office also sought to help the Government maintain asylum principles and enhance its protection capacity. Another goal was to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers displaced by xenophobic attacks received material and legal assistance to facilitate their reintegration into local communities.

Furthermore, UNHCR aimed to work with the Government, UN sister agencies, NGOs and civil society organizations to devise a strategy to combat intolerance of refugees and asylum-seekers and improve conditions of asylum in the country. Another major objective was to promote durable solutions for refugees through voluntary repatriation, local integration or the strategic application of resettlement.

### • Protection and solutions

In April 2009, the Government announced a halt to all deportations of Zimbabweans (except those convicted of major crimes). Those with valid travel documents were to be granted a 90 day, visa-free entry into South Africa with authorization to work. Any Zimbabweans already in South Africa or newly arrived would be given special permits for stay under the Immigration Act, but this last provision was not implemented in 2009.

The national asylum system continued to attract applications from many foreign migrants seeking to regularize their stay in South Africa. Their numbers have overwhelmed the system, making it difficult for those who require international protection as refugees to receive a prompt decision on their claim. UNHCR offered to help the DHA to review procedures and devise changes.

Given the xenophobic sentiments fuelled by the prevailing socio-economic environment in the country, refugees and asylum-seekers faced challenges in pursuing local integration. Nevertheless, the number of refugees opting for voluntary repatriation remained very low, despite the improving and relatively stable political environment in some countries of origin. In 2009, only some 200 persons (30 refugees and 170 asylum-seekers) repatriated voluntarily from South Africa with UNHCR assistance.

Critical protection cases and refugees in vulnerable situations were identified through a needs assessment in 2009. Some 800 persons were submitted for resettlement, representing an increase of 164 per cent from the year before. The latest figures available (for the period ending on 30 September 2009) indicated that some 100 persons had departed South Africa for resettlement countries.

### • Activities and assistance

**Community services:** A monthly allowance was granted to some 300 people with disabilities and chronically ill people (155 females and 150 males) as well as to 33 older refugees. Some 60 refugees received the state disability grant for the first time. Almost a thousand children with special needs (400 girls and 600 boys) received food, shelter and transport assistance. In Musina, UNHCR funded two shelter projects under which some 240 boys and 120 victims of sexual or gender-based violence were offered temporary accommodation and food.

**Domestic needs:** Some 6,750 vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers in South Africa and Swaziland received emergency assistance to meet their immediate food and shelter needs for three months. The number of beneficiaries was much higher in 2009 than in 2008, when only 4,071 people were assisted. All women beneficiaries were able to buy sanitary material with assistance from UNHCR. A total of 14 refugees (12 in Madagascar and 2 in Comoros) received monthly allowances. Some 1,200 refugees and asylum-seekers who had been displaced as a result of the 2008 outbreak of xenophobic violence were provided with shelter support and reintegration packages when the Government shelters in which they had been accommodated were shut down.

**Education:** A total of some 1,600 children living in various parts of the country (900 girls and 700 boys) were assisted to attend primary school; 740 (400 girls and 340 boys) were helped to attend secondary school; and 330 (190 girls and 140 boys) were assisted to attend pre-school. Some 80 refugee students, more than half of them female, benefited from DAFI scholarships, and 14 graduated in 2009.

**Health:** Some 1,400 refugees and asylum-seekers received financial assistance to pay for consultation fees, medical prescriptions, and eyeglasses. Some 550 refugees were referred for HIV-related services. Sixteen social workers from different organizations dealing with refugees were trained on psychosocial support and mental health issues. UNHCR and its partners developed guidelines on medical referrals. Information, education and communication sessions reached more than 22,900 refugees and asylum-seekers, of whom 30 percent were women. UNHCR through its partners disseminated related materials in 20 sites, conducted 36 workshops on gender, reproductive health and life skills training. Over 61 percent of participants reported increased condom use. A total of 226,030 male and 12,000 female condoms were distributed and 24 HIV peer educators were trained. More than 60 chronically ill refugees and asylum-seekers were provided with home based care in Pretoria.

**Income generation:** Some 930 refugees and asylum-seekers (450 females and 480 males) received vocational skills training. More than 1,000 people benefited from small business loans (approximately USD 250 for each beneficiary) as well as business training.

**Legal assistance:** Protection assistance was provided to some 16,000 refugees and asylum-seekers through three legal partners in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria. In Musina, more than 60,000 people received information and advice on how to access asylum systems and the legal and social services available in the country.

**Operational support:** UNHCR covered the operating costs of 11 implementing partners in South Africa and one each in Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Swaziland.

○ *Constraints*

South Africa continued to attract a large number of migrants and asylum-seekers, placing a heavy burden on the asylum system in the country and creating negative perceptions of foreigners, including refugees and asylum-seekers, among the general public. The total number of asylum applications filed in 2009 exceeded the extremely high numbers seen in 2008.

There were sporadic attacks targeting foreigners and their businesses throughout 2009, posing a major challenge to local integration and self-reliance. The number of submissions for resettlement to third countries also increased significantly in 2009, with more refugees viewing resettlement as their only durable solution.

| **Financial information** |

Compared to the 2007 programme (USD 6.8 million), expenditures rose in 2008 (USD 10 million) and 2009 (USD 11.3 million) because of the additional needs for assistance to Zimbabweans and to respond to the xenophobic attacks in the country.

| **Organizations and implementation** |

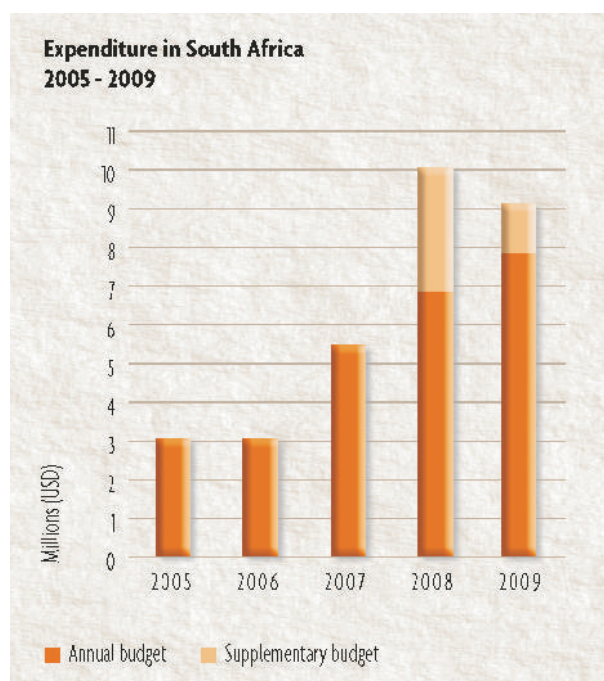
The regional office in Pretoria coordinated the operations of seven other country offices in southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and directly addressed protection needs in Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Swaziland. UNHCR maintained two field offices, in Cape Town and Musina. The regional office was supported by 22 international staff (of whom 16 had regional responsibilities) and 29 national staff.

| **Working with others** |

UNHCR worked with 11 implementing partners in South Africa: UN agencies, local NGOs, civil society organizations and one international NGO. It chaired the protection working group, established in the aftermath of the 2008 xenophobic attacks, which included other UN agencies, NGOs and police and met on a bi-monthly basis. The Office also collaborated closely with the Government, in particular the Departments of Home Affairs (DHA) and Social Development.

| **Overall assessment** |

South Africa continues to uphold a liberal admission policy that benefits refugees and asylum-seekers, who have



freedom of movement, access to the labour market and social services. Despite improvements in the national asylum capacity, a sizeable backlog of applications remains and UNHCR will continue to extend technical support. The current socio-economic situation made the local integration and self-reliance of refugees and asylum-seekers difficult to pursue. There is a need for these issues to be addressed at the national level.

The provision of emergency food and shelter assistance to vulnerable people of concern in urban areas was costly and challenging, even though it was limited to a small number of individuals. As a consequence, not all vulnerable individuals could become self-reliant enough within a few months to be able to leave the shelters.

Partners	
<b>Implementing partners</b>	
<b>Government:</b> Ministry of Home Affairs, Swaziland	
<b>NGOs:</b> <i>Bonne Esperance</i> , Cape Town Refugee Center, Caritas Swaziland, El-Shaddai, Jesuit Refugee Service, Lawyers for Human Rights, Musina Legal Advice Office, Refugee Social Services, Sediba Hope Center, Sonke Gender Justice, Uniting Reformed Church, University of Cape Town Law Clinic	
<b>Others:</b> IOM, UNDP Comoros, UNDP Madagascar, UNDP Mauritius	
<b>Operational partners</b>	
<b>Government:</b> Departments of Education, Health, Home Affairs, International Relations, Justice, Police, Social Development; Municipalities of Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Musina, Pretoria; National Disaster Management Center	
<b>NGOs:</b> Agency for Refugee Education, Skills Training and Advocacy; Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa; Mthwakazi Art Center; Musina Catholic Church; Southern African Women's Institute for Migration Affairs; Save the Children UK	
<b>Others:</b> UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF	

Budget, income and expenditure in South Africa (USD)					
	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
<b>Annual budget</b>	<b>8,168,086</b>	<b>433,163</b>	<b>7,550,413</b>	<b>7,983,576</b>	<b>7,856,216</b>
Zimbabwe Situation SB	2,230,529	0	1,170,003	1,170,003	1,170,003
Avian and human influenza preparedness SB	43,663	0	43,663	43,663	43,663
<b>Supplementary budget subtotal</b>	<b>2,274,192</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,213,666</b>	<b>1,213,666</b>	<b>1,213,666</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,442,278</b>	<b>433,163</b>	<b>8,764,079</b>	<b>9,197,242</b>	<b>9,069,883</b>

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in South Africa (USD)				
Expenditure breakdown	Current years' project			Previous years' project
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,416,599	277,531	1,694,130	0
Community services	289,402	0	289,402	101,746
Domestic needs and household support	296,670	0	296,670	143,096
Education	194,194	0	194,194	78,291
Health and nutrition	120,086	39,302	159,388	36,664
Income generation	72,235	0	72,235	16,281
Legal assistance	237,363	155,013	392,375	127,510
Operational support (to agencies)	782,637	715,223	1,497,860	136,373
Instalments to implementing partners	724,742	26,598	751,340	(639,961)
<b>Subtotal operational activities</b>	<b>4,133,929</b>	<b>1,213,666</b>	<b>5,347,595</b>	<b>0</b>
Programme support	3,722,288	0	3,722,288	0
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>7,856,216</b>	<b>1,213,666</b>	<b>9,069,883</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cancellation on previous years' expenditure</b>				<b>(34,396)</b>
<b>Instalments with implementing partners</b>				
Payments made	2,175,399	181,610	2,357,009	
Reporting received	(1,450,657)	(155,013)	(1,605,670)	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>724,742</b>	<b>26,598</b>	<b>751,340</b>	
<b>Previous year's report</b>				
Instalments with implementing partners:				
Outstanding 1st January				1,112,619
Reporting received				(639,961)
Refunded to UNHCR				(33,644)
Currency adjustment				3,158
<b>Outstanding 31st December</b>				<b>442,172</b>