



**SUMMARY UPDATE OF MACHEL STUDY FOLLOW-UP
ACTIVITIES IN 2001-2002**



UNHCR/C. Sattlberger
Angola/IDPs/Children playing in Benga, near Luanda.

**Refugee Children Coordination Unit
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
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“Adults go to war, but they don’t realize what damage they are doing to children.”

- A Nicaraguan child¹

I. Introduction

The reporting on UNHCR’s follow-up activities to implement its comprehensive follow-up strategy to the *United Nations Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* (the Machel Study) has, as of 2001, been streamlined into the Annual Protection Reports submitted yearly by UNHCR field offices to Headquarters. In drawing on the Machel Study, UNHCR’s prioritizes five global issues relating to refugee children and other children to concern to the Office, namely: 1) separation, 2) sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, 3) military recruitment, 4) education and 5) the special needs of adolescents. This being said, there may be additional and/or other regional priority issues such as birth registration, detention, child labour, harmful traditional practices, notably female genital mutilation, and early marriages, that require the Office’s attention.

This Summary Update on UNHCR’s implementation of its Machel Study follow-up strategy provides information on the situation of refugee children in various parts of the world. It gives an overview of the kinds of problems they are facing. It can also be used as a tool to compare whether the situation of refugee children in a certain country operation or situation has improved or deteriorated and whether any new issues affecting refugee children have emerged. This is expected to facilitate the task of field offices to identify problem areas and to focus on concerns for refugee children that require particular attention. While the Summary Update, by its very nature, does not include information on all existing problems, great care has been taken to highlight the main child protection issues that ought to be addressed by the stakeholders responsible for the protection and well-being of refugee children.

The ensuing country summaries cover the activities of UNHCR and its partners in 2001 and 2002 as extracted from the Annual Protection Reports, with specific focus on the above-mentioned five global priority issues for refugee children.

II. The five global priority issues

1) Separation

In the chaos of conflict, flight and displacement, children face an increased risk of being separated from their families and caregivers. Given the fundamental role played by the family in the protection, physical care and emotional well-being of its members, separation from families is particularly devastating for refugee children. Children who are unaccompanied or separated from their previous primary caregiver, face a greater risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, military recruitment, child labour, lack of access to

¹ Machel, Graca, *“The Impact of War on Children: A review of progress since the 1996 United Nations Report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children”*, UNICEF, 2001, p.ix.

education and basic assistance, and detention. Moreover, while experience has shown that in emergency situations, refugee children may be “accompanied” by an extended family member, this does not necessarily decrease their proneness to risks similar to those of unaccompanied children and to the need for tracing and reunification with their previous primary caregivers if in the best interest of the child.

Separated girls are particularly vulnerable to, amongst others, forced labour, sexual abuse and human trafficking. Special attention, therefore, needs to be given to girls who are placed in *ad interim* care of foster parents. Few mechanisms are, however, in place to monitor girls’ situation when the foster family leaves the camp setting. Education is an effective tool to protect separated girls and boys from the dangers of military recruitment, exploitation, abuse and violence as well as an important means to give them better opportunities for the future. Rapid identification, registration and documentation, tracing and reunification with their families are also of critical importance to protecting and seeking durable solutions for unaccompanied and separated children. Cooperation with other organizations such as UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee and World Vision International, is vital in this area. The recent *Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, finalized in 2003 and due to be published in early 2004, provide important guidance in this respect. Moreover, the inter-agency training and capacity building programme *Action for the Rights of Children (ARC)* also contains a resource pack on “Separated Children” as well as resource materials developed under the *Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP)*.

2) Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence

Refugee children face an increased risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and violence given their level of dependence, their limited ability to protect themselves, and their limited power and participation in decision-making processes. Both boys and girls fall victim to sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, but certain groups are at particular risk: unaccompanied and separated children, children in detention, child soldiers, adolescents, mentally and physically disabled children, working children, girl mothers, children born to rape victims/survivors, boys as victims/survivors, and child perpetrators. Refugee children also face other forms of sexual and gender-based violence such as harmful traditional practices, child prostitution, and sexual violence within the family as well as by persons having unhindered access to these children.

UNHCR has stepped up its efforts over the past few years to combat sexual exploitation, abuse and violence against refugee children. Revised *Guidelines for Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons*, first issued in May 2003, include a specific chapter on refugee children and form the basis for a major training and awareness raising exercise to ensure that they are implemented in the field as well as at Headquarters. Other training programmes such as UNHCR’s Protection Learning Programme and ARC, in particular its resource pack on “Abuse and Exploitation”, suggest a range of prevention and response measures. A *Code of Conduct* which, among other things, addresses appropriate behaviour by UNHCR staff towards children was, furthermore, issued in September 2002. Facilitation sessions on the meaning and application of this Code have subsequently been organized in most UNHCR offices worldwide. A subsequent Bulletin of the Secretary-General on *Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*

came into force on 15 October 2003 and is legally binding on all UN staff members as well as on UN forces conducting operations under UN command and control. UNHCR's capacity to investigate alleged sexual and gender-based violence has also been strengthened. As of 2003, new clauses were, moreover, introduced in UNHCR's agreements with implementing partners according to which all staff of these partners are bound by the principles relating to standards of behaviour developed by the *Inter-agency Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises* in 2002.

UNHCR continues to advocate for States' accession to the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*, which came into effect in January 2002.

Within the broader framework of reproductive health, UNHCR has launched multi-sectoral initiatives to meet the needs of adolescent girls in a variety of refugee settings. The ARC resource pack on "Sexual and Reproductive Health" can give guidance also in this respect. Projects for young people have, moreover, been developed to deal with HIV/AIDS. Preventive measures include e.g. education, sensitization and awareness-raising, and response measures e.g. health facilities for victims/survivors of violence, counselling, monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

3) Military recruitment

Refugee children are among those at the highest risk of military recruitment. Most are adolescents, but children as young as 10 years of age or younger are also recruited. The reasons for refugee children to join armed forces are manifold. Some are conscripted, others are press-ganged, and yet others join as a way to protect their families from victimization. A number of children become child soldiers for safety reasons as they feel safer with guns in their own hands. There are also children who have joined armed opposition groups after being harassed by government forces. In some situations, the proximity of refugee camps to conflict zones exposes adolescents to the risk of forcible recruitment, either by State or non-State entities. Separated children face an even greater risk of recruitment. Military recruitment affects boys and girls in different ways: boys are more often used in combat and other military activities whereas girls are more frequently used for sexual slavery and forced labour.

UNHCR continues to advocate against the military recruitment of children in all circumstances and encourages States that have not yet done so, to accede to the *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*.

UNHCR programmes in several countries have shown that family reunification is a key way of rehabilitating child soldiers. UNHCR, in collaboration with UNICEF and other partners, implements various activities to demobilize, rehabilitate and reintegrate former refugee child soldiers into their communities through, among others, non-formal education, skills training and income generating activities.

4) Education

Education is a fundamental human right and an important protection tool for refugee children. Education and vocational training are also crucial to the development of children, including adolescents, giving them hope for the future. It offers alternatives by providing opportunities for them to learn new skills required to live productive and independent lives. Recreational activities such as sports or music can help children deal with the trauma of conflict and re-establish daily routines which thus contribute to the healing and well-being of the community as a whole.

Refugees, including the children themselves, often consider education a top priority, since going to school gives children a sense of normality and stability, and helps protect them against forced labour, military recruitment and sexual exploitation.

Education must be available throughout the displacement cycle, i.e. from the emergency through to the durable solution phase, and needs to cover basic education. While primary education is broadly recognized as vital to the well-being and development of girls and boys, secondary education is frequently undervalued. Even when understood, highly insufficient resources are often allocated for this second level of refugee children's basic education. For a small number of refugee children only, access to secondary and tertiary education is made possible through scholarship schemes.

Girls' education is of particular concern as they more often than boys drop out of school, particularly at the post-primary education level. Specific measures to improve the enrolment and retention of girls beyond primary education include awareness-raising in the community about the importance of girls' schooling, training and employment of female teachers, distribution of sanitary supplies to girls, incentives to families agreeing to their daughters attending school, and child-care facilities to ensure that young mothers continue their studies.

5) The special needs of adolescents

The needs of adolescents differ considerably from those of infants and younger children, and range from reproductive health, educational and vocational training, to income-generating opportunities and the acquisition of life skills. Adolescents face particular risks of military recruitment and of sexual exploitation, abuse and violence. Girls are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse, of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and may face unwanted and potentially dangerous pregnancies.

Adolescents often have less access to information about reproductive health care than adults, since they are frequently not targeted for such information. A key means of appropriately addressing their needs is to involve them in the planning and implementation of refugee programmes. This approach is in line with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* which, as one of its four guiding principles, highlights the right of children to participate in matters affecting them.

As indicated under section II. 2) above, a number of UNHCR training programmes focus on sexual and reproductive health. Multi-sectoral initiatives involving school-based as well as health-facility interventions have also been launched in order to improve the

access of adolescents and young people to reproductive health services and to address HIV/AIDS.

Unaccompanied and separated adolescents may find themselves in particularly distressing situations. It may be difficult to find foster parents for them. Some may have to take on responsibilities for younger siblings or other family members, i.e. in the case of child headed households. Access to post-primary education, vocational training and income-generating opportunities is fundamental to supporting the rights and capacities of adolescents to develop life skills and become self-sufficient.

III. Concluding remarks

As at the beginning of 2003, there were an estimated 9.1 million refugee children, including adolescents, roughly 46 per cent of all refugees world-wide. Refugee children are a UNHCR policy priority. As part of its strategy to meet refugee children's rights and needs, UNHCR seeks to incorporate or "mainstream" children's issues into its overall protection and assistance activities. Increased emphasis is also placed on inter-agency collaboration and on joint training and capacity building activities. To this effect, UNHCR is working in partnership with a wide range of United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

While progress has been made in a number of areas, notably with respect to inter-agency collaboration, training and capacity building and mainstreaming, many serious challenges remain. Security concerns, insufficient human and financial resources, inadequate law enforcement systems to prosecute perpetrators of child rights violations in a timely and effective manner and, at times, insufficient political will by States to comply with international standards, continue to hamper the protection and safeguarding of the rights of refugee children.

There is a need for more concerted action on the part of all actors involved to address these challenges. The involvement of the refugee and host community, including the refugee children themselves, is indispensable if these efforts are to yield success.

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AFRICA

Angola	Separation	Family separation has increased the numbers of mono-parental households headed by women or female siblings and unaccompanied minors. The trans-culturalization process caused by the constant and combined external and internal displacement has led to an increased number of abandoned, rejected and physically and psychologically abused children accused of witchcraft by their families and their communities in the Zaire, Uige and Luanda provinces. The joint project for children with INAC aims at the prevention and community-based response to this problem.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The lack of mechanisms of the administration of justice, the deteriorating living conditions and lack of immediate alternatives of the population combined with discriminatory practices have resulted in an increase of violence within IDP and refugee camps and a significant rise of domestic and sexual violence.
	Military recruitment	The government adopted a law-based policy to prohibit the future recruitment of child soldiers, including re-recruitment of those who participated in the conflict. No recognized refugee children have been identified as formerly involved in armed conflict.
	Education	There is an ongoing process with the government on the issuance of birth certificates for refugee children born in Angola, including refugee children, which are a pre-requisite for the enrolment in public schools. BO liaised with the different schools and reached an agreement to facilitate refugee children enrolment without the proper certificates. Nevertheless, the available resources can not cover the enormous demand for education services in the country. Competition is therefore high, which implies that most refugees have to pay bribes to be enrolled. Under the strategy for local integration, the GoA is reinforcing the compliance with Law 08/90 establishing the equal rights of refugees to education. Nevertheless, the available resources cannot cover the enormous demand for education services in the country.
	Adolescents	UNHCR offered vocational skills training to young refugees, aiming at achieving better job opportunities. There has also been a vocational training for adolescent girls, on business and administration, rural health promotion and seamstress and tailoring. Community meetings and seminars have been held on HIV/AIDS and STDs in Viana and Kifangondo refugee camps.

(continued)	Other	Olympic Aid (now called Right to Play), a Canadian NGO, has organized sport activities for the refugee and IDP children, which is well received by the children and youth. Angola is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Benin	Separation	Ten unaccompanied minors were registered by the Office of which six rejoined their families. One case of trafficking was reported, a Congolese girl. The Office has started the necessary investigations together with various NGOs to trace the girl's family.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees receive the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education. UNHCR's partners in the field, Le Centre Panafricain de Prospective Sociale and Caritas-Benin, assisted 751 refugee children to subscribe for primary and secondary education.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Benin is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention. It also ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Botswana	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Young unaccompanied women were relocated to areas adjacent to the police station to improve their physical safety and security. The police saw a decline on reports of violent behavior against these girls.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Education up to secondary school level is free, and placement for vocational training and tertiary education is provided to qualified refugees by the Botswana Council for Refugees. There was a marginal improvement in sex education with the advent of peer educators, who educated their colleagues on primary healthcare issues and the need to practice safe sex.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Botswana acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. It also ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Burkina Faso	Separation	-

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	The problem of child soldiers is not being discussed in the social environment of Burkina Faso.
	Education	In 2002, all refugee children had access to primary education. In the framework of local integration, UNHCR and partners facilitated the integration of refugees' diplomas at university level and technical/professional level in the socio-economic and professional circuit.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Burkina Faso is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Burundi	Separation	In the framework of unaccompanied children, UNHCR has intervened (with the help of its operational partner Save the Children) in the registration and tracing procedure, in the search for foster families for separated children, as well as in the latter's socio-psychological help. The number of unaccompanied children that could arrive with the refugee population is estimated at 1'000.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The fact that the population of IDPs is composed of a majority of widow or orphan women in need of help exposes them to harassing practices by the security forces. In turn, this brings with it an increase in the number of forced pregnancies and a propagation of STDs. Some cases of rape were also reported within some camps hosting IDPs. There should therefore be (as recommended by GTS) information campaigns on STDs aimed at military forces working in isolated camps.
	Military recruitment	The rebel attacks and the police forces expose IDPs to murder, looting, threats, and destructions. The security of certain IDP camps is ensured by young children of the age of 12 to 16, or by peacekeepers (paramilitary force composed of armed civilians that have no military education). Most of the military positions that guard IDP camps have school-age housekeepers, who can be regarded as child soldiers. Initiatives should be promoted with a view to putting these children into schooling programs, in order to keep them away from criminal activities.
	Education	In general, refugee children in Burundi have little or no access to primary, secondary, or other forms of education. This implies that their chances to reach a certain level of self-sustenance and independence in the future are seriously undermined. Teachers are often refugees themselves, and for this reason classes most often take place in French or Swahili. Access to education is even more problematic for refugee families living in urban areas, as they do not have the means to pay for their children's education. That being said, special attention was paid to promote educational possibilities for refugee girls, with a view to surmounting the obstacles that prevent them from benefiting from formal educational programs.

(continued)	Adolescents	Three educational programs in micro-projects (sewing, household matters, fabrication of carpets) were organized in the transit site of Rugombo. These micro-projects gathered three groups: a group of 32 young girls for sewing, a group of 28 boys for housekeeping, and one of 16 women for the fabrication of carpets. These groups were supervised by UNHCR's operational partner in Burundi, the NGO INTERSOS.
	Other	In the framework of preparations for the repatriation of Burundian refugees living in Tanzania, a mission was carried out in Tanzania to participate in a meeting of the health / nutrition group. Burundi is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Cameroon	Separation	In 2002, two cases of family reunification took place. Both cases were of Rwandan nationality.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR focused on the issue of the status of determination for the most vulnerable in this regard refugee women and children. However, the absence of the status of determination during 2002 did not prevent the Cameroon Red Cross from raising sufficient awareness on the consequences of gender-based persecutions against refugee women and girls. The consequences were taken into consideration which helped staff from the Cameroon Red Cross to bring into line the importance to rapidly deal with the problems that refugee women and children are facing.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	There is free primary education for all refugee children. With regard to secondary education, refugee children receive the same treatment as nationals and pay the same school tuition. Cameroon has a policy of positive discrimination in favor of refugees that would like to apply for specific schools.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Refugee children are part of a governmental vaccination program which makes them less vulnerable towards certain diseases. Cameroon is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Cape Verde	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees have the same privileges as nationals with regard to access to education, the right to work and social advantages.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Cape Verde is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Central African Republic	Separation	A national program has been put in place that aimed at searching for parents and other family members of unaccompanied and separated children. UNHCR, in conjunction with the National Commission for Refugees, assisted eight unaccompanied and separated children living in Bangui covering student fees, subsistence and accommodation. Two unaccompanied Rwandan sisters left for resettlement in Denmark in 2001. Nine unaccompanied Congolese children belonging to the same family were repatriated back to Kinshasa (DRC) to join their grandparents in 2001. UNHCR assisted them with transportation and allowance subsistence until the time of departure.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No incidents have been reported in 2001. In 2002, Congolese residents in the Central African Republic, including refugees have been the main target for abuse, imprisonment and arbitrary detention by the autochthon population and the police forces, who have committed violence acts against women and girls.
	Military recruitment	Special attention is required to refugee children that have actively taken part in armed conflicts. CAR has received some children from DRC who served under Kabila's forces or rebel forces. One case involving an ex- DRC's refugee soldier is under consideration of resettlement. During 2002 there were no cases of forced military recruitment of refugee children.
	Education	Education is provided for Primary and Secondary school students, as both a Primary and a Secondary School are open in MBOKI and MOLANGUE. Around 3,000 students benefited from Primary Education and around 400 students attended the Secondary School. In the rest of the areas where refugee live either rural or urban, they are fully integrated and refugees attended national schools. Assistance to urban refugees is directed through the National Commission for Refugees in conjunction with UNHCR (mainly in the fields of health, education and protection). UNHCR provides annual student grants for Secondary School students (60.000 CFA per trimester). Besides, 8 unaccompanied minors (NAMs) received a subsistence allowance enough to cover accommodation and studies by UNHCR in 2001. As regards university students, 13 refugees benefited from DAFI Scholarships during the reporting period. Likewise, 11 refugees received vocational training in 2001.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	CAR is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Chad	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No information available
	Military recruitment	No information available
	Education	No information available
	Adolescents	No information available
	Other	To mark the occasion of the celebration of the Day of the African Child, a group of urban refugee children of different nationalities performed in front of the National Assembly and of the highest national authorities. The impact of this performance was remarkable, as the public took notice not only of refugee-related problems, but also of the presence of refugees within Chad. Chad is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified both the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Democratic Republic of Congo	Separation	In 2001, 1, 618 unaccompanied minors (1,560 Rwandans, 10 Burundian, 34 Sudanese and 13 Angolans) have been registered throughout the DRC. These children are living with other families, or are placed with foster families or in group care. For those children living in refugee camps, care and maintenance support has been supported. One separated minor was identified in Zongo in 2002 and was reunited with her parents after successful tracing. 22 separated children are known in the Angolan refugee camps and tracing on their behalf has so far not been successful. In eastern Congo, a total of 3,441 of Rwandan nationality were repatriated on a voluntary basis of who 196 separated children. 31 Separated minors have been identified in Aru and are all living in foster families.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Three cases of rape of refugee children were registered in 2002 in Bas-Congo, which had been perpetrated by 2 male refugees. In Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, 4 Rwandan separated minors were raped by members of their respective host families, became pregnant and have given birth. 7,122 Rwandan refugee women were repatriated in 2002. This group includes 321 separated minors, of which 179 adolescent girls. 126 refugee women have collectively declared having been victims of sexual harassment, abuse or rape. Major constraint lay in the lack of an effective judicial system in the eastern province which resulted in perpetrators not being prosecuted, thus raising doubt on the need to report among the refugee community.

(continued)	Military recruitment	Child soldiers are still present in all armed groups in DRC, in some cases representing up to 35 per cent of the troops. New recruitment, sometimes of already demobilized child soldiers continues. Rwandan refugee children as well as separated children continue to be exposed to economic, physical and sexual exploitation. Two refugee children were forcibly recruited in Aru. In both cases, demarches made by UNHCR to obtain their release have (so far) failed.
	Education	Budgetary constraints have made the access to post-primary schools for a large number of refugee children very difficult and resulted in the fact that some children became victims of war or street children. Refugee as well as DRC parents are often reluctant to send their children to school as such activities prevent them from working, i.e. less source of income. Although the percentage of refugee girls attending school has increased there is still a major concern as many of them, particularly Sudanese, are not given access to education by their parents for cultural reasons or to have them carry out domestic tasks.
	Adolescents	A total of 1,080 Angolan refugee adolescents received scholarships and attended secondary academic (870) and vocational schools (221). Awareness training on HIV/AIDS as well as instructions on how to use contraceptives was organized for adolescent refugees. The youth was given sports, cultural and art material in order to stimulate their artistic talents and free expression and was introduced in Bas-Congo to Peace Education in camp school curriculum.
	Other	Vaccination campaigns against measles and poliomyelitis are ongoing at national and refugee settlement levels. Supplementary and therapeutic feeding programs are implemented, de-worming and medical attention is being ensured. Cases of severely malnourished children were particularly found in displacement situations, i.e. the repatriation program in the east and the influx in Kimvula. DRC is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Eritrea	Separation	Among the refugee population (approx. 3,600 persons), a small number of unaccompanied children exist. In the Somali refugee camp, there are 75 unaccompanied children, however, in the Somali tradition, they are in the care of a member of the extended family. A number of children are separated from one parent. The unaccompanied Sudanese children have all turned 18 years of age. There are a few cases of separated children amongst the returnee population, returning from Sudan, however, the system for identification in the repatriation phase needs improvement.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	SGBV assessments have taken place in the two refugee camps and will need to continue on a regular basis. Domestic violence and violence against women is a problem in Elit refugee camp for Sudanese refugees. Gender-oriented training of camp management and staff, about harmful practices such as abduction of girls and forced marriages, should be a priority. In some cases, victims of SGBV from both the Sudanese and Somali refugee camps are relocated to Haz-Haz camp in Asmara for their own safety. Towards the end of 2001, UNHCR approached the National Union of Eritrean Women to visit Elit refugee camp and propose an intervention mechanism to help reduce the alcoholism widely seen in the Sudanese refugee camp and its consequences of domestic violence and neglect of children by their alcoholic parents. UNHCR Eritrea has not received any report pertaining to the sexual abuse of refugees by humanitarian personal in 2001 or 2002. There are no general mechanisms to identify SGBV in the returnee population other than through the routine returnee monitoring, which has not revealed any cases.
	Military recruitment	There is no documented military recruitment of children, either of refugees or returnees. However, there is a potential risk in Elit refugee camp that refugee boys may be forcibly recruited into Sudanese opposition groups. This is a serious concern for the office in Eritrea. Individual cases have been raised with the camp and central authorities, and assurances for their safety have been received, but close monitoring needs to continue.
	Education	Access to education remains a problem for returnee children in Eritrea. Many of the locations where returnees are settling have few, if any, educational facilities so returnee children may have to travel long distances to attend school and many have household chores affecting their studies due to poverty. This is particularly a problem for girls. UNHCR is concentrating on a number of reintegration activities on ensuring that returnees have access to basic education. Primary education is offered to the refugee children in both refugee camps, however, there is no possibility of attending secondary school as of yet.
	Adolescents	UNHCR entered into an agreement with the National Union for Eritrean Youth and Students to promote public awareness on HIV/AIDS and STIs. The strategy is on raising awareness and prevention through the distribution of reproductive health material and condoms donated by UNFPA to both returnees and refugees. Refugee adolescents cannot access secondary school and therefore, decide to seek employment illegally. Refugees are not permitted to work, however, the practice is tolerated. There are no labour laws to protect refugees and the adolescents can be at risk of being exploited. Girls have a tendency to get married very early. For returnee adolescents, UNHCR has built and reconstructed three youth centers in returnee areas.

(continued)	Other	There are a number of traditional cultural practices which may adversely affect children, and in particular girls. These include Female Genital Mutilation, which is widely practiced in Eritrea and amongst the Somali refugee community, and early marriage. Eritrea is a party to the Convention to the Rights on the Rights of the Child.
Ethiopia	Separation	In the eastern refugee program, unaccompanied minors are present in all camps. In accordance with the Somali cultural practice, unaccompanied children are taken care of by family members as the traditional foster care system is applicable. As the result of this, UNHCR has no record on the unaccompanied children in the east and their problems have not been announced. In the western camps unaccompanied children are assisted by Save the Children Sweden (SCS) under well organized and structured programs. In Sherkole there are 42 (male) unaccompanied minors and 292 separated children in the camp. All of them are registered by SCS in the regional registration form prepared by UNHCR. To enhance the identification and assistance of unaccompanied and separated children, the best interest determination (BID) team was established and commenced its work in the western camps.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR received reports on a few accidents of physical and sexual abuses in the camps or in the surrounding areas. It can be assumed that these incidents were under-reported, mainly because of lack of female protection staff in the camps and because of traditional and customary aspects of the refugee culture. The majority of types of SGBV were practiced in Somali communities. Physical and sexual abuse, harassment and domestic violence in the camps were found to be common. The most common harmful traditional practices (HTPs) for refugee women in Ethiopia are female genital mutilation (FGM), early childhood marriage, forced marriage and widow inheritance. UNHCR organized awareness-raising activities against HTP in the camps and prepared a leaflet to help create greater awareness on issues of sexual exploitation, which was distributed in the camps. Seminars on conceptualization of SGBV and dissemination of its implication to the refugee women/girls were made in all camps.
	Military recruitment	UNHCR has continued to monitor the situation of refugee children to avoid their forced recruitment by a variety of armed insurgents in or at the outskirts of the respective refugee camps. Efforts were made to address the problem of forced recruitment through workshops. There was no report of incident of forced recruitment, but unconfirmed reports from refugees showed that the SPLA is recruiting refugees from three of the western camps: Dimma, Fugnido and Sherkole. It is possible that (former) child soldiers are among them. UNHCR received letters of refugee children who claim that they have been child soldiers and fear to be re-recruited by the SPLA. To prevent recruitment UNHCR and Save the Children Sweden have addressed the issue during ARC workshops in the camps.

(continued)	Education	Provision is made by UNHCR to provide education up to primary school level for refugee children. Secondary education has been expanded in Dimma to include grade 11. Refugees are also attending secondary school in Fugnido, Addis Ababa and Jijiga (not supported by UNHCR). In addition, pre-schools (children from 3-6 years old) were operating in 4 camps in the west and non-formal education was provided in Bongo, Dimma and Fugnido. In the eastern camps non-formal education is being provided by Save the Children US. There has been a problem of dropouts, especially of girls. With regard to girls, some of the reasons for leaving school at an initial stage are early marriage, household chores, lack of clothing, sanitary napkins and uniforms.
	Adolescents	Youth in all the eastern camps suffer from a lack of formal education and training. Elders have reported increasing levels of destructive behavior on the part of bored and demotivated youth. With the exception of the 5 camps where Save the Children US is working, there is no formal education or vocational skills training programs available to these young people. Youth committees have organized cultural and sporting activities in all the camps despite the need for additional external support. Through these youth committees young people learn to take responsibilities for themselves and their future. In western camps, youth are mainly involved in group activities, participating in awareness campaigns on the rights of children, prevention of HIV/AIDS, girl's education. Youth and children enjoy also sports and recreational activities.
	Other	A survey was conducted in the eastern Somali camps and the result showed that child labor, though not at an alarming scale, does exist and is seen as a source of income to the affected families. This also counts for the "school drop outs". Ethiopia acceded to the Convention to the Rights on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Gambia	Separation	There was no caseload of unaccompanied minors. All children were cared for by their parents or relatives from the same country of origin.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	With regard to sexual exploitation, abuse and violence no case of this nature was reported both for children and women. UNHCR has conducted sensitization among refugee population and implementing partners on the issues related to SGBV and the way to address the problems.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Primary and secondary education was made available to all refugee children in the camps. 95 per cent are attending both primary and secondary schools. However, parents need to pay for this education, but are often sponsored by UNHCR.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	All new born refugee children are registered in the public hospitals and health centers and are provided with a birth certificate. Parents of newborns are provided with a sum of D300 by UNHCR to buy clothes. When a refugee child is born in Gambia and one of the parents is Gambian she/he will get Gambian citizenship. Gambia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Guinea	Separation	Separated children and unaccompanied minors were identified and registered at border entry points, in the camps, and in urban settings. In 2002, there were a total of 4,734 separated children identified and registered, of whom 2634 were boys and 2100 were girls. UNHCR worked with its partners on the tracing of family members of separated children and unaccompanied minors. 37 children were reunified outside of Guinea in 2002, while 1597 family reunifications took place within Guinea. Foster families were identified for non-reunifiable children, and their situation was monitored by Protection and Community Services to ensure that no exploitation or abuse took place. In June 2002, Guinea hosted a sub-regional meeting on mass tracing for Liberian children, to ensure a harmonized strategy and consolidated database for mass tracing.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR created a plan of action to address SGBV and identify concrete measures to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations, particularly women, children, and adolescents. In particular, a referral mechanism was created to support the judicial process, and to allow refugees to have legal advice and take legal action against perpetrators. Human rights training was also undertaken to ensure sensitization and awareness-raising on the issue. UNHCR closed down brothels and cleaned up ghettos that had been established in the camps. UNHCR also strengthened the camp police and security forces. Other initiatives included lobbying the Government of Guinea to implement relevant international conventions, and building safeguards to ensure that sexual exploitation does not take place in the school system. An investigation mission was sent to Guinea in 2002 from the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services to look into allegations of exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers. The mission, who conducted a six-month investigation, was unable to substantiate the allegations previously made. The mission did note, however, that conditions in the camps and amongst refugee communities left women especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. In light of this finding, UNHCR continued to treat the issue as one of its primary protection challenges in 2002.
	Military recruitment	There were reports of forced recruitment by groups of unknown armed men infiltrating the refugee camps, particularly in Kouankan camp in Nzerekore region. As a result, UNHCR developed a strategy to relocate the population of the camp to a more secure area, and negotiated with the government to adopt a strategy of separation and internment of armed elements.

(continued)	Education	All refugee children living in the camps in Guinea have access to primary and secondary education. As part of the SGBV action plan, 470 women were recruited as teachers and school assistants in the refugee schools. Peace education was introduced in primary schools in the refugee camps in December 2002. Vocational education was also offered in the camps, and to a limited number of urban refugees. Priority was given to adolescents at risk.
	Adolescents	UNHCR worked with its partners on a programme for the reintegration of adolescents at risk, in particular former child soldiers. Through this programme, child protection and welfare outreach teams were established within the camps in order to enhance protection of vulnerable adolescents.
	Other	The registration of births and the issuance of birth certificates received particular attention and was the focus of concerted campaigns in the camps. Given the fact that many births take place outside the hospital the need to explain the importance of obtaining birth certificates was a major priority. It was also noted that among those giving birth in the hospitals at the camp level many refugee parents failed to come forward to collect their registration certificates. Registration of births also formed an important element of the public awareness campaign undertaken within the context of repatriation to Sierra Leone. Refugees in Kissidougou and Dabola were made aware of the need to obtain official birth certificates for children born in Guinea. Guinea acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child a ratified the ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Guinea Bissau	Separation	UNHCR organized a registration operation at the beginning of 2002, in order to prevent the separation of refugee children in the future.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No cases of sexual, exploitation, abuse and violence were reported. In order to enforce the protection of refugee women and girls against sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, UNHCR organized consultation sessions with refugee women and girls to alert and consult them on their rights.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	With regard to access to education refugee children have the same rights as nationals. In 2002, 159 refugee children received education of which 52 per cent were boys and 48 per cent girls.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	The government of Guinea Bissau made a serious effort to put in place a radio program about children (“radio des enfants”) to sensitize the issue of children’s rights. Guinea Bissau is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.

Ivory Coast	Separation	The important innovation has been the conclusion of a MOU between the SAARA and UNHCR aiming at establishing a special treatment for separated refugee children, mostly in the field of registration and identification, refugee status determination, family reunification, voluntary repatriation and detention. The main objective of the MOU was to soften all procedures in dealing with refugee minors, especially when unaccompanied as prescribed by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Along with the MOU was also a plan of action for 2001. This document was agreed with all partners working on children matters. The two documents were completed as of July 2001. Though the MOU was not formally signed due to overbooked agenda, the documents were fully implemented throughout 2001. It was in the spirit of these two documents that 23 separated refugee minors were reunited with their families during the reporting period, with the assistance of the <i>Bureau International Catholique pour l'Enfance</i> (BICE) and Safe the Children-UK. This was done in close coordination with UNHCR, despite the cease of official collaboration between SC-UK as of 31 December 2000 and the non existence of a formal partnership between UNHCR and the BICE. In 2001, 676 unaccompanied minors were documented. Having investigated the causes for these rising separations, it appeared that some of them could be voluntarily organized by returnee parents in Liberia who find it difficult to make a living there, upon return. They therefore organize a new flight for their minor children alone. It is therefore important to emphasize on reconstruction efforts in countries of origin for the success of voluntary repatriation operations. In 2002, there was an attempt to coordinate different interventions by various agencies. It was necessary to harmonize coordination mechanisms for all the participating parties, which resulted in a conference in Nzerekore in Guinea, with the participation of Liberia, Guinea and Ivory Coast. The seminar resulted in the establishment of a regional repatriation-tracing mechanism. Further, UNHCR successfully improved adoption procedures by softening them. This contributed to reviving interest of many de facto foster families for separated refugee children to regularize their situation vis-à-vis the adopted child.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Cases of sexual exploitation, abuse and violence, especially against young girls, were perceived in 2002, but the number of cases was limited. It needs to be said that sexual exploitation, abuse and violence also occurred in transit centers.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	<p>UNHCR concentrated its efforts on the local integration of refugee children into the Ivorian primary public schools. Due to rather difficult and protracted negotiations between the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP, a Memory of Understanding (MOU) was only signed on 31 August 2001 between the above mentioned Parties. The second and last transitional school year for Liberian refugee children funded by UNHCR ended in August 2001 as well. Following the signature of the MOU, a large sensitization campaign targeting refugee parents throughout the ZAR, aiming at ensuring refugee children enrolment to Ivorian primary public schools for school year 2001/2002 began. At the end of 2001, only about 15% of the refugee children had registered with the Ivorian schools. UNHCR's obligations under the MOU were mainly the construction of 90 classrooms to expand the capacity of 25 schools in towns or villages with large concentrations of refugees. The first phase of the construction project was completed in January 2002 with the construction of 24 classrooms. Secondly, UNHCR committed itself to playing a catalytic role between Côte d'Ivoire and the donors for the funding of the overall integration project of refugees in Côte d'Ivoire to be followed by the rehabilitation program of the ZAR. UNICEF is providing teaching material to all 25 schools concerned, whereas WFP provides food commodities to support school canteens in the same 25 schools. The Minister of Education, on behalf of the Ivorian Government has instructed the regional education authorities to admit refugee children in all schools in the ZAR. All Parties agreed to let the functioning secondary Liberian schools in the ZAR continue their activities, given that there are no other options for the secondary Liberian students at present</p>
	Adolescents	<p>The main preoccupations are the cases of prostitution in Tabou, Danane and in the city of Guiglo in where the majority of adolescents offer themselves for an insignificant sum of money. According to these adolescents, the amount of money paid for their services is sufficient to survive.</p>
	Other	<p>Other activities organized for refugee children and youth included the continuation of the vocational training in various branches such as farming, masonry, electricity, road maintenance, construction, etc. For year 2001, 275 students were enrolled for vocational training; of these, 165 graduated in November 2001. The Ivory Coast is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>

Kenya	Separation	All unaccompanied children identified both at camp level and at the BO level are systematically registered, the social history forms completed and tracing and family reunification sort through ICRC. Foster care arrangements are the preferred care given to unaccompanied minors in the Kenyan refugee camps, though some of them are still in group care in Kakuma. In 2002, 1,753 registered unaccompanied minors were present in Dadaab, while 1,407 were in Kakuma (1,177 of them boys). The high number of unaccompanied minors in Kakuma is placing a strain both on the availability of foster-care and on monitoring capabilities. It should be noted that about 3,000 Sudanese unaccompanied refugee minors (lost boys) were resettled to the US. UNHCR is confronted with complex challenges in caring for, and keeping track of unaccompanied minors in urban areas.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Gender and sexual violence against refugee women and girls is one of the worst forms of violence against refugee women and girls in both Kakuma and Dadaab camps. It affects children both directly, when they are the victims, and indirectly, when their mothers are the victims. The girl child is particularly vulnerable both within and outside the camp. According to the reports, 25 per cent of rape survivors are minors as young as 5 years. In addition, the Sub-Office registered 3 cases of sodomy of boys. Child labor and exploitation particularly of girls engaged in domestic work and goat herding has increased their vulnerability. There is a wide occurrence of the traditional practice of circumcision of females, in many circumstances resulting in genital mutilation with high risk of health complications for girls as young as 5 years. Early marriages are common, resulting in girls dropping out of school. Allegations by segments of the refugee community of clandestine practice of prostitution in the camps have not been systematically addressed due to associated stigma. UNHCR and partners tried to combine preventive action in the form of education, awareness-raising with enhanced judicial action.
	Military recruitment	There were no reports of recruitment of children in Kenya. In Kakuma, some Sudanese young men decided to leave the camp to join the SPLA, but do so voluntarily. The elders actively discourage boys under 18 from joining the rebels, in line with SPLA/SPLM stated commitment.

(continued)	Education	Children have access to primary education, though only Convention refugee children have access to it on a systematic basis. For the camp population, primary and secondary education is provided by UNHCR and its partners according to Kenyan curricula. Refugees are therefore eligible to sit for the national examinations and obtain legally recognized certifications. In 2002, the Kenya Program set the provision of education to all school-going age children as an objective. The provision of basic education has so far been one of the most valued services refugees received in the camps. In this regard, pre-school, primary and secondary schooling as well as special and adult education form the education sector at camp level. Peace Education is also provided as an independent subject in all the primary schools. Girls' education remained a focus in the Kenyan program with the result of an increase in the enrolment of girls in schools.
	Adolescents	Access to play therapy and recreation in the Dadaab camps was limited to the schools and to documented unaccompanied minors. Funding was a major constraint in the implementation of valuable recommendations. Idleness among many refugee children and adolescents/youth, therefore, remains a major concern in the Dadaab refugee camps and continues to impact negatively on their overall protection. Refugee students from the camps, other than those sponsored through UNHCR, are required to obtain full scholarships that cover their basic needs during their studies.
	Other	A regional seminar on child protection took place in September 2002 in Nairobi. A workshop on refugee children organized by the NGO Kenyan Alliance for the Advancement of the Children took place in November 2002 with the participation of UNHCR BO and the Regional Services. In Kakuma, seven workshops for community leaders, members of the Child Advisory Committees, teachers and aid workers were held. In addition, a specific ARC training on child abuse was organized. Kenya is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Liberia	Separation	With the support of the government, UNHCR and its relevant implementing partners continued to trace the parents/relatives of unaccompanied children. Where necessary, they were placed in foster families. Monitoring the welfare of the children was undertaken by UNHCR and its partners along with governmental agencies, including the Liberia Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Sierra Leonean refugee children, especially young girls, were subjected to sexual exploitation, harassment and rape. Adults, including refugees, who sexually abused refugee children were prosecuted in accordance with the laws of Liberia.

(continued)	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children benefited from improved access to education, from primary to university and vocational levels.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	UNHCR closely worked together with sister UN agencies such as WFP and UNICEF in both the Care and Maintenance program. Several implementing NGOs worked with UNHCR in the implementation of various sectoral activities including shelter management, health, food/nutrition, water and sanitation. Liberia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Mali	Separation	There were no unaccompanied minors reported for the year 2001 and 2002. With regard to unaccompanied children, they are entrusted to an adult refugee, according to the rules set out by UNHCR.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No case of violence was reported in 2001 and 2002, also due in part to the protective role played by parents, with UNHCR acting as a complementary help in this domain. Meanwhile, the UNHCR's delegation had already had to engage in preventive actions against all forms of abuse or violence directed against refugees in general and vulnerable persons in particular. In that respect, meetings organized in urban areas provided fruitful occasions to emphasize problems related to human rights abuses as well as to issues related to bringing such matters forth to the competent authorities.
	Military recruitment	No information available
	Education	Refugees enjoy the same rights as nationals with regard to access to education as well as tuition fees.
	Adolescents	No information available
	Other	In addition to the reinforcement of sensitization actions on the importance of the rights of the child directed toward operational partners and refugees alike, the influx of Ivorian refugees into Mali has enabled UNHCR to extend its preventive and protective actions aimed at helping this vulnerable group. Mali is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Malawi	Separation	No information available
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No information available
	Military recruitment	No information available

(continued)	Education	The Liaison Office continued to pursue activities consistent with UNHCR policies and guidelines on refugee children. Through the Malawi Red Cross Society, special support to children was provided. Primary education was supported, through IP Jesuit Refugee Services. The government has fully respected the fundamental right of the child to education, hence access to primary and secondary education.
	Adolescents	UNHCR in coordination with UNFPA and UNAIDS organized a training session for 80 refugee youth within the camp. The main subjects were related to gender, sex and sexuality, STDs and HIV/AIDS. Sports facilities are provided and encouraged.
	Other	Under-nourished children received nutritional supplements. Malawi acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Mauritania	Separation	The government has special programs to care for unaccompanied and separated children. However, inadequate funding hampers these programs and the government is in this area dependent on foreign donors.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were no reports of intended violence against refugee women in Mauritania. However, the government and NGO community continued intensive media and educational campaigns against Female Genital Mutilation and gavage during 2002.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children were enrolled in primary schools, which were established by UNHCR in consultation with refugees and IP. A UN common project on the promotion of girls' education has been initiated in 2001 to avoid the drop out of young females from schools and positive results are expected to be achieved in this area. UNHCR has also opened a refugee primary school for urban refugee children.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Existing child labor laws need to be enforced, as there is a large amount of children that are involved in child labor, especially in the informal sector. Mauritania is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Mozambique	Separation	Staffing constraints prevented the closer monitoring of the situation of unaccompanied minors in the country. Two unaccompanied refugee children were interviewed at Nampula refugee camp, which was followed up by UNHCR, UNICEF and CVM, by tracing the children's parents.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Two cases of sexual violence against female asylum seekers were reported to UNHCR. These violations took place in the Marratane and Bobole camp and in both cases government officials were involved. Investigations were stopped for various reasons and UNHCR is concerned that there may be a number of other cases that remain unreported. An SGBV workshop, held in Pretoria, concluded that camp management should be restructured. Management structures should be gender-based, avoiding situations in which all food distributors are male.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Access to education is limited. In the Bobole camp there are no refugee schools, but some refugee children are attending the local primary and secondary schools surrounding the camp. In the Marratane camp refugees can attend either the local primary school (only 4 refugee children) or the refugee school (French). The vast majority of refugees prefer to attend the refugee school, which besides primary education includes also nursery and secondary education.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Mozambique guarantees birth registration and all inherent rights for foreigners or refugees born in Mozambique. Refugee children born in the camps are being registered with the support of NAR. Mozambique is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Namibia	Separation	There are quite a few unaccompanied minors at Osire. Current numbers indicate that there could be as many as 300 unaccompanied minors. Many of these minors have been absorbed into other family units. Nonetheless, there remain a number of unaccompanied minors who likely are not receiving adequate protection. Children do not have equally access to refugee status determination or identity documents. To address this problem, a joint registration of unaccompanied and separated children is planned among UNHCR, the ICRC and the Namibian Red Cross for the first quarter of 2002. Further, ration cards were issued to unaccompanied minors, regardless of their age, if attempts could not be made to absorb them into a family unit. Additionally, the camp administrator was approached to issue arrival forms to unaccompanied minors.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In 2002, BO Namibia in conjunction with Namibia Planned Parenthood Association, facilitated two separate workshops on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Osire refugee camp. The workshops focused on defining SGBV, its prevalence, and specific examples of SGBV in camp-based settings. UNHCR's implementing partners and the government have adopted a zero tolerance policy and, as a result, camp based government employees and two teachers were dismissed due to reasons of SGBV during the reporting period.

(continued)	Military recruitment	Namibia did not record the involvement of child soldiers or compulsory child labor during the reporting period.
	Education	All refugee children at the Osire camp have access to primary education. At the end of the reporting period, there were 5,450 refugee learners and over 1,500 pre-school children who attended kindergarten classes at Osire. These children were provided with lunch. In addition, the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS), UNHCR's implementing partner for education, constructed classrooms for secondary education for 8 grade learners. 417 learners benefited from this arrangement in Osire and others continued secondary school outside of Osire.
	Adolescents	The Osire camp continues to experience an extremely high birth rate, including a high teenage pregnancy rate. The teenage mothers normally drop out of school and take care of their children. To address this problem, UNHCR, in partnership with the JRS, began plans to start girls' groups at Osire and Kassava. Further, sports activities continue to provide recreational activities, particularly for the youth at Osire.
	Other	Malnutrition was one of the main leading causes of death at Osire, particularly for children under the age of 5. UNHCR, in conjunction with UNICEF, formed a multi-sectoral nutritional team to examine the problem and propose a solution. Namibia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Niger	Separation	During 2002, a couple of refugees from DRC left Niger, leaving behind three children of 16 years, 12 years and 9 months.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	During 2001, a national from Niger raped a 12 years old refugee girl from DRC.
	Military recruitment	No case of military recruitment of children was noticed in 2001 and 2002.
	Education	The refugees receive the same treatment as nationals with regard to access to education. During 2001, 36 refugee children benefited for educational assistance. During 2002, the number was raised to 75.
	Adolescents	UNHCR and its partners provide vocational training to some adolescent refugees. 22 refugees received assistance for vocational training during 2001 and 2002.
	Other	Niger is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified the ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Nigeria	Separation	The Office followed-up on the tracing and family reunion of separated children. Resettlement as a durable solution was also sought for children registered as orphan refugees. Remarkable was the fact that unaccompanied and separated children were often well aware of their parents' whereabouts but persisted to register as separated minors in order to benefit from UNHCR's special assistance to unaccompanied children: clothing, food, education and resettlement for orphans.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The Office's greatest concern towards refugee women remains sexual and labor exploitation outside or within the camp, sometimes by refugee leaders and camp managers. According to a social investigation conducted by the Office in November on the camp, it was disclosed that many female teenagers are involved into prostitution. Many are also used in Nigerian families as house girls and often undergo sexual exploitation. Some cases of abortion were also reported, of which 2 were very serious as the girls nearly lost their lives. In 2001, a 5 year old Sierra Leonean child died in the camp. There were rumors that the boy was beaten up by his caretaker one hour before he died. An investigation is underway, which will also investigate the ill treatments that the sister has been undergoing. She has been removed from the caretaker's custody. 9 refugee orphans were submitted for resettlement to the US in 2001.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Primary and professional education was one of UNHCR's highest priorities. Parents were encouraged to sign their children up for public schools and 35 children were given the necessary school materials in 2002. UNHCR carried out assessments of education needs and reviewed the scholarship policies, introducing new measures and criteria aimed at improving the quality of education.
	Adolescents	A committee was composed of (mainly Sierra Leonean) refugees, insisting that young girls should control their sex life and get involved into vocational training, formal education, farming or trading etc., instead of choosing idleness and free sex.
	Other	Nigeria is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Rwanda	Separation	Community Services Officers together with Protection staff try to find a foster home inside the camp for unaccompanied children. UNHCR staff is present in the camps on a daily basis to monitor the situation. In Kigeme camp there are 8 unaccompanied children in foster families and 2 boys living alone. In Gihembe camp there are 75 orphans who are currently living on their own. Another 166 orphans are living with relatives in the camp. Tracing of children returning from DRC was problematic, as they were crossing the border with groups of refugees without prior tracing. Those children were then placed in orphanages instead of returning straight to their families.

(continued)	Sexual Exploitation, abuse and violence	In Kigeme camp, the refugee committee in place is working as a conflict body, especially as pertains to cases of domestic conflict and abuse. If the committee can not find a solution it delegates the matter to UNHCR and MINALOC staff. The rape of a 3 year old girl was reported to UNHCR and the Office took all the necessary measures to assist the victim. The rapist, a 19 year old was brought to the police and detained. In Kiziba camp, a mother committed infanticide against her newborn baby and she was subsequently arrested and sentenced to prison. A sensitization campaign on child abuse was organized throughout the country, which directly benefited refugee children.
	Military recruitment	Both Congolese camps in Rwanda have reported the presence of ex-combatants in the refugee camps. Their presence created several problems in 2002 as they recruited young refugee men to go fight in the DRC. UNHCR requested MINALOC authorities to rid the camps of these ex-combatants. However, Rwandan authorities have been slow to react and showed no interest in rectifying the situation.
	Education	Refugees have access to primary and secondary education, provided by Jesuit Refugee Services, UNHCR's implementing partner, in both Congolese camps. In Kigeme camp, only the first three years of primary school are available inside the camp. Children attend the last years at local primary schools. Parents pay the registration fees. Students have to pass national exams in order to integrate the national system of secondary education. However, only the best pass this exam, the remaining stay in the camp schools for Gihembe and Kiziba. Kigeme camp does not have a secondary school, so children here remain often idle. UNHCR is trying to get these children enrolled in a professional school.
	Adolescents	Field offices were confronted with cases of adolescents who did not agree with their parents to repatriate back to DRC. Children showed a more rational opinion and looked at the future in the DRC where there was no school system and no health care for them upon return. UNHCR negotiated with the MINALOC authorities in order to allow those children to stay in Rwanda for their studies.
	Other	Women have access to an array of training. They participated in training on SGBV, HIV/AIDS, seminars on forced marriages and rapes, on rights of refugees and especially of refugee women and children. Rwanda is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Senegal	Separation	There is no information available on cases of unaccompanied minors. Meanwhile, after the meeting with the administrator responsible for protection has established that they are eligible for a refugee status, unaccompanied children are taken care of by the operational partner. The latter must put the child under the guardianship of a person who, either by law or custom, is responsible for the child. In turn, this measure permits to avoid the child's acculturation. In addition, the UNHCR delegation makes sure that the recognition procedure of the children's refugee status is followed through, with a view to providing separated children with ID documents. In parallel to the aforementioned, the delegation initiates the necessary search for a possible family reunion.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In order to reinforce refugees' protection as well as the protection of vulnerable groupings (most notably women and refugee children), the delegation has based itself upon HQ directives and taken concrete preventive measures (see under <i>education</i>). With regard to refugee women, sensibilization actions against sexual violence and other forms of abuse against them were organized by the delegation, in cooperation with the operational partner.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	The delegation's priority for 2002 was to make sure that all refugee children and adolescents would get access to education. Moreover, qualified young adolescents are encouraged to sign up for a professional teaching program, with the costs being born by UNHCR. In addition, women refugees, particularly young girls, residing in urban areas are granted priority assistance by UNHCR. This happens not only with regard to micro-projects aimed at increasing their self-sufficiency, but also takes the form of scholarships for secondary education.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	In the health domain, refugees and asylum seekers in need enjoy free access to medical assistance. Refugee children that are in the age group for being vaccinated against child diseases benefited from the extended vaccination program. Moreover, sensitization campaigns were launched with regard to refugee women, most notably on forced pregnancies, as well as on STDs and HIV / AIDS. Senegal is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Sierra Leone	Separation	<p><i>Refugees:</i> UNHCR and child protection implementing partners identified unaccompanied/separated minors at entry points during mass Liberian refugee influxes and provided family tracing and community-based interim care. UNHCR, UNICEF, SC-UK and IRC developed inter-agency Guidelines for Liberian Separated Refugee Children in Alternative Care, including maintenance of databases, establishment of individual files and standardized monitoring forms. ICRC, UNHCR, UNICEF, and child protection NGOs formulated a Framework for Collaboration on Reunifying Unaccompanied/Separated Liberian Children with Their Located Family Members in Liberia.</p> <p><i>Returnees:</i> UNHCR-organized child protection networks received Sierra Leonean returnee convoys at entry points and way stations and carried out screening to identify and register separated children. Family tracing was provided through the child protection network including the government. Interim care was provided in foster families or, where this was not immediately possible, in an interim care centre.</p>
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(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p><i>Refugees:</i> SGBV programmers were started in each camp, especially as there was a high level of war-related sexual violence experienced by refugees in Liberia. SGBV committees were set up in camps. A SC-UK/UNHCR consultants' report made allegations of extensive sexual exploitation including by humanitarian workers in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. While there were concerns about the methodology of the study and a subsequent UN investigation did not substantiate allegations against humanitarian workers in Sierra Leone, the issue of exploitation is a reality, especially where vulnerability of beneficiaries is exacerbated by grossly inadequate assistance (which was the situation in Sierra Leone especially in 2001-02, as a result of a financial crisis). UNHCR took a lead role in setting up the Coordination Committee on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CCSEA), which undertook a wide range of inter-agency initiatives, including Standards of Accountability for all humanitarian and development staff, reporting systems, investigation procedures, training and mass information. UNHCR offices in the region were asked to formulate and cost a plan of action to prevent and respond to SGBV in all sectors of activities. However, lack of funding hindered implementation, although progress was made especially in awareness raising and construction of shelters for female-headed households. Sexual violence cases were reported to the police, but prosecutions were hindered by lack of a properly functioning judicial system in the provinces. UNHCR training for police deployed in camps and refugee security wardens included SGBV. <i>Returnees:</i> UNHCR helped with setting up SGBV inter-agency committees in main areas of return. Survivors of war-related sexual violence received counseling, health care, education and vocational skills training. Rates of FGM (estimated 80% nationally) were believed to be lower among returnee communities, because of UNHCR sensitization as well as perceptions (albeit incorrect) that UNHCR assistance might cease for those practicing FGM. The practice was forbidden in temporary settlement camps for displaced returnees.</p>
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(continued)	Military recruitment	<p><i>Refugees:</i> Liberian children associated with the fighting forces entered Sierra Leone in mixed inflows of adult combatants and civilian refugees. Whereas adult combatants were accommodated at Mapeh internment camp (UNHCR was allowed to remove children from this facility), a special procedure was set up by UNHCR in collaboration with UNICEF and child protection implementing partners for accelerated reintegration of these children in refugee camps, where they were recognized as prima facie refugees. The children benefited from foster care or supervised independent living arrangements, family tracing, and education. Despite rumours, no cases of military recruitment in camps were detected by UNHCR. UNHCR and UNICEF conducted a sensitization campaign against child recruitment in camps. <i>Returnees:</i> Returnees with a child ex-combatant background were not significant in this period, as most were yet to return. Where UNHCR was aware of such cases, they were referred to the UNICEF-led Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration programme, in order to ensure community acceptance and children's access to reintegration programmes.</p>
	Education	<p><i>Refugees:</i> In principle, refugees have access to free education on an equal basis with nationals, but in practice many parents cannot afford numerous charges imposed by schools. A UNHCR screening of the residual caseload of Liberian urban refugees in 2000-01 showed a high level of non-school attendance after premature termination of education assistance. Therefore an education programme (provision of uniforms, tuition fees etc) was restarted in 2001, but funding was inadequate to cover all children. Refugee children in camps had access to primary schooling in camps in host communities. In most camps there was access to secondary schools in host communities. <i>Returnees:</i> Displaced returnee children had access to schools in UNHCR temporary settlement camps and host communities. Lack of education infrastructure in devastated areas of return was a serious problem, so many parents left their children in the temporary settlements to continue their education, while the parents returned to home areas. This required family tracing and reunification at the end of the school year. Access to education was improved through UNHCR's community-based projects, including rehabilitation of schools. UNHCR advocated for school certificates from countries of asylum to be recognized for continued education in Sierra Leone.</p>

(continued)	Adolescents	<p><i>Refugees:</i> Protection reception hours for children and adolescents were started in some camps, with part of the session devoted to group discussions and part for individual consultations with a protection officer. Youth clubs were set up in refugee camps. The NGO Right to Play developed recreational and sports activities. Due mainly to a financial crisis, the most critical gaps were lack of access to secondary schooling, vocational skills training, income generation and age-appropriate reproductive health services. <i>Returnees:</i> Teenage mothers, including “wives” of ex-combatants, had access to community-based reintegration programmes for war-affected youth, including opportunities for counseling, education and skills training. <i>Cross border abductees:</i> Guineans abducted by Revolutionary United Front rebels, included many adolescents and were assisted on humanitarian grounds by UNHCR – negotiation for release and voluntary repatriation. In cases where teenage girls (primarily those who had conceived while in captivity) were unwilling or unable to repatriate, UNHCR attempted to re-establish contact with their families and integrate them into community-based projects with a view to empowerment.</p>
	Other	<p>A system was put in place in refugee camps for birth registration and issuing of certificates by the government in collaboration with health clinics. Therapeutic feeding was provided for refugee children suffering from malnutrition. UNHCR negotiated a country-level MOU with UNICEF on child protection in 2002. The Sierra Leone operation participated in an independent evaluation of the impact of UNHCR’s activities in meeting the rights and protection needs of refugee children. A National Commission for War Affected Children was set up in 2002 and UNHCR highlighted issues of refugee and returnee children to this new government agency. UNHCR participated in initiatives for the Child Rights Bill, which aims to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Sierra Leone’s domestic law, but has been pending in the legislative system since the mid-1990s, delayed in part due to the war. Sierra Leone ratified the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>
Somalia	Separation	<p>No unaccompanied children have been received by UNHCR to date. However, in the fourth quarter, UNHCR reviewed the general health situation of the refugee population and noted particular cases with both parents HIV/AIDS positive. Unfortunately this will result in orphaned children in 2003, which UNHCR began to address on a case by case basis to work with the friends and families involved in the best interest of these children. The one case of an unaccompanied minor involved a young Ethiopian girl born in 1997, who witnessed the brutal murder of her mother at the hands of her father, who was later sentenced to death by the Somaliland courts. The girl was resettled to the US in 2002, where she was placed in foster care until a permanent family was identified.</p>

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) continued to be performed throughout Somalia on girls between the age of 4 and 10 and had a prevalence of over 95 per cent. Infibulation, the extreme form of FGM, was the most common cause of difficult or prolonged delivery in Somalia and was one of the main causes of maternal mortality. UNHCR, through its support to a TB clinic in Boroma/Awdal region, contributed to the long process of awareness raising and combat of harmful traditional practices. Attitudes towards FGM were slowly and gradually changing in certain parts of Somalia like Mogadishu, Hargeisa and Bossaso, especially among the more educated segments of society.
	Military recruitment	Male youths of school age were recruited into militia clans due to the continuous civil war in certain parts of Somalia. The major cause of male youths being attracted to join militia groups was poverty and the need to make a living. Giving male youth and adolescents an alternative to roaming the streets with arms in order to survive will be one of the main elements in breaking the cycle of violence in Somalia. There was no evidence of involvement of child refugees in armed conflict.
	Education	With the closure of Biyo Shina Refugee Camp in December 1998 to May 2003, refugee children in Somaliland/NW Somalia thereafter have only had the option of attending public schools, which most did not attend with parents reporting constant discrimination and harassment received at the hands of the local children. In addition they claimed that the curriculum used in the Somaliland system does not cater for the future of their children. For these reasons, in many cases the refugee community chose to send their children to the schools back in Ethiopia in the Jijiga area. As a result of the civil war in Somalia, the education of local and returnee children remains a general concern for UNHCR, Through the support of the international community, including UNHCR Quick Impact Projects and Sub-Agreements with Implementing Partners, over 60,000 children had access to primary education. UNESCO and UNICEF reviewed, updated and reprinted Somali primary school textbooks.
	Adolescents	UNHCR assisted in the organization of Refugee Committee Elections, which included the election of a female and a male youth representative. With the involvement of the youth representatives, UNHCR arranged an HIV/AIDS awareness workshop for the youth, which was led by the International Cooperation for Development (ICD). Teenage girls received handicraft classes and along with a group of minority Somali girls were coached in volleyball. Refugee boys gathered to play basketball on a weekly basis.
	Other	Children born to refugee parents in Somaliland did not acquire Somaliland nationality but retained the nationality of their parents. IDP children were facing a lot of problems as well as they often ended up on the streets as beggars. Somalia signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

South Africa	Separation	UNHCR offers assistance to unaccompanied children upon arrival, which continues after refugee status, has been granted. In some cases this assistance has been a pull factor and has resulted in a number of cases where parents deliberately separate from their children in order to access UNHCR's targeted assistance. UNHCR noted that some children have been smuggled into the country for better education opportunities. There are a growing number of separated or abandoned children being found in the streets, including shelters for destitute as well as those being brought along by adult asylum-seekers. UNHCR and its IPs continuously monitor the situation of unaccompanied children in the country to ensure that UNHCR's assistance is targeted to those who meet the established criteria.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR established a Task Force on SGBV in 2002. After undertaking a risk analysis, a plan of action was developed to prevent and respond to SGBV. Elements of the prevention strategy include addressing the root causes through improving the living conditions of refugees and including a SGBV component in all relevant meetings/trainings. Part of the response framework includes individual and group counseling to survivors and victims of SGBV. There is no information on sexual exploited, abused or violated refugee children.
	Military recruitment	UNHCR offers assistance to unaccompanied children upon arrival, which continues after refugee status has been granted. In some cases this assistance has been a pull factor and has resulted in a number of cases where parents deliberately separate from their children in order to access UNHCR's targeted assistance. UNHCR noted that some children have been smuggled into the country for better education opportunities. There are a growing number of separated or abandoned children being found in the streets, including shelters for destitute as well as those being brought along by adult asylum-seekers. UNHCR and its IPs continuously monitor the situation of unaccompanied children in the country to ensure that UNHCR's assistance is targeted to those who meet the established criteria. UNHCR and its IPs provided assistance to children who were involved in the armed forces in their countries of origin.
	Education	The prohibition on studies in an asylum seeker permit does not apply to children for primary education. Assessment made by UNHCR in the area of education indicates that parents tended to keep the children from going to school, as they could not pay fees. Access to education in urban areas is also made difficult as the nationals who had been deprived of attending to city schools during apartheid are now taking advantage of the new dispensation to enroll and move into urban centers. This resulted in overcrowded public schools and refugees seem to be disadvantaged as school administrators give priority to South Africans. For those who require to be phased out, Jesuit Refugee Services has assisted the children with continued education.

(continued)	Adolescents	The Ted Turner special project aimed at increasing access to reproductive health care services and increase HIV/AIDS awareness among young refugees.
	Other	There is no food distribution program, as such, as the refugee population in South Africa is urban-based. Because of limited resources, UNHCR and –its implementing partners provided emergency assistance for a period of three months to vulnerable individuals/families upon arrival, including refugee women and unaccompanied children.
Sudan	Separation	No special procedures have been established for unaccompanied minors. The number of unaccompanied minors is low as the extended family structure and customary practices treat children as if they belong to the community, i.e. children are taken care of by the community.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Cultural norms discourage open discussion of SGBV and domestic abuse, making them taboo subjects among the Eritrean and Ethiopian refugee communities in Sudan. In Sudan sexual related violence is considered a difficult issue to address because it falls under Sharia Law which places a big burden on the victim. To prove sexual violation, the victim has to provide four witnesses to give evidence under oath that they saw the violation. This requirement seems to discourage victims from reporting, because of the repercussions that would follow in the event of an unsuccessful prosecution. In order to raise awareness on the importance of discouraging SGBV, UNHCR conducted workshops on the protection of women and children in Gedaref State during 2002. Further, it is estimated that among the Eritrean and Ethiopian refugee communities, over 90 per cent of the girl-children are subjected to FGM. UNHCR has organized health training and awareness programs targeting all traditional harmful practices, including FGM.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children in Sudan access education in Sudanese schools while refugee children residing in camps are provided with primary education by UNHCR. Thirty UNHCR supported primary schools continued to be operational in the Sudan, but were inadequate to meet the enrolment needs of all school-aged children. Some children therefore had to join Sudanese Islamic and locally organized schools. There was an increase in the enrolment of girls and vocational skills for refugee youth were extended to 268 refugees.
	Adolescents	Under the Action for the Right of Children (ARC) projects, UNHCR supported the establishment of youth clubs in 10 refugee camps and facilitated intensive information campaigns on the protection of young refugee women and children with particular emphasis on the need to eradicate the prevalent harmful traditional practices of the FGM and child marriages.

(continued)	Other	Seven young Eritrean girls from Wad Sherife camp were arrested and sentenced to deportation by a court in Kassala. The girls used to work in Kassala during the school vacation and were arrested when they were returning to the camp after their daily jobs. The Sub-Office and COR appealed to a higher court and their release was secured after some days of detention. Sudan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
United Republic of Tanzania	Separation	The protection focus for children has been on identification, registration, verification, care, tracing, and family reunion of unaccompanied minors. Unaccompanied minors have been placed with foster families. Community Services Officers and non-governmental organizations, through community outreach workers, monitor the progress of unaccompanied minors and their foster parents. The deterioration of the security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi brought to a halt any further efforts at cross-border family reunion. In collaboration with UNICEF, photo-tracing activities were carried out with regard to all separated children under the age of 5 and children who had difficulty in expressing themselves. Following the withdrawal of ICRC from the Burundian program, the UNICEF program was expanded to include all Burundian unaccompanied minors.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	231 incidents of rape in and around the camps, 2206 cases of domestic violence, 177 cases of early/forced marriage and 93 cases of attempted rape were reported. In total 2,978 reported incidents, a decrease from 2001, wherein 3,229 incidents were reported. This reduction could be attributed to awareness raising campaigns and SGBV training given or the option for witnesses and survivors to voluntary repatriate, rather than facing the consequences of reporting incidents and pursuing court cases. Incidents of sexual exploitation and statutory rape of refugees in the refugee camps in western Tanzania were reported as well. The policemen in the "security package" program and implementing partners' staff were implicated in the sexual exploitation of refugees. UNHCR is exploring the possibility of taking legal action against the perpetrators and requested the government for an increase in the number of women in the "security package" in 2003. UNHCR focused on the problem of sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers, as accusations of sexual misconduct by aid workers and police, confirmed that this problem still exists.

(continued)	Military recruitment	In 2002, a number of refugee children left the refugee camps to fight with the Burundian rebels. While the number remained unknown, it was certainly a difficult problem to tackle given that families of these children were often involved in the recruitment and "volunteering" process. But at least this year some parents reported incidents of abduction of their children by suspected Burundi rebel forces and some children who managed to escape confirmed this. There were approximately 22 incidents of child abduction, which occurred in Kanembwa in Kibondo camps in western Tanzania. There was an incident of seven minors charged with illegal entry and possession of firearms. The minors were arrested and taken to court and their case remained pending at the end of the year. In 2002, attempts to identify child soldiers ended in vain. UNICEF obtained names of the suspected child soldiers but they were not traced in the camps. Most probably they changed their names.
	Education	In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, formal primary education was provided in both the new camps and old settlements hosting Burundian refugees. Moreover, in the new camps, Children's Activities Centers were established at the initiative of refugee communities themselves through a community-based approach. The curriculum at the primary level follows the country of origin syllabus. Informal education and skills were provided to adolescents past primary school age. The main challenge, as far as refugee children were concerned, remained the denial of post-primary education. This had the negative impact of discouraging children from attending school, as they saw no future prospects beyond primary school education. UNHCR assisted refugees attain scholarships for higher education, albeit on a limited scale. This was done through DAFI and a new Belgium supported scholarship for Burundian refugees in Tanzania.
	Adolescents	Recreational facilities for young and adolescent refugees were set up in refugee camps. The presence of the coach trainers of the NGO Olympic Aid in the camps in western Tanzania, promoted a new model or approach to sport, which affirmed the right of children and youth to play. Organized forms of play were shown to provide a sense of safety, security and normalcy in children's lives, and were also a means of building skills, confidence, self esteem and social relationships.
(continued)	Other	There was a remarkable achievement following the (ARC) training of 16 trainers. This increased the number of trained staff as ARC trainers. These trainers, in their turn, trained a total of 313 trainees (155 men) promoters of ARC. Major issues covered in ARC included child soldiers, sexual and reproductive health (HIV/AIDS and FGM) separated children, abuse and exploitation and child labor. Tanzania is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Togo	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In November 2002, there was an investigation into the alleged mistreatment of two young Rwandese girls by their tutor, which however revealed that the children were being treated well.
	Military recruitment	The problem of child soldiers does not exist in Togo, and children do not live in an environment of violence or exploitation.
	Education	Refugee children have access to education under the same conditions and constraints as Togolese children. At the level of primary and secondary school as well as universities, refugees pay the same tuition fees as nationals. That being said, priority is given to primary education. In 2002, UNHCR's implementing partner provided scholarships to 118 children at primary school level and 85 to children at secondary school level.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	With regard to resettlement, 16 persons of Rwandese nationality were interviewed by the Canadian authorities in 2002. They are still awaiting a decision as to their request for resettlement. Moreover, 2 Rwandese children are also waiting to be interviewed by American authorities. That being said, no new case of resettlement was submitted to UNHCR in the course of 2002. Togo is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
	Uganda	Separation
Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence		33 incidents of sexual and gender based violence were reported. Eight cases were reported to have involved children. Not all the cases resulted in the prosecution of perpetrators. However, the survivors/victims were assisted with health care and counseling. SGBV workshops were held in all settlements and as a result SGBV Action Plans for all settlements were drawn up and are being followed up. SGBV Zonal Teams were formed in all the settlements.
Military recruitment		UNHCR participated in an observer capacity in UNICEF's efforts to release children who were recruited by the rebel forces in DRC and who were undergoing training in Uganda. An estimated number of 14 refugees were abducted by the LRA and 8 have returned. Upon their release and return to the settlement they were referred to TPO an NGO specialized in psychosocial counseling.

(continued)	Education	Refugee children have now access to the Universal Primary Education System (UPE). Refugees are not impeded to use their own language even if the curriculum in school is the Ugandan one. Classes are held in local languages and increasingly in English as the pupils' progress to higher levels. As girls grow older their attendance in school drops significantly. Programs to enhance girls' education are being implemented and the ratio of girls in the last year of primary school has increased over the last two years by 20 per cent.
	Adolescents	Children are involved in the sensitization of ARC that involves creating a forum to address adolescent issues, awareness to children's rights and respect towards each other. Special emphasis was placed on education of the girl child and HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and other health issues.
	Other	Uganda is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Zambia	Separation	There is no particular procedure for refugee status determination in the case of unaccompanied refugee children. In general, unaccompanied minors are placed with foster families. Adoption and institutional placements are rare. In the refugee settlements, unaccompanied minors are registered and mainly placed with families according to their nationality and place of origin. These care arrangements in the settlements do not have a legal basis, but consist of a form of guardianship. Monitoring arrangements are done by UNHCR's implementing partners. During the reporting period, ten families fostering unaccompanied minors in Mayuwakyukwa refugee settlement received small grants in kind. A few unaccompanied minors have been placed in foster care with Zambian families in urban areas under a similar arrangement. During the reporting period there were no cases of resettlement of unaccompanied minors.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	BO undertook joint Community and Protection missions to all refugee camps and settlements, in order to sensitize the refugees, UNHCR staff, Government and implementing staff on UNHCR's policy with regard to SGBV and the "Zero Tolerance". The joint mission also activated mechanisms for reporting SGBV cases and put in place mechanisms for dealing with such cases. In all refugee locations, UNHCR female staff was identified as focal points for reporting, as police officers and to involve police in general through the victim support units. SGBV forces were established in all camps. As a direct consequence of the measures put in place refugee women and girls started reporting SGBV cases and actions were taken.

(continued)	Military recruitment	Ex-combatants are sent to Ukwimi in order to maintain the civilian nature of its refugee camps. However, some of the ex-combatants were unaccompanied minors. The office worked with the ICRC to trace the families of these minors and reunify them with their families. The Office has also been concerned about reports of possible military recruitment of children in camps in Western Province by UNITA rebels. Following enquiries conducted at the field level, the BO was satisfied that no evidence existed that would substantiate these allegations. However, it remains vigilant that future allegations of this sort do not prove to be correct.
	Education	Education for refugees has been treated as a mandatory right at the primary school level. Refugee children attend government schools at primary and secondary school level. Refugees are given the same opportunity as nationals to enrol at primary, secondary and vocational colleges. During the reporting period, 15 refugees were sponsored in various fields at the University and 92 were sponsored for vocational skills training at post secondary institutions. Refugee children in the settlements are taught English and local Zambian languages.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Children accompanied by their parents automatically acquire their parent's nationality and are considered as refugees through their parents' status. If one of the parents is a national of Zambia, the child can apply for citizenship upon reaching the age of majority (18 years). Individuals below the age of 17 are not subjected to the interview process. Uganda is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

THE AMERICAS

Argentina

Separation

Due to the lack of special procedures, unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Argentina have to face many difficulties from a protection and integration perspective. Several cases of unaccompanied minors without documents were verified, most of them as stowaways coming in ships from different African ports. The cases were processed by CEPARE just like any other asylum cases, with no consideration for the special needs of these children and with no consideration for special legal responsibilities of the state. Assistance in the form of basic shelter, health care, education and food needs was given to the minors through the implementing agency, Foundation of the Argentine Catholic Commission for Migrations with funds provided by UNHCR. The Regional Office, together with the implementing agency, has approached CEPARE and judges sitting in Juvenile Courts on this matter. As the RO reiterated to authorities, it is necessary to establish a procedure for unaccompanied minors. This would ensure appropriate legal protection to these children in the light of national legislation and not via current ad hoc interventions. A special meeting was arranged during 2001 by the implementing partner to discuss the situation of unaccompanied minors. Representatives of CEPARE, judges sitting in Juvenile Courts of Buenos Aires, as well as legal advisors and social workers from different NGOs attended the meeting, exchanged experiences in dealing with minors, and committed to continue the coordination and work on the matter. The objective of the activity was to promote the protection of refugee children. A slight improvement was verified in 2002, as several cases have been derived by the immigration authorities to the judicial authorities to provide for the legal guardianship required. This has greatly improved the situation of minors during the processing of the asylum request.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Paraguayan authorities uncovered a trafficking ring that sent women and young girls to Buenos Aires, under the guise of working as domestic servants, and then forced them into prostitution. Domestic violence and sexual harassment against women are widely recognized as serious social problems. However, few official statistics on these crimes are available, so any accurate measure of the problems is difficult. The national government, through the National Council of Women, recently implemented a new database system with the help of UNICEF to standardize statistics on domestic violence, permit a more accurate evaluation of the scope of the problem and promote better public policy. Any person suffering physical or psychological domestic violence at the hands of a family member can file a formal complaint before a judge, where the level of injury inflicted determines the punishment under the civil and criminal codes. In addition, the Law on Protection Against Family Violence gives a judge the right to prevent the perpetrator of a violent act from entering the home or place of work of the victim and temporarily to decide issues of family support, child custody and arrangements for communication with children. Public and private institutions offer prevention programs and provide support and treatment for women who have been abused. Transitory housing is almost non-existent. The Buenos Aires municipal government operates a small shelter for battered women and a 24 hour hot line offering support and guidance to victims of violence. Women lack information about what constitutes sexual harassment, what can be considered rape, or when physical and emotional abuse is considered a punishable crime. Unfortunately the prevention and support programs for victims of sexual harassment and domestic violence have much deficiency due to reduced budgets provided by governmental agencies. In addition, incidents of violence against women are seldom reported. Situations are not being openly discussed due to cultural barriers that still confine these matters within the family's private sphere. Such cases are assigned to a working group dealing with mental health and referred to the Secretariat of Women of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires, which has a Department devoted to the attention of victims of domestic violence.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	All children (refugees as well as asylum seekers) have access to education. This continues to be a priority in all cases and is provided by the public education system. Children may enroll in and/or graduate from educational institutions in the country even when unable to fulfill documentation formalities. They also have free access to public medical assistance/services. Primary and secondary education is free and mandatory. Despite the fact that all children have access to education, the current socio-economic crisis in the country has seriously undermined the possibilities of many minors to access to education.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	The RO protection staff conducted an informal survey of gender and child sensitive practices in the work of the implementing partner agencies and the government refugee commissions. This survey revealed unfortunately that both in the implementing partner agencies as well as in the government commissions recommended practices on gender issues were not always being followed. One example is the basic recommendation of separate interviews for women regardless of whether they are accompanied by male family members. Argentina is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Bahamas	Separation	No formal provisions have been adopted for cases of unaccompanied children. Nonetheless, authorities have expressed their full commitment to applying UNHCR guidelines on unaccompanied minors, should the need arise.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Although there are no formal procedures to address gender-specific problems, women asylum seekers, in principle, have access to female immigration officers to interview them and determine their refugee status. UNHCR has promoted the adoption of administrative measures and procedures to enhance the protection and rights of refugee women and girls, as well as the implementation of specific UNHCR guidelines with respect to women asylum seekers, in the context of the refugee status determination process. Past training has included scenarios that focus on the potential problems that confront asylum seekers who have suffered rape or other sexual abuse. No cases were submitted in 2002 in which persecution based on gender could have been considered as valid grounds for the granting of refugee status.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children enjoy the same access as nationals to public education. No discrimination regarding refugees' children's access to education has been reported. However, it should be recalled that children detained in the Carmichael Road Detention Center do not have access to education and the sometimes lengthy stay of detainees, particularly from Cuba, arrangements for return routinely taking several weeks or even months, means that detained children of asylum seekers may spend months without access to education.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Birth registration of refugee children is performed according to the domestic regulations generally applicable to any child born on Bahamian territory. Registration assures that children born in the Bahamas to non-citizen parents may make application for Bahamian citizenship in the 12 months following attaining the age of 18. Immigration authorities have assured UNHCR that many children born in the Bahamas to non-citizen parents are issued with Bahamian nationality under this procedure. The Bahamas are a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Belize	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR's programmatic activities include, among others, attention to the special needs of women and girls, including to cases of sexual and gender-based violence.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children in Belize have unrestricted access to education, although many struggle with the cost of books and uniforms.
	Adolescents	Refugees run the risk of being detained by the authorities during operations designed to curb illegal immigration. This is particularly so in the case of adolescents who are unable to obtain their own refugee cards until they reach the age of 18 and, thus, have no official means of identification.
	Other	UNHCR does not have an office in Belize since 1998. The RO in Mexico has maintained contact with the Belizean authorities on all matters related to refugees, mainly on the issue of the application of the legislation on refugees and the lack of access of asylum seekers to the RSD. UNHCR's implementing partner, Help for Progress, implements projects for UNHCR both in the material assistance sector as well as in the legal sector. Belize is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Bolivia	Separation	There is no special procedure for unaccompanied minors, including measures aimed at addressing their specific needs. UNHCR's implementing partner gives close monitoring and assistance to cases of unaccompanied minors. Whenever possible, contact with their parents or relatives in the country of origin is attempted in order to explore the possibilities of family reunification.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There continues to be ill-treatment of children in Bolivia, including sexual abuse, both within and outside the family. There are insufficient legal protection measures and appropriate financial and human resources to prevent and combat such abuse.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugee and asylum seeker children have the right to public education. Financial assistance for education will continue to be provided by the implementing partner agency to children and adolescents at primary and secondary level. In special cases, scholarships will also be granted to young unskilled persons to attend secondary vocational studies. All children also have free access to public medical services. However, according to UNESCO the situation for children is alarming, as 70 per cent of children under 9 years old do not attend school.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	All persons born in Bolivia are automatically considered Bolivian nationals. However, UNHCR is concerned about the situation of abandoned children born in Bolivia, since there is no clear authority designated for registering them and giving them a name. In these cases, the orphan or abandoned child is de facto considered stateless. Bolivia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Brazil	Separation	No special procedures have been established to deal with unaccompanied minors seeking asylum or aimed at addressing their specific needs. The legal consultant of CPIDH (UNHCR's implementing partner agency in Brazil) continued the work relationship established in 2001 with Axé Programme in Salvador and Travessia in Sao Paulo, two well known and recognized NGOs devoted to assistance to unaccompanied children. Financial assistance for basic shelter, health care, education and food needs was given to the minors through the implementing partners both in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo (Caritas) with funds provided by the RO. The social service agencies and legal advisers closely monitor the unaccompanied minors. Whenever possible, contacts with their parents or relatives in the country of origin are made in order to explore possibilities of family reunification.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The most serious violations of women's rights in Brazil are sexual and domestic violence, which are widespread and underreported. Possible cases of forced sterilization of poor women and sex tourism are mentioned by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as an issue to be clarified by the State in its next report (2003). Trafficking of women and children for purpose of prostitution within and outside the country is another subject of concern in Brazil.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees have access to all levels of education the same as Brazilian nationals as well as to a process for authentication of professional degrees and diplomas.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Regarding the situation of children of refugees born in Brazil, Brazilian nationality law establishes that they automatically acquire Brazilian nationality by birth. They are simply registered by their parents at the National Registry of Persons. This registration also enables the parents to acquire Brazilian nationality. No detention of refugee children came to the attention of UNHCR. Brazil is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

<p>Canada</p>	<p>Separation</p>	<p>The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act does not set out specific procedures or criteria for dealing with claims of unaccompanied children. UNHCR has devoted considerable attention to identifying protection gaps relating to unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers, and proposing ways to meet these gaps. During 2001, UNHCR Canada published a report entitled “Separated Children seeking Asylum in Canada”, and organized (with two NGO partners) a roundtable discussion on the topic, involving immigration officials, IRB, child welfare authorities, NGOs, lawyers and others, to examine the current situation and look at ways to improve it, in particular with regard to avoiding the detention of minors and ensuring adequate care. The Office has been urging all the stakeholders to find ways of getting the recommendations that stemmed from the roundtable implemented. While the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act requires that an adult be designated to represent an unaccompanied minor in RPD proceedings, there is no standard procedure for appointing a legal guardian for such children. Child welfare is an issue of provincial responsibility and as a result, standards of treatment vary from one province to another. According to Citizenship and Immigration, the intake for separated children making asylum claims nationally for up to end of September 2002 was over 2000. During 2002, the IRB finalized asylum applications of 659 separated children. Ninety-one applications from unaccompanied children were withdrawn or declared abandoned by the CRDD during 2002. There is no ready explanation for this, although IRB officials tend to conclude that most of these children were joining parents or close family members in Canada. If that is the case, such children either join their parents’ landing applications or re-unite by an in-land humanitarian application. In one typical scenario, children might possibly use the CRDD procedure to re-unite with their parents while applying concurrently for the right to remain in Canada on humanitarian grounds. Once physical access to Canada is secured and the humanitarian application is in process, the refugee claim is abandoned. More troubling would be the cases of children whose cases have been deemed abandoned but they may not understand the procedure and fail to appear when convoked, or fail to have a representative appointed. More troubling still would be the cases of children smuggled elsewhere by human traffickers after gaining access to Canada via the RSD procedure. More work needs to be done in this area. UNHCR has been working closely with and sits on the Advisory Committee of the International Bureau for Children's Right project on Separated Children, the Focal Point on Separated Children in the Americas since its inception in 2002. The overall objective of the project is to enhance protection of separated children and their rights.</p>
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(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	It has been noted in the last two years that there is an increase in trafficking, smuggling of women for the purposes of sexual exploitation including prostitution and stripping. It should be noted that the group includes women who are not refugee women. State practice to suppress such movements have included increased surveillance of smuggling patterns and better co-operation between immigration and law enforcement agencies to apprehend and criminally charge the smugglers. The High Commissioner's "Five Commitments" to refugee women were found not to be of relevance in the context of an industrialized country such as Canada. The Branch Office therefore took the initiative of defining five objectives relevant to situations where UNHCR does not implement an assistance program. These five objectives are: To undertake advocacy work to raise public and governmental awareness of the needs of refugee women and girls, and to ensure that the voices of refugee women are heard; to ensure that women have access to the RSD procedure and are not arbitrarily detained; to promote understanding by decision-makers of persecution based on gender or sexual orientation; to promote resettlement of refugee women and reunification of refugee families; to raise funds for UNHCR programs which assist refugee women.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Like all citizens and permanent residents, asylum seekers and Convention refugees have access to free primary and secondary education. The cut-off age for compulsory schooling is set by each Province - with a few exceptions it is 16 years of age - and applies to asylum-seeking children as well as to recognised refugees. Refugees generally may undertake post secondary studies on the same basis as nationals, although they are not eligible for government loans and scholarships until they have become permanent residents. This is a problem for refugees – in particular Somalis and Afghans – who have to wait long periods to be landed because they cannot provide the required identity documents. Various advocacy groups urge the government not to exclude these "refugees in limbo" from official loan schemes.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Until 1999, minors were rarely detained. Since then UNHCR noted an increase in the detention of unaccompanied minors and expressed its concern to the government about this, which yielded some positive changes in the provisions of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA). Although IRPA permits the detention of minors, the principle that a minor child shall be detained only as a measure of last resort, taking account the best interests of the child, is affirmed. Additionally, IRPA Regulations sets out a series of special considerations to be taken account of when deciding on the continued detention of minors. These are the availability of alternative care arrangements; anticipated length of detention; risk of continued control by human smugglers or traffickers who brought the children to Canada; the type of detention facility and conditions; the availability of accommodation that allows for the segregation of the minor children from adult detainees who are not their parents; and the availability of services such as education, counselling and recreation in the detention facility. Canada is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Chile	Separation	No special procedures have been established to deal with unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. Chilean law states that cases of unaccompanied minors are to be handled by the SENAME (National Service for Minors) which deals with the legal situation of the minor and provides elementary care and maintenance. There is no specific constitutional provision regarding the protection of the rights of the child. There were no cases of unaccompanied minors in 2002.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The Committee on the Rights of the Child is deeply worried about the report it received on the widespread practice of child abuse within the family and in institutions, including those run by SENAME. It is concerned at the lack of data and information on child abuse and neglect, at the inadequacy of measures, mechanisms and resources to prevent and combat physical and sexual abuse and neglect of children, including the institutionalization of child victims of abuse, and at the limited number of services for abused children, in particular in rural areas.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children still have serious problems accessing basic health care due to the fact that the public health system is overburdened and private systems cost too much. Refugee and asylum seeker children have access to the public education system.

(continued)	Adolescents	While noting the decrease in the infant and child mortality rates and the reform process which has been under way since the early 1990s, the Committee on the Rights of the Child is nevertheless concerned at the great disparities existing within these rates, in particular with regard to indigenous children, those living in rural areas, those with a lower socio-economical origin and those with a mother with a low level of education. It further notes that maternal mortality rates may not reflect actual cases related to complications resulting from illegal abortions, in particular those affecting pregnant adolescents
	Other	The Chilean legislation does not regulate the status of abandoned children. There is no presumption of nationality in their regard. Thus, in such cases, the orphan or abandoned child is <i>de facto</i> considered stateless. No cases of statelessness were reported in 2001. Chile is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Colombia	Separation	No special determination procedure has been established for unaccompanied children, nor have border officials been trained with regard to the handling of these cases. No cases of unaccompanied minors requesting recognition of refugee status have been reported in Colombia.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Violence against women is a very grave issue in Colombia because some armed groups use it as a war strategy. There are no specific answers on behalf of the State to this problem. Civil society sensitization level towards this kind of violence almost doesn't exist and affected women are impotent and afraid of denouncing abuses and violations. UNHCR has given a broad promotion to the subject, by supporting few groups who are currently working on this issue. The board "Mujer y Conflicto" has constituted in a voice of encouragement to women affected by violence, especially for internally displaced women. An important lobby work must be carried out in order to assure that the new government will assume the protection of IDPs right as a priority issue.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugee children recognized by the Colombian government enjoy the same access to public education as nationals. Primary schools are free of charge for all in the State establishments. No discrimination as regards access to education of refugee children has been reported. Though education needs of IDPs are formally addressed in the legal framework, worrisome obstacles are encountered in guaranteeing these basic rights for IDPs. The legal and policy standards in relation to education services for IDPs are well developed. However, in practice severe discrimination is experienced by displaced families and often access is denied. For example, though local schools are obliged to accept displaced children in their programs, a corresponding subvention or grant scheme is not in place. Thus, the problem is decentralized, but no decentralized solution is offered. In addition, given the economic strains resulting from displacement, children are often forced to abandon school, with a disproportionate effect on girls.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Refugee children born in Colombia do not automatically obtain Colombian nationality. They may be entitled to Colombian nationality only if one of their parents is a Colombian national or a permanent resident (“domicilio”) of Colombia. Colombia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.
Costa Rica	Separation	No cases of unaccompanied minors were reported. Of the total of requests for family reunification during 2002, 41 percent of the requests were approved, 37 percent are pending, and 22 percent withdrew their application or were denied family reunification by UNHCR, because of the lack of disinterest shown by family members, lack of interest to fulfill the proceedings, or because of an absence of permission by guardians for the exit of minors. The high percentage of cancelled applications has been explained by the applicants to be a result of the long waiting period for family reunification, which has made them run up high debts to realize the process themselves.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	As regarding to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), it is not seen as a problem among the refugee population, which is mainly constituted of urban middle class professionals. However, the fact that not too many cases of SGBV have been reported might be misleading; as such situation could result from women's fear to denounce the real situation. Recently, more and more cases of domestic violence have been discovered, but lack of local integration might prevent women of the refugee population to report the events. A regional field test on SGBV has been carried out on 12-13 September, 2002, during which the participants discussed a draft in order to update the guidelines. The Monitoring mechanisms have been discussed and agreed with various women organizations. During a workshop which took place in September 2002, various institutions and women organizations revised the guides to monitor gender based violence. When cases of SGBV were reported in 2002, the women were given legal advice, as well as economic support and health treatment. Young refugee women have been informed about their right to denounce sexual pursuit despite their fragile position in the working place, which is due to their willingness to compromise and their refugee status. They have been provided with economic support.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	All children have access to education, which remains a priority in all cases and is facilitated by the public education system.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	A minor holding refugee status in Costa Rica was denied medication that is life essential to him, by the "Hospital de niños" in San José. The minor's mother was told that the hormone Genotropín her son needs in order to grow only is distributed to Costa Rican children, and that he has to travel to Colombia to be treated. The minor could fortunately receive the hormone until October 2002, after which the Colombian authorities demanded that he return to Colombia for a medical exam, unacceptable considering the situation in the country, and the fact that the minor is a refugee. Fortunately, UNHCR's implementing partner ACAI has, as a temporary solution, been able to receive the hormone for a limited time, no charge, from a medical company here in Costa Rica. A process against the "Hospital de niños" has been incited by ACAI at the "Defensoría de los Habitantes". Costa Rica is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Cuba	Separation	In 2001 a new group of 252 Western Saharan refugee minors (all boys between the ages of 12 and 17) arrived in Cuba as part of the programme of educational assistance agreed between the Cuban government and the Polisario Front. As UNHCR's policy was to provide assistance only to refugee students who were already in Cuba in 1994, as per an agreement with the Cuban Government, funds had not been foreseen to help meet the needs of this group of children. In 2002, the Regional Office in Mexico, undertook a thorough assessment of the situation of above-mentioned group of 252 refugee children, prompted by concern over the separation from their parents. These children's parents and/or other close relatives are in the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria, and their separation took place with the consent of the parents. It was necessary to evaluate whether the best interest of these children was being met by their stay in Cuba, and what it meant for these adolescents to have the opportunity to pursue studies at levels not available in refugee camps. Considering that education and family environment are both main factors when considering the best interest of the child, and taking into account the right of the child to express his/her opinion, it was decided to consult them individually. A survey was performed among all refugee children, which found that they had been explicitly authorized by their parents or guardians to travel on scholarship to Cuba, and that it was the children's own personal will to continue taking advantage of this opportunity to study in Cuba. A reallocation of funds already approved for assistance to refugees in Cuba was made to contribute to the improvement of the living and health conditions of these refugee children. Refugees have the same opportunities as nationals to continue on to higher education, according to academic achievement. Refugee children are organized in a student's association and their representatives participate in the school's administrative council where decisions are made.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Two incidents of SGBV, both cases of domestic violence, affecting refugees under UNHCR protection and assistance, came to the attention of the office during 2002. One case involved a couple, and the second case was reported in a family with an adolescent female child. UNHCR Cuba intervened in both cases by providing counseling to all refugees involved (male and female, adults and minor) on gender equity values and legal provisions, co-coordinating professional psychological support to all refugees involved, and ensuring that follow-up home visits were made to monitor the intra-family situation.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugee children who have recently arrived with their parents (entering Cuba with tourist visas) do not enjoy formally the right to study as they do not hold any migratory status in the country. However, although no formal agreement has been reached with Cuban authorities on this subject, all refugee children have been admitted into governmental schools, with exceptional authorizations of the Ministry of Education, on a case by case basis. Only two refugee children were not able to enroll. The first case was of an illiterate 16-year old refugee who could not be admitted in a primary school due to his age (adult education is only available from 9 th grade). In this case, UNHCR made a special arrangement by hiring a private teacher especially devoted to teaching this refugee and his elder brother elementary school subjects. The second case was a 16-year old refugee who recently arrived in Cuba, who needs first to learn Spanish language in order to be admitted into a public school. UNHCR organizes a Spanish language course for refugees of recent arrival, in which this refugee child was included as a student.
	Adolescents	The Cuban Government for many years has offered an expansive programme of scholarship for foreign students, including refugees, to receive secondary and higher education in Isla de la Juventud. The largest group of refugees to have benefited from this programme are minors (ages 12-17) of Western Saharan origin, who were brought to Cuba from the refugee camps in Algeria through an agreement between the Cuban Government and the Polisario Front. These students travel to Cuba without their relatives, thus they can be considered as separated children. They are under direct responsibility of the Cuban government, specifically of directors and staff of the school where they live and study. A small number of Western Saharan teachers accompany the students, sharing responsibility for their care and helping the adolescents to preserve their cultural identity
	Other	All refugee children benefit from the same health care programme as nationals, including vaccination and preventive and curative health care at all levels. All refugees, even those who have no formal migratory status in Cuba, receive free health assistance in governmental institutions through the co-ordination of the Cuban Red Cross. Cuba is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
Dominican Republic	Separation	During the reporting period, no cases of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum were reported. It is estimated that about a third of the refugee population in the Dominican Republic are children, five of whom are unaccompanied. They have been taken care of by relatives or others identified by CTSD (on behalf of UNHCR). Concern exists over the lack of special procedures for determining refugee status of unaccompanied minors. Considerable difficulties exist for tracing relatives or family friends in the host country or country of origin for the purpose of family reunification.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	-
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Refugees who have not been granted residency/permit to lawfully stay are considered to be foreign residents in transit, and, their children, though born in the Dominican Republic, are not considered Dominican citizens. Of particular concern is the fact that on account of this interpretation, the estimated 200,000 children of Haitian nationals residing without legal status in the Dominican Republic may be at least de facto stateless. These children are not granted Haitian citizenship unless officially registered at Haitian Consulates, and they are not granted Dominican citizenship because their parents are considered “in transit”. Although the Haitian Embassy in Santo Domingo registers hundreds of children a year, officials there have recognized that there is an outstanding number of children that are never registered, either because the parents never approached the Embassy due to lack of knowledge, interest or economic resources, or because they do not have any type of document to submit as proof of Haitian citizenship. The numbers of undocumented Haitian children who are de facto stateless are estimated around 200.000. Further, the Dominican Republic has had a long history of administering harsh treatment to Haitians residing within Dominican territory. For years, Haitians have arrived illegally in the Dominican Republic to work in the sugar-cane industry. After the harvest, undocumented Haitian immigrants frequently overstay their work permits and search for new employment, particularly in the agricultural and construction sectors. Many, mostly women and children, resort to begging in the streets when employment is not available. The Dominican Republic is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
El Salvador	Separation	The Government has no procedures or policies in place regulating family reunification. The usual procedure followed is for the refugee to request family reunification by approaching the UNHCR implementing partner. UNHCR then evaluates the request following the guidelines of assistance for family reunification cases.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	National legislation requires compulsory education for all children, including refugees up to the ninth grade. Children born to refugees have access to education and health services. Often priority is given to male children for schooling, to men for available jobs and to sons for inheritances.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	El Salvador is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Ecuador	Separation	There are no provisions related to the treatment of unaccompanied minors. There are a very small number of unaccompanied minors registered in Ecuador. Care arrangements, when needed, have been up to present found on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis. In the province of Sucumbiós two unaccompanied brothers of 9 and 10 years of age were registered during the reporting period. They were temporarily housed in a child-care centre facility in Lago Agrio while UNHCR was looking for a durable solution. The Office succeeded in locating a resident aunt in Ecuador and the two children were placed with her. UNHCR provided the new family unit with assistance, including house appliances, kits and financial assistance. This was the only case of unaccompanied children encountered during the reporting period. As the number of UAM and separated children is likely to increase with the general increase of the caseload, UNHCR feels that there is currently a need for a more comprehensive approach to systematically detect such cases and their special protection and assistance needs, and address these in a timely manner. To achieve this, a first step will be the training of the implementing partner's personnel, as they are the staff that has first contact with these asylum seekers. This will enable them to identify special cases including UAM, separated children and children with special needs, and to identify solutions to their protection problems and assistance needs and inform UNHCR Quito if necessary. Co-operation with professional experts or specialists and with other institutions will be sought when appropriate.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-

(continued)	Military recruitment	The deterioration of Colombia's internal war during this year intensified following the collapse of three years of formal talks between the Government and Colombia's largest guerrilla group (the FARC3) on February 20. Massacres ⁴ , selective killings, and death threats continued to take place throughout the year in most areas of the country. All sources report that the three of the largest illegal armed groups have grown in number. According to the US based NGO Centre for International Policy, the FARC consists of approximately 18,000 members, the ELN ⁵ approximately 3,500 and the paramilitary group AUC ⁶ more than 8,0000 member in its ranks. All three of the aforementioned groups actively recruit children into their ranks, severely punishing or even killing them if they attempt to leave.
	Education	Under Ecuadorian law, recognized refugees have full rights to an education. However, it does not specify whether asylum seeker children enjoy the right to education. In practice no known cases have been observed where asylum seekers or refugees have been denied this right, although the lack of resources may prevent some children from going to school. In addition, the need to generate a living within refugee families places a pressure on adolescents to neglect their education and seek employment. During the reporting period, UNHCR has provided educational assistance in the form of school materials and school uniforms, as well as meeting any costs in relation to school registration. In the province of Sucumbiós this type was assistance was provided to a total of 185 children distributed in 32 different schools throughout the province. In the provinces of Imbabura, Carchi, Esmeraldas and Pichincha educational support in the form of school materials, school uniforms and enrolment fees was provided to 227 children. A total of 412 children benefited from educational assistance in the country. A crèche facility was also provided in the Apafano refugee centre for children of asylum seekers and refugee women who work in the nearby Apafano farm, as well as for children of persons of concern accommodated in the centre. In addition to direct assistance for families, UNHCR has liaised with other institutions and agencies to improve educational infrastructure and conditions of existing facilities. In Quito, the only location where non-Colombian refugees are registered, 23 recognized refugees attended Spanish classes. This was possible through the NGO Solidarity, which provided the classes free of charge.
	Adolescents	Sixteen cases of unaccompanied adolescents, between 16 and 18 years of age were registered during the reporting period. These cases were given priority in interviews to speed up the eligibility proceedings and were given priority assistance. However no special care arrangements were found for them as they all firmly expressed the will to look after themselves and the social assistants also deemed that it would have been more detrimental for them to be placed in a child care institute or under other form of care. The Offices however giving special attention to follow up to these cases.

(continued)	Other	With the growth of the refugee population, cases which may need resettlement of ground other than the security situation appear likely to arise, such as women at risk, unaccompanied minor and victims of torture. To adequately address such needs, and with the support of additional funding, the project for a small resettlement unit within LO Quito, has been formally approved in December 2002 and will become operational in January 2003. The project is funded by the US Government Bureau for Population and Refugee Migration. Further, a project of special interest and success is a 4 soup-kitchens project in the province of Sucumbiós, providing lunch every day to an average of 20 children. With the support of the above-mentioned ORI, which provides complementary food products, the 80 children who are provided with a nutritionally balanced meal each day are both Ecuadorians and Colombians up to 10 years of age. The project has the double benefit of making a real difference in the nutrition and health of the children, as well as in largely helping the integration between refugee and local children and families. The Ecuador is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Guatemala	Separation	There were no unaccompanied minors.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR's implementing partner, ASI, continued to organize seminars for refugee women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence with funds from the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have access to education and health services.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Refugee children or children born to refugees on Guatemalan territory generally face the same problems as the rest of the population, i.e., limited economic opportunities and deficient schooling. Guatemala is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Honduras	Separation	In 2001, two Haitians minors arrived in Honduras as stowaways. After being interviewed by the migration department with the participation of CIPRODEH it was concluded that they were not refugees nor did they want to request refugee status. During 2002, there was only one refugee child in Honduras. She faces no obstacles in access to education and other government services. Provisions recognizing the importance of preserving the family unit are indicated in national legislation through the Law of the Family and the Family Code. However, the Government has no policies or procedures in place regulating family reunification for refugees. The usual <i>ad hoc</i> procedure followed is for the refugee to request family reunification by approaching UNHCR's implementing partner, CIPRODEH. UNHCR manages all family reunification cases.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have access without limitation to public education services and can carry out studies at any academic level.
	Adolescents	The increasing phenomenon of violent youth <i>maras</i> obliges UNHCR to study more carefully how these groups function, what their objectives are, whom they are attacking, and in particular, what happens to those youths who refuse to participate in some or all activities, or decide to abandon membership. The extent, to which a former gang member is considered as a traitor by his/her former gang and therefore persecuted by the gang, may be relevant when considering whether such an individual could meet the refugee definition. Some such cases may be recognized on the grounds of membership of a particular group, due to persecution by a non-state agent of persecution and the lack of effective protection by the state. The issue of the <i>maras</i> must be studied carefully due to the fact this social phenomenon may increasingly generate forced displacement of youth, and may become an increasingly common reason for persons to seek asylum abroad.
	Other	Children born to refugees are registered nationally and birth certificates are issued without any difficulties. Honduras is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Jamaica	Separation	There were no child refugee/asylum applications.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	-
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Although there are some internally displaced persons in Jamaica, UNHCR has not been involved with them. Their displacement can be traced to the violent demonstrations that have occurred in Kingston over the years, as a result of which several families were forced to flee from their communities. In other parts of the country, displacement has been caused by severe flooding. The media has consistently adopted the misnomer “refugee” when referring to these displaced families. Public perceptions of the term “refugee” appear to have altered accordingly. Such violent incidents occur not infrequently in Kingston due to political divisions within the community. Displaced families have generally been unable to return to their homes and communities. Jamaica is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Mexico	Separation	During 2002, there were three cases of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers (involving a total of 5 children and adolescents). These undocumented minors entered Mexico apparently assisted by smugglers in transit to the US, but were intercepted by Mexican migration authorities. All of the adolescents were transferred to the Migration Holding Centre in Mexico City, where they remained while their refugee claims were reviewed by COMAR. Those children who were recognized as refugees were released into the custody of COMAR, and the minors were accommodated in a guesthouse. Eventually all the minors travelled on their own to the USA. There is no special legal framework for the custodianship of foreign unaccompanied minors in Mexico, therefore COMAR’s actions in these cases were <i>ad hoc</i> . On the basis of this experience, UNHCR and COMAR entered into a dialogue with DIF (Integral Development of the Family), a state institution which runs shelters for Mexican unaccompanied children. DIF expressed willingness to enter into a co-operative agreement to support minor asylum seekers during 2003. UNHCR has not received reports about refugee children being separated from their families against their parents will.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Physical security problems reported by some Guatemalan refugees in southern Mexico, principally in Chiapas. Issues directly affecting the rights of women refugees, such as spousal violence, sexual violence, discrimination, abandonment, child support and child custody, featured prominently amongst the cases attended. During 2002, a total of 40 cases were jointly attended by UNHCR and COMAR. UNHCR has adopted a policy of active accompaniment to address rights violations, particularly of women refugee victims of sexual and gender-based violence. While Mexican state legislation on domestic and sexual violence is quite advanced in many states (including the penalization of sexual abuse within marriage in some states); the rate of actual enforcement of this legislation is extremely low. The causes for lack of enforcement include emotional barriers (fear to report, economic dependency of victims, cultural norms, etc.) as well as severe deficiencies in judicial processes (corruption, administrative barriers and inefficiencies, judicial practice favoring conciliation between victim and aggressor, unreasonable evidentiary demands, failure to apply legislation by officials due to cultural views towards sexual and domestic violence, etc). UNHCR also continued to participate actively in the UN Inter-Agency Group on Gender, and continued to ensure visibility of refugee women's issues in activities organized by UNIFEM.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	With regard to the <i>right to education</i> , refugee children have the same access to primary education as nationals. Nevertheless, they may face problems in meeting registration requirements because of a lack of proper migration documents and/or lack of documentation of previous studies completed in their country of origin. These practical problems have been overcome in virtually all cases with intervention and support of UNHCR's implementing partner, who co-operates closely with various schools as well as the Secretariat of Education. All refugee children, including children with special needs, have been able to receive formal education. Refugees can enter any public university following the criteria for Mexican students. Practical difficulties include obtaining recognition of previous studies completed in their countries of origin.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Children may be detained when they accompany their undocumented parents who are asylum seekers. Younger children who are detained in the Migratory Holding Centre in Mexico are detained together with their mother in separate quarters (or with their father, if traveling only with this parent). Upon a favorable decision of the refugee claim they are released. Another principal protection concern, primarily affecting refugee children in Chiapas, involves birth registration. When a child is born to refugees in Mexico, his/her birth is registered in the hospital and in the Civil Registry, and under the Mexican constitution obtains Mexican nationality (<i>jus solis</i>). However, the Civil Registry Offices do not always apply those norms in Chiapas. Practices regarding registration of refugee children are inconsistent and confusing. It should be noted, however, that in some cases, children of refugees have not been documented due to the lack of initiative of their parents, who may not always recognize the importance of documentation. Mexico is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Nicaragua	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No violations to personal security, physical safety, and/or sexual or any other types of violence came to the attention of UNHCR. No cases of discrimination against refugees were reported.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees have equal access to health care, social services and education.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	There are no refugee children in Nicaragua, as children born to refugees are Nicaraguan by birth. All individuals attempting to enter or remain in Nicaragua without proper documentation can be sentenced by a migration judge to three months of detention in the Managua Holding Centre. Men and women are lodged separately and food and beds are provided to all detainees. This centre has no room for interviews to ensure confidentiality. Nicaragua is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Panama	Separation	ROVEN's mission to the Detention Center in La Palma found that five children were detained; two (11 and 13 year old) were with their mothers while other three (16 and 17 years old) were without any relatives These unaccompanied children were separated from the rest of the detainees, being kept in a small office unsuitable for living. The unaccompanied minors were finally recognized as 1951 Convention refugees in December 2002 and released from the detention center.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>UNHCR's implementing partner <i>Justicia y Paz</i> has reported various cases of detention and deportation by Panama's authorities. Three women, one child (three years old) and one man irregularly crossed in June into Panama's border province of Darién in search of international protection. On their way to Panama, unknown persons raped one woman in front of her small daughter. They managed to escape alive and applied for refugee status at the nearest Panamanian police post in Tupiza. Despite their trauma, Panamanian authorities put all four of them in prison together with common criminals. They managed to send a written asylum-application to the national refugee agency ONPAR in Panama City. Nonetheless, migration authorities prepared their deportation. In view of this situation, ROVEN contacted ONPAR so that they assist the asylum seekers with their asylum applications. According to the asylum-seekers only thanks to the intervention of the Colombian Consul in Panama who sent letters to UNHCR regarding the humanitarian situation of the Colombian citizens, the deportation of the woman and her child was prevented. The two other persons "voluntarily" withdrew their asylum-applications preferring deportation to Colombian to being detained under inhumane conditions. Another incident involved two children of 17 years that equally crossed by foot into Panama's border area and were subsequently detained over several months together with common criminals.</p>
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Recognized refugees living in Panama are granted the same access to schools and universities as Panamanian nationals. However some refugees have faced problems accessing university education due the lack of proper documentation requested by the Minister of Education. Equally, relevant documents from Colombia must be legalized before the Colombian Consulate what is a costly undertaking that many refugees are unable to bear. In terms of basic education, refugee children have enjoyed the same right of access without being requested to present legalized academic documents. In the case of persons under humanitarian status in communities at the border, the right of education was accorded by the present government, there are only primary schools available in the reception communities and with the restriction of mobility, the majority of the children are prevented from accessing higher levels of education. To resolve this problem, during 2002, UNHCR, through its implementing partner VIDA, granted scholarships and processed authorizations with the authorities to help seven refugee children to continue their studies at different communities in Darien, where higher education levels are offered. Likewise, poor families have received assistance for their children's uniforms and school materials from ONPAR. In some of the locations where persons with temporary humanitarian status live (e.g. Punusa in the Alto Tuira), there are no educational facilities available. In this particular case, the Panamanian Red Cross, in collaboration with UNICEF, negotiated with the Ministry of Education the appointment of a local teacher in return for school utilities provided by these institutions. The lack of a development plan of the government for the border provinces in general, and the lack of education strategies for border areas of the Ministry of Education in particular have also negatively impacted on education of refugee children.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Panama applies the <i>ius soli</i> principle to every child born in Panamanian territory. Children born in Panama are therefore Panamanian nationals and benefit by law from registration procedures. Refugee children are usually documented individually when they complete their twelfth year of age. Nevertheless, some of these children are not registered at birth and may thus be without proper documentation. This situation complicates the acquisition of Panamanian nationality. The detention of children in the appalling detention facilities of La Palma, either with their parents or unaccompanied, raises serious concerns in light of Panama's international obligations. Panama is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Paraguay	Separation	No special procedures have been established to deal with unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, including measures aimed at addressing their specific needs. There have been no cases of unaccompanied minors during 2002.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Problems of domestic violence are seldom reported. However, according to the implementing partner agency the existence of such problems have been perceived in a number of cases. They have the feeling that such situations are not openly discussed due to cultural barriers that still maintain these matters within the family's private sphere. Harassment and ill treatment of women, both within and outside the family, together with the lack of effective action or remedies on behalf of the local authorities to prevent these types of situations are common in Paraguay which, like many other countries in the region, has a traditional and patriarchal society.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees and asylum seekers have free access to public or private education. Access to education at primary and secondary levels, both for refugee children, men and women, is facilitated by UNHCR through its implementing partner agency. They are also granted documentation support and a one-time allowance to buy uniform and materials. Medical services are provided through public hospitals and clinics at minimum costs.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Children of refugees born in Paraguay automatically acquire Paraguayan nationality by birth. They are simply registered by their parents at the National Registry of Persons. This registration also enables the parents to acquire Paraguayan nationality. No cases of in-country adoption have been reported during the period. There is no specific procedure under refugee legislation to eventually deal with this type of cases. Adoption of refugees should be dealt with in the same manner as that of any child, Paraguayan or foreign. The RO protection staff conducted an informal survey of gender and child sensitive practices in the work of the implementing partner agencies and the government refugee commissions. This survey revealed unfortunately that both in the implementing partner agencies as well as in the government commissions recommended practices on gender issues were not always being followed. One example is the basic recommendation of separate interviews for women regardless of whether they are accompanied by male family members. As projected in the objectives set out for 2002 a year ago, gender and child protection issues were raised at least tangentially in the regional RSD seminar, eventually held in September, and at the PARinAC meeting in May. However, insufficient time and focus were devoted due to the pressure of other issues. Paraguay is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Peru	Separation	There is no information available on unaccompanied and separated children. With regard to family reunification, the term “nuclear family” in the Peruvian legislation encompasses spouse, minor children and elderly parents. The latter has to demonstrate that they lack the financial means to care for themselves due to their advanced age or poor physical condition. It is noteworthy that the loss of refugee status does not ipso facto entail that of the refugee’s family members. Under the title “family reunification” the refugee status may be extended to the spouse, partner of a mere union, children and other persons which are economically depending on the refugee.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No intervention by UNHCR has been requested during the reporting period regarding any type of domestic violence, detention, and torture or kidnapping affecting refugee women.
	Military recruitment	-
(continued)	Education	Asylum-seekers and refugees enjoy free access to public education (pre-school, primary, secondary and superior education). Access to education at primary levels and higher for refugee children and women is supported by UNHCR. Equally, the DAFI program has granted university scholarships for some refugees.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Refugees enjoy free access to medical services and assistance. There is no mandatory blood testing on HIV for asylum seekers. Special support is given to refugee women who arrive in Peru by their own means, as well as to orphans, unmarried mothers and women heads of household. There is no legislation specifically aiming at the protection of refugee children or asylum-seekers. In practice, authorities accorded special consideration and preferential treatment to these cases. There is no specific reference to the protection of refugee children in the new refugee law. Peru a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Uruguay	Separation	No special procedures have been established to deal with unaccompanied children asylum seekers. There were no cases of unaccompanied minors. There is an <i>ad hoc</i> procedure for family reunification whereby the family of a refugee is allowed to enter the country with a tourist visa and is later recognized as refugee on family reunification grounds. The definition of family applied for family reunification includes offspring up to the age of 21 and spouses and elderly parents who depend economically on the refugee

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Problems of domestic violence are seldom reported. However, according to the implementing partner agency the existence of such problems have been perceived in a number of cases. They have the feeling that such situations are not openly discussed due to cultural barriers that still maintain these matters within the family's private sphere. Harassment and ill treatment of women, both within and outside the family, together with the lack of effective action or remedies on behalf of the local authorities to prevent these types of situations are common in Uruguay which, like many other countries in the region, has a traditional and patriarchal society.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	All children (refugees as well as asylum seekers) have access to education. This continues to be a priority in all cases and is provided by the public education system. UNHCR, through its implementing partner agency, facilitates access to education in primary and secondary levels, including the provision of documentation support. All children also have free access to public medical services.
	Adolescents	There were no gender-based claims for asylum in Uruguay in 2002. However, female members of a family (spouse and dependants such as mature girls) are encouraged to file their own eligibility questionnaires. As a general rule, they are separately interviewed by implementing partner agency's female staff. However, the basic recommendation of separate interviews for women and girls were not always being followed.
	Other	Offspring of refugees born in the country automatically acquire Uruguayan nationality by birth. They are simply registered by their parents without further requisites. No cases of in-country adoption have been reported and there is no specific procedure under refugee legislation to eventually deal with this type of cases. Adoption of refugees would be dealt with in the same manner as that of any child, Uruguayan or foreign. Uruguay is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

United States of America	Separation	<p>Children, specifically the reception and treatment of separated children in the US, continues to be a priority, given the poor record of the US, especially regarding the use of detention for children and their lack of access to legal representatives. This year, RO Washington has the opportunity to follow up on its past activities to impact the development of new procedures in this area. Due to efforts of NGOs and UNHCR in 2001 and 2002, the US Congress enacted legislation toward the end of 2002 that transfers the care and custody of separated children from the INS, an immigration enforcement body, to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, an agency with expertise in working with resettled separated refugee children. RO Washington plans to work closely with the USG in 2003 to ensure that the new procedures are in line with international refugee standards, and will focus primarily on issues surrounding custody and care and access to counsel and guardians. Refugees and asylum seekers are permitted to petition for spouses and children less than 21 years of age to join them in the United States. However, refugees must file the petition within two years of admission and asylum seekers within two years of the final grant of asylum.</p>
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(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>In October 2000 an NGO, the Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, issued a report on the detention conditions for women asylum-seekers in Florida’s Krome Detention Center. This report, <i>Behind Closed Doors: Abuse of Refugee Women at the Krome Detention Center</i>, alleged widespread sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuse of detainees at the hands of INS officials. During and after the writing of the report, some of the women detainees who alleged abuse were transferred, including some to county jails further away from their lawyers, where allegations of inhumane conditions continued. The special needs of immigrant women, including those who may apply for asylum, who face threats to their physical security was addressed by Congress and the Administration in 2000 and 2001. In October 2000, President Clinton signed into law the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000. It includes the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The TVPA provides for, among other things, an Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking, measures to protect and assist victims of trafficking, actions against governments who fail to meet minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, and actions against traffickers. VAWA provides for, <i>inter alia</i>, improved access to protection for battered spouses and children, adding that battered immigrant spouses would not need to depend on their abusive spouses to obtain benefits, but can self-petition for permanent residency in the US if they establish that they are victims of domestic abuse and would suffer extreme hardship if they are returned to their home country. As of mid-2002, according to the Center for Gender and Refugee Studies at Hastings College of Law, the Asylum Office had granted at least 22 such applications involving honor killings, domestic violence, forced marriage, and trafficking. Immigration judges had granted at least 33 cases involving gender persecution, including female genital mutilation, domestic violence, rape, and forced prostitution and sexual slavery.</p>
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	<p>All refugees under the age of 18 years may attend primary or secondary schools free of charge. Refugees have the same access to university education as US citizens and permanent residents; however, in most states there are tuition charges for public universities.</p>
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	In 2002, INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service) detained over 4,800 children annually. Some children were housed in foster care homes or shelter care facilities but many were held in jail-like juvenile detention centers. RO Washington continued to monitor the detention of juvenile asylum-seekers in the US and reports its findings to the INS, especially regarding inappropriate conditions of detention, shackling, and age assessment techniques, including dental exams which have been criticized for their inaccuracies. In 2002, RO Washington visited three facilities used to house INS juveniles, including two shelter-care facilities and one juvenile jail. During these monitoring visits, representatives spoke with children held at the facilities for firsthand information on their treatment and the conditions in the facilities. The US signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Venezuela	Separation	No cases of unaccompanied minors requesting recognition of refugee status has arisen. No cases were reported of refugee children separated from their parents against their will.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were no reports of refugee children who were subject to detention, arrest or imprisonment or problems relating to the physical safety of refugee children. The Government had not adopted specific legislative and administrative regulations to protect refugee children. The Colombian NGO Codhes has undertaken in the second semester of 2001 a study on gender issues and refugees in border areas in Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela. The paper highlights the specific vulnerability of refugee women and girls that constitute approximately 65 percent of the overall caseload. It identifies violations to the right to security and integrity as well as to the principles of non-discrimination and voluntaries of return as the main problems encountered in terms of violence against women. The analysis concludes with a recommendation for humanitarian organizations on how to incorporate the gender perspective in monitoring activities at the border.
	Military recruitment	UNHCR has received reports that irregular armed groups from Colombia have been recruiting Colombian boys less than 18 years in the border areas of Venezuela. National and municipal child welfare authorities have expressed concern over their own security if getting involved in cases of forced recruitment of minors by the Colombian irregular armed actors in Venezuela or child deserters of these organizations. Central authorities and the army have denied the presence of irregular groups on Venezuelan territory and thus the risks of forced recruitment. UNHCR and its implementing partners in turn have been prevented from acceding the border areas due to precarious security conditions.

(continued)	Education	Recognized refugee children enjoy free access to education by virtue of article 19 of the refugee organic law. Children asylum-seekers are <i>a priori</i> not entitled to enjoy free access to education. Asylum-seekers who have applied for refugee status over the last two and half years are still awaiting a decision on their claim. Immigration authorities were not inclined to issue provisional documentation allowing refugee children to attend school in the meantime
	Adolescents	-
	Other	In practice, as the government does not distinguish between asylum-seekers and migrants, refugees as such do not enjoy the specific rights enshrined in international and national refugee law. This has affected particularly vulnerable refugee categories such as refugee children. A significant number of Colombians in the border region, born in Colombia, but living for more than 5 years in Venezuela, do not have identity papers from either their country of origin or from Venezuela. Moreover, despite some attempts to speed up the registration process, such as mobile registration teams operating in public health institutions, the lack of resources – many offices lack even the most basic office items such as paper and typing machines – seriously hampers the extension of identity documents. In addition, it is important to recall that for any birth registration, parents should be duly documented (passport, identity papers or agricultural card). As many Colombians in Venezuela are irregular migrants, they refrain from registering their children in order to avoid detection and deportation by the immigration authorities. Venezuela is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Australia	Separation	<p>There is no separate Regulation for the determination of refugee status of unaccompanied minors in general, although reference is made to UNHCR's own guidelines. Australia's own body of domestic laws, which incorporates some of the elements of the Convention of the Rights of the Child provides for the rights of children in Australia, regardless of their status. In December 2002, the Migration Series Instruction (MIS) 370 was issued to provide a framework by which immigration officers discharge the duty of care for unaccompanied minors in detention. Under MIS 370, immigration officers are to prioritize the protection visa application of unaccompanied minor in detention to ensure that their protection claims are resolved. MIS 370 also instructs immigration officers to appoint service providers to the unaccompanied minors in detention to assist them in their application for protection visas. Unaccompanied minors are not exempt from any mandatory detention of unauthorized arrivals, although Regulations allows for their release. MIS 370 mentions that it would be usually in the best interest of unaccompanied minors to be transferred to an alternative place of detention in the community or, if eligible, to be released on a bridging visa as soon as possible. Children of refugees, whether recognized on-shore or resettled in Australia, are considered to be refugees as well. Nevertheless, difficulties have arisen in family reunification where a child of a refugee has been left in the country of origin. Lacking recognition of refugee status, such children are not entitled to funding assistance for travel and reception services.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>UNHCR RO has intervened on a few of cases in 2002 where asylum-seeker women were not given a separate interview by a female officer and have not raised material elements of sexual assault in their asylum claim as a consequence. In April 2002, the High Court upheld a decision of the Refugee Review Tribunal to grant asylum to a Pakistani woman who fled her home to escape beatings by her husband and family. The High Court stated that the persecution and abuse was because she was a woman, which was a particular social group. The woman claimed that refusal by the Pakistani police to intervene was part of systematic discrimination against women which was tolerated and sanctioned by the state. Government lawyers argued her treatment stemmed from personal factors related to her marriage.</p>
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	<p>Once granted protection visas, refugee children are registered in the same way as other permanent residents and become entitled to the same rights, including access to education and health care. Children in detention pending a determination of their status are provided with basic education, although this can not be said to meet Australian standards.</p>
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	A major public issue in Australia over the last three years has been the mandatory detention of children who arrive without the documentation required by Australian authorities. The Minister of Immigration has tabled information in Parliament showing there were 120 children in detention centers at 13 December 2002, with a further 24 in other places of detention such as private apartments or foster care. He provided no information on those held in Nauru and Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. The Minister said that the average period of detention for the children was one year, three months and 17 days. The longest a child has been detained was five years, five months and 20 days. The Minister said that at that moment there were 79 children in detention under the age of 12. Australia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.
Bangladesh	Separation	No unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Bangladesh came to the attention of the Office in 2002. In the refugee camps, only 25 minors are known as unaccompanied minors, however, all had foster parents and/or guardians and were well taken care of. UNHCR has undertaken to review the list of unaccompanied minors together with the Community Services Assistants. This is to ensure that no unaccompanied minor is returned without a guardian or foster parents to Myanmar. Unaccompanied children or children separated from their parents are normally provided with care and emotional support by their relatives or family friends. During pre-repatriation interviews with refugee individuals/families, particular attention is paid to unaccompanied minors at the departure point and UNHCR liaises with Field Office Maungdaw to ensure these children are well received.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	A few allegations of sexual harassment were investigated and necessary police or administrative actions were taken against the perpetrators. There remains a common practice amongst refugees to arrange marriages of boys and girls, particularly, who are at the ages of 14-16 years, thus violating the local minimum age requirement of 18 years. Human trafficking is another concern, as there were reports of human trafficking from the camps. Three girls were missing, two of them escaped from the traffickers and one returned to the camp after working for a while as a domestic help.
	Military recruitment	There have been no reports of forced recruitment of refugee children

(continued)	Education	There were 14 schools operational in two camps. Basic school supplies were provided including sets of textbooks with a Myanmar curriculum. The number of total enrolled students in December 2002 was 4,554, an increase by 4.42 per cent. The enrolment of girls was 45.72 per cent among the students which was also an increase by 5.95 per cent. To improve the quality of education, training for refugee teachers was organized by implementing partners in both camps. A total number of 19 urban refugee children were provided with assistance for their primary and secondary education in private English medium schools. Tuition fees, books, uniforms, examination fees and school supplies were funded by UNHCR. 13 refugees were given the opportunity to attend different skill development training and 1 Somali medical student received a monthly subsistence allowance.
	Adolescents	An Adult and adolescent education programme was introduced in both camps during the year but it was discontinued in Nayapara from May 2001, because of the prevailing tense situation in the camp after abandonment of 3 refugee children by their parents.
	Other	In both camps, a number of awareness raising sessions on STD, HIV/AIDS, personal and environmental hygiene, domestic and sexual gender based violence and video programmes were organized for refugee women and men, boys and girls by the Community Service Assistants with the close supervision of the UNHCR protection team. Bangladesh is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Cambodia	Separation	The issue of unaccompanied children is rare in Cambodia, since all refugee children, except for two cases, are living with their families. As for the two cases of unaccompanied children, both cases are pending resettlement to the US based on family reunification. As for the Montagnard child, he has been placed with a Montagnard foster family who will travel to the US for resettlement. As for the other case, a Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) social worker has been involved with the case and the child has been attending school pending his departure to the US.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were no reports of rape or other physical assault against children or female refugees or asylum seekers. This does not mean that it could not have occurred, but LO Phnom Penh feels confident that such incidents would have come to the notice of the social worker of the JRS who knows all the refugees and who carries out home visits on a routine basis.
	Military recruitment	The issue of children involved in armed conflict is not applicable.
	Education	Education remained a UNHCR priority, as language difficulties have proven to constitute a barrier to public education. Most of the urban refugee children attend English courses at private institutions, which do not include regular primary and secondary curricula.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Families with small children have been given additional milk rations. Mothers and infants have been taken to postnatal check-ups and all children have been provided with the necessary vaccinations prior to their departure to the US. Cambodia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.
China	Separation	In 2002, the RO was approached by one 13 year old unaccompanied minor boy from Sri Lanka. The Chinese's authorities decided not to detain him, although he had no identity papers and entered the country illegally. The RO decided to submit a resettlement application to Canada, as the boy was supported by an uncle who is living in Canada. There are no legal or administrative provisions referring to reunification of refugee families in China, and no family members of refugees in China have been authorized to enter on family reunion grounds.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	A challenge for UNHCR is to obtain access to education for urban refugee children. Children of school age are assisted by UNHCR to attend primary and lower secondary school. They now have access to ordinary Chinese schools, with high foreigners' fees, but they are facing difficulties with the language, and the UNHCR has to pay even higher entrance fees for them to attend international schools.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Indochinese refugee children born in China are registered by the local authorities where they are settled. The parents are provided with a birth certificate. For urban refugees, a birth certificate is also issued by the hospital. Refugee children born in China maintain the nationality of origin of their parents. China is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

India	Separation	Two Afghan unaccompanied minors were reunited with their mother, who was in Pakistan and about to be resettled in Canada, through resettlement undertaken in coordination with UNHCR Islamabad. Two minor Somali boys were taken care of by their aunt, who was soon to be resettled. Therefore, efforts were made to identify a Somali refugee who was willing to be a guardian for the boys. Another concern was an Afghan family of 5 children who had been abandoned by their father after the mother had died in an accident. The children were taken care of by their cousin who himself was only 19 years old. Given their vulnerability, the family was assisted by UNHCR's implementing partner. The office in Chennai assisted a Sri Lankan refugee who had come from the UK to secure her minor daughter who was in the custody of a Sri Lankan family.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Cases of domestic violence are interviewed, counseled and assisted in filing a complaint to the police if appropriate. Refugee women who claim to have been physically mistreated are assisted with supportive counseling and financially as deemed appropriate. Such cases are closely monitored in collaboration with the NGO partner. UNHCR officers or implementing partners have been trained by the legal unit staff to accompany refugees to police stations to assist in mediating on behalf of the refugees and to ensure that due attention is paid to the case. Throughout the reporting period, few cases of domestic violence were reported and none on sexual gender-based violence.
	Military recruitment	Due to the nature of the refugee situation in India and the limited access of UNHCR to refugee groups in areas affected by armed conflict as well as the sensitivity of the matter, OCM was not able to neither monitor the situation nor facilitate the implementation of the recommendations.
	Education	Refugees have equal access to education as the local population. However, refugees generally do not favor their children going to government schools which they perceive as ill equipped and sub-standard, thus many, as long as they can afford it, put their children in private schools where English is taught. Through its implementing partner, the YMCA, UNHCR provides assistance at government rates in the form of payment for fees, uniforms and scholastic materials up to grade 10. Admission to government schools is based on the area in which the refugee family resides, and there were reports that in some areas, particularly in South Delhi area, some local schools were reluctant to admit refugee children. A significant proportion of schooling children were overage in relation to the grade/standard and sought to address this. OCM initiated a plan to assist a maximum 200 meritorious students in higher grades of grade 11 and 12 to improve their educational qualifications so as to gain access to higher education.

(continued)	Adolescents	The implementing partner in charge of health, VHAD, also made special efforts to address issues of women and children. One of their ongoing activities was to make available motherhood care and closely monitor the pregnant women in the pre and post natal phase and after the delivery provide post natal care to the mother and child. Doctors also conducted health education classes for lactating mothers, would-be mothers, and adolescent girls. Pregnant women and lactating mothers were supported with supplementary diet assistance where necessary if they were diagnosed to be in need of it.
	Other	VHAD assisted 105 children with Hepatitis B vaccination and initiated the screening and assessing of all children between the ages 0-5 for the immunization programme. YMCA organized summer camps in where a total of 120 participated. Refugee children were taught handicrafts and other arts like drawing, painting and singing. Competitions were held to encourage drawing, sketching, painting, essay writing and debating skills. They were also taken for educational trips. India acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Indonesia	Separation	By 2002, 4323 cases of separation had already been registered by UNHCR and its implementing partner, the International Rescue Committee. The majority of the pending cases as per December 2002 were still living in refugee camps in West Timor. Because of difficult socio-economic situations, refugees often hand-over their children to unknown organizations that often present themselves as charitable institutions eager to help refugees by promising them proper education and care of their children in other parts of Indonesia. Yayasan Hati in Java is one of such organizations and strongly opposed the return of the children to East Timor. To date, movements of children from West Timor to Central Java are still being reported. However, UNHCR together with the MFA of Indonesia accomplished a breakthrough in the negotiations with YH to let some of the children return to their families. Communication between children and parents was prioritized and became ongoing in 2002. At the end of 2002, UNHCR had a remaining 819 cases of separated East Timorese children registered in its database. The majority of these children were still living in West Timor (357) and East Timor (162), with increasing numbers in Central Java (65), East Java (59), West Java (50) and Sulawesi (31).

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	RO Jakarta has faced the constraint of security phase 5 in West Timor. This has prevented the office from implementing an effective strategy for protection/security concerns (including SGBV), which have arisen in the refugee camp setting in West Timor. In the urban refugee setting, one of the recurrent security problems is the fact that refugees and asylum seekers are often accommodated in areas where drug trafficking and prostitution are rampant. Reported cases of domestic violence and child abuse among rejected asylum seekers under IOM care (as per the 2000 Interception Agreement between Australia, Indonesia and IOM) has lighted the need for UNHCR to take a proactive stance in this area. RO Jakarta has been engaged in raising awareness among implementing partners and government counterparts on SGBV. This process is only at an inception stage with the launch of the interagency Consultations on the Prevention of a Response to Sexual Violence held in Jakarta on 8-13 September 2002.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees in Indonesia are not allowed to work, nor do they have access to state education, except on the same basis as other foreigners with payment of appropriate school fees. In order to meet educational needs, UNHCR does provide assistance to refugee children to attend school, and has also provided English language classes and computer lessons for adults. A large proportion of urban refugee children do not attend school during their stay in Indonesia. Although UNHCR does provide assistance for this, most parents indicate that they do not wish to send their children to local schools where they will need to learn Indonesian. Refugees have also not positively responded to UNHCR requests to set up their own ad hoc school, although a number of them are qualified teachers. With respect to East Timorese separated children in Indonesia, education has been in many cases an obstacle to reunification with the children's parents in West Timor or Timor Leste. In the implementation of solutions, UNHCR found that education was generally lacking in the places of return as compared to the places of current residence of the children. Many times, this well-known fact was strongly put forward, sometimes manipulated, by the caretakers of the children, who, disregarding the wishes of the parents, fiercely rejected reunification as a durable solution.
	Adolescents	Approximately two thirds of separated East Timorese children in Indonesia are adolescents.

(continued)	Other	An overwhelming concern was the detention of children. In most cases, the problems were not severe as the asylum seekers, although in custody, enjoyed, more or less, freedom of movement. In some locations, however, the intercepted cases, particularly when they were in small groups, were detained in jails, and the children were also detained with their parents. In these cases, UNHCR tried to request the transfer of these asylum seekers to other locations, where they could successfully have better freedom of movement, or urged the authorities to give special treatment to the children. Indonesia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Japan	Separation	All asylum seekers irrespective of age are requested to file an individual application for refugee status. In practice, members of a family normally share a common result (recognition or rejection). Children under 20 who accompany refugee parent(s) are accorded the same status by authorities. No specific status determination procedure for unaccompanied minors exists, but there was no application of unaccompanied minors during the reporting period.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The 2001 US DoS report focused on the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation to Japan from the Philippines, Thailand and former Soviet republics. 91.6 per cent of foreigners from Asian countries were classified as "entertainers". Nevertheless, women from this group have not applied for asylum in a bid to stay when apprehended for illegal stay (passports of the trafficked women are usually confiscated by their "employers", leaving them unable to escape their circumstances). The MOJ has asserted that it tries to prevent discriminatory practices and human rights violations through guidelines and training to law enforcement officers. However, the report concludes that the "administrative mechanisms to address human rights violations are weak due to the small staff and limited investigative and enforcement power of the MOJ's Civil Liberties Bureau and as a result many cases end up in court.
	Military recruitment	No information available
	Education	Refugee children can have their education at regular public schools while waiting for decision in the RSD process, regardless of their parents' legal status, as many schools provide education to children of aliens even if they do not have a valid visa. The main problem over education is the lack of facilities for children who do not command Japanese. UNHCR has repeatedly pointed out this problem to the authorities, requesting that the facilities available to Indochinese be made available for other refugee children. The challenge for the near future may be the provision of such services in Shinagawa due to the variety of nationalities and languages that potentially would require basic education.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Japan changed its legislation in 1996 to allow an immigration status to foreign mothers who raise children of Japanese nationals. However, not much has been done to seriously implement Art. 7 of the CRC to ensure that children of foreign mothers have a nationality. There are not reliable figures as to the extent of the problem of children born of Japanese fathers and foreign mothers engaged in the so-called "entertainment business" who may have become stateless. Japan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Malaysia	Separation	A small number of young men, aged between 15 and 18 enter Malaysia alone, mainly from Myanmar. A cause of separation within Malaysia is the deportation process in which families can be split up and only part arrested, detained and deported
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Each year, women enter Malaysia to work in the sex trade, either voluntarily or trafficked. Many are from Vietnam or Cambodia, but a significant proportion is from Myanmar. None of these women has approached UNHCR. It is not known whether their numbers include girls. A major concern is underage marriage, especially among the Rohingyas who tend to marry girls shortly after puberty.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	The government of Malaysia is not granting primary education for refugee children or other children with illegal immigration status as they are afraid leniency could result in social problems. UNHCR Malaysia financially assists a limited number of refugee children to attend private kindergartens. However, the assistance on primary education was extremely difficult due to extraordinary high education cost at private international schools which are open for refugee children. The office also began efforts aimed at introducing a refugee education and awareness project for secondary school children.
	Adolescents	The caseload is predominantly adult male of working age (approximately 90% of asylum seekers). The proportion of children and youth is very low – approximately 5%. As with all “illegal immigrants”, adolescents are not able to enroll in school or vocational training. It is believed that many of them work in unskilled occupations such as construction labourers or garbage collector.
	Other	Malaysia has explicitly stated that it does not regard illegal children (children without Malaysian visa at arrival) as covered by the Child Convention, even if they should be refugees. The main problem for children of asylum seekers and refugees remains that their parents are considered illegal immigrants and are therefore afraid to go to the registry department to register the birth as they are subject to detention and deportation according to immigration legislation. Malaysia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Mongolia	Separation	Although there have been reports of refugee children among the North Korean cases, UNHCR has not access to them, except for one unaccompanied minor. The minor was assisted and counseled by UNHCR and later resettled to ROK where his relatives there were contacted.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	-
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Mongolia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Myanmar	Separation	UNHCR has established special measures for the reception and care of extremely vulnerable individuals, including unaccompanied minors, who return to Myanmar from Bangladesh. Among, the vulnerable individuals however, very few cases of unaccompanied children have been recorded since the inception of repatriation. Since the government of Myanmar accepted to receive affidavits for the return of separated family members, UNHCR staff in Bangladesh and Myanmar has been able to solve some of the few cases existing in the camps. Two cases of unaccompanied minors (5 children) repatriated to Myanmar in 2002 and regular visits continue to be conducted to ensure the smooth reintegration of these children.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR has identified and made interventions to address the needs of several cases of sexual abuse among the returnee population in Northern Rakhine State. These included counseling of the victims and their relatives, legal representation as well as health and income generation assistance.
	Military recruitment	To UNHCR's knowledge, the recruitment of child soldiers is not widespread among the Muslim population of Northern Rakhine State. Residents of Northern Rakhine State are not recognized as citizens of Myanmar and therefore are not recruited to serve in the armed forces.

(continued)	Education	The objectives of UNHCR's assistance in the education sector in 2001-2002 in Northern Rakhine State were: to bring more returnee children to school and reduce drop-out rates; to achieve a balanced number of male and female pupils in schools by promoting higher female enrolment and attendance; to reduce illiteracy especially amongst Muslim women; to promote the empowerment of girls and women through education and finally to facilitate access to vocational skills training for vulnerable individuals so as to provide more income generation opportunities. UNHCR provided basic Myanmar language classes for 11,000 vulnerable returnees and individuals in the host community, who only speak a dialect of Bengali. 70% of the beneficiaries were women. UNHCR also provided vocational skills training to vulnerable adults among the returnee and local population. 85% of them were women. Since 2002, 2500 children, including returnees and vulnerable children among the local community, aged between 5 and 13, received an intensive Myanmar language course to enable them to integrate regular schools.
	Adolescents	The Muslim residents of Northern Rakhine State tend to marry at puberty, which is contrary to the minimum age for marriage fixed by the local authorities (18 years). There is no nationwide legislation regulating the age for marriage in Myanmar. To avoid the multiplication of illegal marriages leading in turn to unregistered births, UNHCR sensitizes both men and women to a host of issues relating to the age of marriage. The psycho-social and health consequences of premature pregnancy were disseminated through Community Services Centers and meetings. In the meantime, UNHCR intervened for the regularization of unregistered children with the authorities.
	Other	The Muslim residents of Northern Rakhine State tend to marry at puberty, which is contrary to the minimum age for marriage fixed by the local authorities (18 years). There is no nationwide legislation regulating the age for marriage in Myanmar. To avoid the multiplication of illegal marriages leading in turn to unregistered births, UNHCR sensitizes both men and women to a host of issues relating to the age of marriage. The related psycho-social and health consequences in particular are disseminated through Community Services Centers and meetings. In the meantime, UNHCR intervenes for the regularization of unregistered children with authorities. Myanmar acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Nepal	Separation	No unaccompanied minors of other nationalities approached the BO. One single Sri Lankan female refugee with a child is being assisted financially. Another Sri Lankan family with three children is being assisted financially as well by the Branch Office. BO has, whenever approached, facilitated family reunification requests from Tibetan refugees in Nepal, mainly reuniting with their families in the United States.

<p>(continued)</p>	<p>Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence</p>	<p>Sexual and gender based violence against refugee women and children emerged as a major protection in the last quarter of 2002. In the camps, cases of rape or attempted sexual assaults, harassment, polygamy and child marriage against refugee women, including refugee girls, were reported. In an attempt to reinforce SGBV prevention activities, UNHCR-supported awareness and advocacy activities were carried out by several actors, including the refugees themselves through the Refugee Women’s Forum, Children’s Forum etc. Because of their apparent overlap with extra-marital affairs between the alleged victims and alleged offenders and unsubstantiated claims, some of the claims needed to be investigated further. SO and BO compiled a report on a variety of problems including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in the camps and forwarded it to the BAP seeking advice and support. Subsequently, in mid-October 2002, an Investigation Team from the Inspector General’s Office conducted an investigation in all seven camps with a particular focus on the incidents of SGBV against female refugees, including children. The Team reported a total of 47 cases in which 10 refugee teachers, one refugee health worker, one refugee sanitation volunteer and two Nepali Government officials were reported to have been involved. The cases of sexual and gender-based violence against refugee women received both national and international press coverage. In mid-November 2002 a Support Team from Headquarters composed of seven international staff including an Officer in Charge in Kathmandu, a PI officer, three senior protection officers and two community services officer from SCF Norway, subsequently came to Nepal to implement the recommendations made by the Investigation Team. In line with the recommendation of the Investigation team, UNHCR Nepal and the support team immediately took a number of initiatives with a view to respond to and prevent further SGBV incidents and at the same time provide support to the victims and their families. UNHCR has re-established a permanent presence in all seven camps and put in place a proper reporting mechanism of the SGBV related incidents. All identified victims of abuses have been met and their needs for specialized counseling, medical care, legal aid, relocation, security and material assistance have been assessed and have been met. UNHCR intervened strongly with implementing partners whose staff (refugee incentive workers) have been involved as perpetrators in SGBV related incidents to obtained the immediate dismissal of the persons concerned after proper investigation into the allegations had been conducted. Further, UNHCR requested that implementing partners take necessary steps to ensure that dismissed refugee</p>
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(continued)		<p>incentive workers will not be hired by other agencies working in the camps. UNHCR has also actively sought His Majesty's Government of Nepal's support at all levels to ensure that alleged perpetrators, including two government officials, are brought to justice. UNHCR has also initiated the revision of the camp rules and camp management guidelines jointly drawn up by the government, UNHCR, implementing partners and representatives of the camp community. The objectives is that the new guidelines should reflect the changes being put in place such as referral and reporting mechanism, as well as accountability for failure in the performance of assigned functions. Wide ranging awareness and advocacy activities have been carried out in camps targeting women, children as well as agency staff on the aspects of SGBV and contemporary national laws pertaining to SGBV. UNHCR has reached an agreement with the Nepal Bar Association, Jhapa Unit, to assist the refugee victims who wish to prosecute their case in the Nepalese court through legal counseling and legal representation. Legal counseling for alleged perpetrators who may have been wrongly accused and who are refugees will also be provided within the framework of this agreement. A comprehensive action plan has been drawn to address all aspects of SGBV and other social issues of concern such as prostitution, trafficking, alcoholism and corrective measures in these areas will be further intensified in collaboration with UNICEF and ILO during the course of the year 2003.</p>
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	<p>It is unclear whether or not refugees are legally entitled to enroll in public primary schools in Nepal against the fact that refugees are admitted as "foreigners" in the public or private higher education institutions. In any case, enrolment in Nepalese primary or secondary public schools is not commonly sought after by refugees due to comparatively lower standards in local public institutions vis-à-vis the quality upheld in the camp schools which are run by regularly trained refugee teachers under a modified Bhutanese curriculum. Furthermore, some well to do refugee families manage to send their children to local English boarding schools. All registered child refugees, without distinction, have access to the primary and secondary educational facilities, up to grade 10, in the camp. As of 31 December 2002, a total of 39,870 students, of whom 19,315 girls and 20,555 boys, were enrolled in the schools managed by CARITAS. Of those students, a total of 5050 students (1844 girls and 3206 boys) were enrolled in secondary schools (Grades 9 and 10) that are financed exclusively by CARITAS. There continued to be a higher dropout rate of female students in the later Grades, partly due to early marriage and "elopement" taking place from the camps. Two students (both male), who enrolled in higher education in 1998 under the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative, continued with their studies during 2002, while one graduated as a medical doctor and is now employed in this capacity with a renowned NGO in Kathmandu. No other scholarships were provided during the reporting period.</p>

(continued)	Adolescents	An awareness and behavior change intervention programme, funded through specific earmarked contributions made available under the Ted Turner/UNF, for the prevention of STD/HIV/AIDS among adolescents and young Bhutanese refugee was started in April 2002 and is continuing. The target group for this programme comprises adolescents, youths including dropouts from school, pregnant women, STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) patients and their partners.
	Other	The Refugee Women Focal Points have estimated that 10-15 women have disappeared from each camp. It has been stated that the forced idleness of girls and women make them extremely vulnerable to approaches by traffickers and pimps. However, not all reported disappearances are cases of trafficking, as there have been several reports of women eloping from the camps to get married with locals. UNHCR held consultative meetings with ILO and UNICEF to outline possible areas of co-operation to address issues of child abuse, trafficking of women and girls, prevention of prostitution and training in SGBV, as well as examining the local NGO capacity regarding anti-trafficking activities. UNHCR intends to examine the issue of possible trafficking of women and children as a matter of priority in 2003. Refugee women have stated that the absence of a legally registered marriage in the refugee community encourages harmful practices such as child marriages, marriage through elopement or polygamy. This matter that has been raised with the National Unit for the Coordination of Refugee Assistance in the Ministry of Home (NUCRA) in Kathmandu to issue some government certification for legal and future purposes will have to be followed up in 2003. Nepal is a party to the <i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i> (CRC) and a <i>Children's Act</i> was enacted in 1991. In 2000, Nepal signed the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
New Zealand	Separation	No specific refugee status determination procedures have been established for unaccompanied children, for which there has thus far not been a specific need in New Zealand. The Immigration Amendment Act 1999 has however introduced provisions, which ensure the representation of unaccompanied minors in immigration matters by a responsible adult, including in the case of a possible claim for refugee status. These provisions and the available services were successfully put to the test following the decision of the government to accept 36 unaccompanied minors as part of the group of 131 Afghan asylum seekers transferred to New Zealand from Nauru at the end of 2001.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	New Zealand has to date had a relatively small number of gender-based refugee claims, including cases involving domestic violence.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	All children of asylum seekers who are of primary to secondary school age are given student visas and are thus allowed to attend school, pending the outcome of the parents' refugee status application. Refugee children spend their first 6 weeks together with their family at a centre, where they are provided basic education in English and, when necessary, counseling. Resettled refugee families are given permanent residence immediately upon arrival, and the children are thus eligible to attend public schools as soon as they leave the Centre. There are some serious concerns about the long-term educational success of many refugee students, in particular for older students who lack or have limited first language literacy. Furthermore schools find it difficult to accommodate children with little or no prior formal education, and limited knowledge of English, and are therefore known to have sought bureaucratic means to exclude them. Five Refugee Education Coordinators (former refugees) have been based in the Ministry of Education offices to assist refugees in gaining access to ongoing education in the community.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	All children born in New Zealand, regardless of the nationality or immigration status of the parents, obtain New Zealand citizenship by birth. In order to be eligible for New Zealand citizenship through naturalization, however, one has to be 18 years old. New Zealand is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Papua New Guinea	Separation	The extended family networks within Melanesian culture provide a vital reinforcement for care of refugee children, particularly when one or both biological parents are absent. Because the great majority of Irian Jayan refugees in PNG were established in the country for many years, concerns of refugee children that are exacerbated by mass influxes or emergency situations are generally absent. There is no significant number of unaccompanied minors. To the knowledge of RO Canberra there are no unaccompanied minor refugees or asylum seekers in the Solomon Islands or the South Pacific.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	-
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	The issue of refugee children has been widely discussed in Fiji at the October workshop on refugee legislation. UNHCR materials on the protection of children was distributed to participants and general principles from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as they relate to refugee and asylum seeker children, were explained. Papua New Guinea is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Philippines	Separation	There are no special procedures applicable to unaccompanied and separated children. Measures and recommendations to address this were discussed with the government.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were no reports or complaints of sexual exploitation or abuse among refugee and asylum children by humanitarian or state representatives. UNHCR has raised the subject on SGBV in meetings, trainings and briefing sessions with the government and its NGO partner.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugees receive the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to primary and secondary education. Refugee children enrolled in primary and secondary public schools are likewise exempted from the payment of tuition fees under existing laws. There were no reported difficulties in relation to access to primary and secondary education among refugee children. UNHCR provides educational assistance to refugee children enrolled in public primary schools and monitors their educational status.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	The psychosocial and educational status of refugee children is monitored by UNHCR through its NGO implementing partner providing assistance to urban refugee caseload. The Philippines are a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Sri Lanka	Separation	There were no unaccompanied refugee children in Sri Lanka.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were no reported incidents of physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or other abusive or exploitative behavior directed at refugee children. Violence against IDP women in a Sri Lankan context includes harassment at checkpoints and an unknown number of cases of rape, torture, and other human rights violations. Their mobility and thus ability to work outside their homes is severely curtailed due to fear of body searches and similar forms of harassment. Mothers are afraid for their daughters' safety and often tend to confine them to the home or to the centre. Indications suggest that incidental of rape and other violence against women increased during 2001, although many such cases, even of domestic violence often go unreported. This is mainly due to fears along with cultural/societal norms which often hold women back from reporting such incidents. FO Vavuniya established a sex and gender-based violence unit in August 2002. In 2002, a total of 14 cases were reported. In one of the cases, a Sri Lankan police officer was arrested for the alleged rape of a minor. FO Vavuniya's SGBV unit follows cases to ensure that these cases are prosecuted by the GoSL officials.
	Military recruitment	UNHCR continued its efforts to provide for the safety of IDP children, especially with regard to the practice of recruitment and retention of children under the age of 18 by the LTTE during 2002. The LTTE has been engaged in the active recruitment of children to act as soldiers. In an effort to combat underage recruitment, UNHCR joined hands with UNICEF and the HRC to form a tripartite working group to address women and children in armed conflict. In this working group it was agreed to supply UNICEF with information regarding all underage recruitment cases reported to them. UNICEF agreed to present these cases to the LTTE leadership in Kilinochchi and to argue for the release of underage recruitment. From this tripartite working group, over 600 complaints of underage recruitment were listed by the end of 2002. Unfortunately, release of underage recruits by the LTTE was minimal, did not include children known to UNHCR/UNICEF and was only for recruits who had been in the LTTE for a short period of time.
	Education	Refugee children are not admitted to national schools in Sri Lanka and therefore pupils have to enroll in private (international) schools. For children with inadequate English knowledge, UNHCR has, in cooperation with one international school, arranged for English classes to better prepare them to adjust once entrance is gained to one of the schools. UNHCR works closely with UNICEF on the protection of children including a joint project designed to monitor and minimize child recruitment, including full access to schools and the community to investigate such cases.

(continued)	Adolescents	-
	Other	FO Jaffna received 2 cases of juveniles in detention during 2002. FO Jaffna contacted the Jaffna LAF office in Jaffna for immediate retention of legal counsel and counsel and UNHCR made visits to the prison prior to the children being released. UNHCR FO Jaffna and Save the Children intervened in a case involving physical assault on a child by police forces while the child was detained. Sri Lanka is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Timor-Leste	Separation	Since November 1999, UNHCR has endeavored to reunite separated children with their parents or find other durable solutions in the best interest of the child. In 2002, 4,323 separated children had been registered, of whom 2,131 had been reunited with their parents, and 1,373 cases had been closed for other reasons. At the end of 2002, 819 cases remained open: 162 in East Timor, 357 in West Timor and 300 elsewhere in Indonesia. UNHCR is particularly concerned about the need to find a solution for the 819 East Timorese children who remain separated from their families. Most of them are under the care of families and institutions in Indonesia. In some cases Muslim missionaries approached poor families in the remote districts of East Timor to give their children away for education in Islamic boarding schools before and during 1999. During the 1999 crisis many children were taken further away to other islands of Indonesia without the permission of the parents, and the contact with their children was in occasions intentionally interrupted. UNHCR was not able to have free access to the children without the presence of the caretakers and efforts to take back children to their parents in East Timor were manipulated.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR implemented two sub-projects to deal with the issues of women empowerment through economic independence, social support and psychosocial assistance. The programme was to assist women who were victims of the 1999 violence. UNHCR had two implementing partners, i.e. FOKUPERS and ETWAVE, both national NGOs, to implement the safe houses for gender violence victims, counselling for children and women, and finally economic assistance mainly to female victims of the 1999 violence.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Once separated children are reunified with their families they often return to a very poor environment in remote areas. In some cases the children were depressed upon their return, and they were worried about their future education. UNHCR worked with the Church to accommodate these children in boarding schools and further efforts will be undertaken with the Secretary of State for Labor and Solidarity to guarantee access for these children to secondary and vocational schooling. UNHCR also worked with PRADET a local NGO that provides psychosocial counselling.
	Adolescents	Approximately two thirds of separated East Timorese children still in Indonesia are adolescents.
	Other	Timor-Leste is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
Thailand	Separation	There were 1,535 identified and registered separated children in the camps that need their situation monitored and require tracing support. The refugee children may live in the camps with an extended family member and may thus be "accompanied", but the child may still face risks similar to those faced by unaccompanied refugee children. To ensure that all children in need receive protection; UNHCR has adopted a broader concept of "separated" child.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Refugee Myanmar women are considered more vulnerable than Thai nationals with regard to trafficking and prostitution, as they are, in the vast majority, residing in Thailand illegally. Women residing in refugee settlements camps are less vulnerable than women living on their own in urban areas where it often occurs that they are lured or forcibly sold into prostitution. Cases of physical/sexual abuse were known to have occurred in camps, but refugee committees tended to deal with them according to their own justice system, especially when refugees themselves were involved. UNHCR has commenced a program of action under the umbrella concept of SGBV, which consists of setting up prevention and response systems. Prevention is achieved through raising awareness in the community. Refugee women's organizations in the camps have tried to establish an institutional system that is effective in the prevention and response to SGBV issues, but these efforts yielded limited results in part because of the hindering effect of very resistant male-dominated camp leadership.

(continued)	Military recruitment	Minors were known to participate in the warfare inside Myanmar, either recruited by SPDC or rebel groups. Report has it that child soldiers in the KNNP may amount as many as 25 per cent of the entire armed forces and there are a number of indications that military elements and related activities do exist in the camps. In January 2002, over 400 youth from Umpium camp were taken out of the refugee camp and transported to Myanmar to participate in the KNU's Revolutionary Day Ceremony. In September 2002, a 17 year old Karen refugee in Tham Hin camp was reportedly killed in Myanmar while on service for the KNLA. It was agreed during the 2002 Annual Field Office Retreat that field offices would continue to monitor the situation in their respective areas and report on their assessments of possible threats to the camps. In cases where refugee security is deemed to be at risk by such activities, appropriate interventions should be made and the relevant authorities notified.
	Education	Refugees wishing to study at their free choices are hampered by the fact that legal status in Thailand is a prerequisite for admission to a study programme in any education facility. At the refugee camps at the border, primary and secondary education are provided at schools run by the refugees themselves, with minimal "logistical;" help from NGO's. In 2002, UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie visited Tham Hin camp and pledged US\$ 100,000 towards vocational and educational training activities that would benefit the refugee population and host community. With regard to the urban caseload, throughout 2002 UNHCR actively coordinated with Thai public schools to give refugee children access to local education. The majority of the refugee children are enrolled at the kindergarten, primary and secondary levels in both public and private schools. The tuition fees and other related expenses are covered by UNHCR. Refugees accepted to institutions of higher learning may apply to UNHCR for a DAFI scholarship. Myanmar children in Bangkok still had no access to education during 2002. BRC will provide non-formal education to newly recognized refugee children awaiting enrolment.
	Adolescents	In camps the activities organized by refugees with support of UNHCR and NGO's, focused on cultural and social aspects with special attention to children and youths. The activities included exhibition, musical and traditional performance, games and sport competitions, painting and card-making competitions.

(continued)	Other	Several ARC trainings were given and continued support for the ARC workshops is anticipated. Further, many refugee children repeatedly left camps to find work in local factories, as laborers or maids in order to help parents to complement basic food rations and to purchase items that are not supplied by NGOs. There were reports from Rebury that some of them did not get their salaries, and some did not return to camps within expected timeframe, or were retained by their employers. Special concern was given to minor female refugees, whose age ranged between 12 and 16. Some problematic cases could be solved through the services of women rights' NGO and cooperation from the authorities to prevent villagers from recruiting children from camps. Many refugees generally remained silent on the subject for fear of retaliation and to secure their source of income. Thailand acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Vietnam	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Amongst 1,000 Cambodian refugee children living in four camps in the south of Vietnam, only half of them could go to primary school and very few could go to higher education. This is due to the fact that there is no specific school for refugees and thus refugee children who want to go to school have to enroll in local schools together with other local children. Furthermore, since the refugees have Chinese backgrounds, their children just want to learn Chinese at home and prefer not to go to local schools.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	LO Hanoi could not do much on capacity-building activities since the budget was cut to only US\$ 6,000 which was just enough to organize one workshop on the Action for the Rights of Children in 2002. Vietnam is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

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Afghanistan	Separation	In 2002 one of the major concerns of UNHCR's repatriation programme has been the deportation of unaccompanied minors from Iran. During July to December 2002 a total of 608 such children, comprising 595 boys and 13 girls were deported. Of this number, 68 per cent were aged between 15 and 18 years and among whom the majority had been sent to Iran by family members to work and return remittances to needy families. As ICRC and UNICEF have no family tracing or unaccompanied minors program, there was justification for UNHCR to initiate these activities and to consider alternatives such as the placement of children in foster care. For deportee children with parents in Iran, efforts have concentrated on establishing contact with their parents in Iran; efforts have concentrated on establishing contact with their parents. In collaboration with NGO partners, escorted transportation has been provided for children being reunified with parents or relatives. UNHCR Herat has also established contacts with UNHCR Iran on this matter and a number of positive cases of reunifying children with their families were achieved.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Cultural values limiting equitable opportunities for girls, as for women, continue to be typical in many areas of the country, particularly in Pashtun areas. Among the more serious received are those relating to marriage or promise of girls at a very young age (7 to 14 years). Reasons are very often due to poverty and these practices place girls at a high health risk as maternal mortality surveys show that many girls experience complications as a result of their young age. Reports of Afghan girls being abducted and trafficked to Pakistan for prostitution or for sale in marriage have been reported, although these reports continue to be difficult to verify. The absence of rule of law increases failure to disclose, because the retaliation against victims and their families or against informants is high. Further, severe beatings, rape and murder and unjustified divorce of women have reportedly been exerted by unidentified armed groups against young women in local communities. In certain districts local commanders have been accused of kidnapping girls walking to school. A number of individual cases were brought to the attention of UNHCR but for reasons of security and confidentiality cannot be elaborated upon.
	Military recruitment	Forced recruitment of youth in regular and militia groups continues to be seen within the different military groups. The practice is visible as these youngsters are often positioned at check-posts in the provinces. Many youth joined the armed forces, for economic reasons, and often as a result of peer pressure. A small number of reports were received of sexual exploitation of youths by military commanders. The most vulnerable in this regard are youths that are orphaned or originate from economically destitute families. In some areas of the country, some youngsters reportedly join military groups and enter such relationships seeking both economic security and social status.

(continued)	Education	While tremendous improvements have been noted in children's participation in education, substantial discrepancies and gender disparities persist in access to education for all. There is a need to encourage parents to educate the girl child, to provide inclusive or specialized education for the physically or mentally disadvantaged and to gain recognition of education as a tool to knowledge rather than an end in itself. Education must be perceived to have greater long-term benefit than immediate cash income from low-paid work, which is a major reason for school drop-out. The Back-To-School campaign by UNICEF produced both positive and negative results. Positive was that some three million children were enrolled in schools, of which 30 per cent were girls. Among the negative aspects were the fact that there were not enough classrooms and an acute shortage of teachers, especially in the rural areas.
	Adolescents	The widespread absence of livelihood security has caused or risks new migration of men and youth, leaving women and children susceptible to physical abuse and social vulnerability. Respect for human rights and dignity are undermined in specific locations by harassment of men, sexual and gender-based violence against women, and forcible recruitment of youth by both legal and illegal armed groups.
	Other	The problem of unexploded ordinance (UXO) continues to be one of the major causes of child disability. Children tending animals, collecting scrap metal for sale and playing in unsafe areas are most at risk. In addition to loss of limbs or disfigurement, disabled children face stigmatization and limited access to school and social services within the society. Disabled girls are at more of a disadvantage than boys, sometimes not receiving adequate or timely treatment. Understanding and addressing the rights of children were introduced to government officials and staff of UNHCR and Non-government implementing partners. Training on ' Action for the Rights of the Child' was implemented together with workshops on community mobilization by Save the Children Sweden in Kabul, Herat, Bamyán, Kandahar, Mazar and Parwan provinces. Afghanistan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.
Algeria	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	The majority of refugee children were located in four Tindouf camps. Children between the ages of 3 to 6 went to kindergarten schools while those between the ages of 6 to 12 went to primary schools. Although efforts have been made by the Western Saharan refugee authorities to have an indigenous educational system, the curriculum for the refugee children was similar to the Algerian system, and, in general, the educational level was considered quite low. UNHCR contributed to primary education by procuring and distributing stationary and toys.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	UNHCR constructed handicap centers for children in Awserd camp and Dakhla camp in order to strengthen the support given to this most vulnerable group of refugees in the camps. The centre has a capacity of 200 students and was very well received by the refugees. Algeria is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Egypt	Separation	UNHCR has seen a significant increase in the number of separated asylum-seeking children approaching the office. As a result, special operating procedures have been put in place and staff members designated to handle the different stages of the process that the children would go through in order to guarantee their priority treatment, protection, and assistance. The living conditions of the minor are evaluated in order to determine the need for a host family of the same ethnic group amongst the refugee population. Financial assistance is granted to the host family through UNHCR's implementing partner Caritas. The child stays with the host family until she/he reaches the age of 18 and a re-evaluation of the child's needs are made or a durable solution is identified. If the child's family members are still living in the country of origin or in a third country of asylum, attempts are made to reunite the family as soon as possible by tracing those relatives through ICRC, Save the Children, CEDAC and UNHCR's legal offices.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	As a result of their extremely precarious socio-economic conditions in Egypt while awaiting refugee status determination by UNHCR, it has been reported to UNHCR that some female refugee applicants have been exposed to various types of abuse by their employers. The victims do not take any legal action due to fear of reprisals and deportation. UNHCR has intervened several times on behalf of such cases but without any result.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	The education of refugee children continues to remain a top priority for UNHCR, as the country lacks educational facilities, with many schools having to operate three shifts per day. In the circumstances, UNHCR and its NGO implementing partner, Caritas, had to continue enrolling refugee children in private schools. Besides the financial constraints impacting on the UNHCR assistance program, access to private schools is also conditional on the passing of some exams aimed at evaluating the educational capacity/level of each refugee child. UNHCR has to cover the costs for such exams. Assistance is provided in the form of a yearly education grant to refugee children whose parents cannot afford meeting the registration/tuition costs.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	There is increasing evidence that refugee children in Egypt are forced to work in order to support their families, especially given UNHCR Cairo's inability to provide financial assistance for intermediate and secondary education. Refugee girls are in general more likely to be working from a young age given the relative ease with which they can obtain employment as domestic help, though without a work permit. Egypt is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Islamic Republic of Iran	Separation	It appears that further government restrictions on employment, and other increasing economic constraints have led to an increasing pattern, with children separated, left on their own or sent out to work on the streets. This is most noticeable in the Afghan community. At the same time UNHCR has had cases of unaccompanied minors who had no relatives in Iran. It is presumed that they were sent/sold by their families in Afghanistan, and brought into Iran by smugglers for various purposes, not least of which to be exploited as cheap labor. During the reporting period, UNHCR had cases of Afghan unaccompanied children arrested by the disciplinary forces and referred to UNHCR for assistance. UNHCR is not equipped to provide long term and durable assistance to such cases. The actions taken in 2002 included facilitating the repatriation of the children, making efforts to trace the families in Afghanistan and/or making special arrangements at the refugee camps, namely Torbat Jaam, where presently some 30 Afghan children are placed with families residing in the camp. The issue of refugee street children has not yet been developed into a concrete project.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Cases of sexual abuse and rape are sometimes referred to for assistance. However, due to the sensitivity of the issue, traditional restrictions and the lack of appropriate means, UNHCR is not always in the position to find a durable solution, except for providing financial assistance, limited counseling, and referral of cases to the Legal Committees for intervention with the relevant authorities, and in exceptional cases, referral of cases for resettlement.

(continued)	Military recruitment	-
	Education	School registration of refugee children went through waves of uncertainties in the past year. Over the summer of 2002 UNHCR increasingly received reports about problems in enrolling Afghan children in the Iranian schools. However, after a number of UNHCR interventions the enrolment was confirmed a few days before the school started when the government announced that documented children would be registered at Iranian schools. It is estimated that 200,000 Afghan and Iraqi children are registered at some 17,000 Iranian schools at primary and secondary level. Also it is estimated that close to 23,000 Afghan children are attending some 100 Afghan community based schools.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	As part of the assistance programme of the UNHCR Medical Referral Units 8,000 children were provided with life-saving medical and surgical treatment in 2002. UNHCR will continue through its Medical Referral Unit to cover the medical needs of the most vulnerable refugees in the country and provide treatment for 200 children suffering of cancer. Iran is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Israel	Separation	The government of Israel upholds the right to family reunification of spouses, minor children and dependents.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	Involvement of child refugees in armed conflict and compulsory child labor are not relevant issues
	Education	Refugee children in Israel have the same rights as children who are citizens of Israel. There are no difficulties in registering births or accessing education. UNHCR deals with special needs of children as they arise. Local NGO's also assist in implementing the rights of non-citizens in Israel.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Israel is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.

Jordan	Separation	During 2002 BO Amman registered 1776 children, 906 male and 870 female. 68 children were registered as unaccompanied minors, 51 males and 17 females. 22 unaccompanied minors were recognized as refugees under the UNHCR mandate. It was noted that despite the reduction of the registration during the year 2002, the number of unaccompanied minors remain similar to 2001. In Jordan, as well as in Iraq, the tradition of caring for unaccompanied children does not really exist. UNHCR has therefore encountered great difficulties in identifying foster families for unaccompanied minors even though foster families are assisted financially and the care arrangement is usually very limited in time. Frequently unaccompanied minors are placed under institutional care, such as orphanages or boarding schools, pending departure or a final decision on their cases.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There has been a concerning increase of violence reported against women and children in Jordan. Analysts relate the deterioration of the situation to increased poverty and lack of economic prospects. The Jordanian Penal Code, which does address assault, does not contain special provisions for domestic violence. In order to address the situation, the government has instituted a special Family Protection Unit in the Police Department. Alleged victims of violence can report to specially trained officers who are following up on the cases within the existing/regular system. The office observed an increase of female applicants claiming sexual abuse/harassment and rape by of (high-ranking) officials in the country of origin. Some cases are referred to a Consultant Psychologist in order to assist with the assessment of the trauma and to facilitate the evaluation of the credibility of the claims.
	Military recruitment	Iraqi children do frequently claim that they dropped out of school and were working in Iraq to avoid military services and/or to assist the family financially.
	Education	The Prime Minister's office issued a decree in 2000 instructing all educational institutions to enroll Iraqi students while waiving the requirement of the residence permit. The office is not aware of any obstacles for asylum seekers or refugee children to be enrolled in primary education. In order to encourage families to send all children to school, the office has linked the provision of assistance to recognized refugees to the fact that the children are enrolled in school. Further, unaccompanied or separated children who are assisted by UNHCR can benefit from institutionalized care including education.
	Adolescents	Adolescent unaccompanied minors are sometimes accommodated in hotels pending the identification of more suitable shelter. The well being of the children in all situations is closely monitored by the Community Services' staff. The section also carried out a survey under the refugee children which focused on the provision of adequate assistance.

(continued)	Other	One child was arrested and detained by the Jordanian Authorities in special sections for minors. UNHCR was given immediate access through the Residency and Border Department to assess the claims of the children. Upon the office's intervention the child has been released. Further, UNHCR is providing medical assistance to all refugees and identified vulnerable asylum seekers including children, through a government hospital in Jordan. Jordan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Kazakhstan	Separation	5 cases of unaccompanied minors were brought to the attention of LO Almaty. In 4 of the cases, the minors were separated from their parents while they were smuggled by human traffickers. One Iraqi female minor was abandoned by her alleged father. In these cases, LO Almaty liaised with the relevant authorities and UNHCR offices where their parents lodged their asylum claims and explore the possibility of family reunification. The Kazakhstani authorities possess no mechanism to deal with unaccompanied foreign minors and those minors who were found by the authorities are simply kept at a governmental detention center. Some minors are taken care of by their relatives who were tasked by their parents and are without any documents. Some of the caseload of Afghan orphans, children who were sent to study during the Soviet regime and became "stranded" after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, still remains in Kazakhstan. Over the past decade they have usually lost all contact with their families and generally their home country.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	The Office has focused on the right to education for refugee children since economic difficulties and severe winter weather are two common obstacles for many refugee children in Kazakhstan to receive education. Free access to local schools has been ensured for refugee children and asylum seekers. Through the Children's Fund of Kazakhstan (CFK), UNHCR Almaty has supported Afghan and Chechen refugee children, mainly in Almaty. UNHCR has assisted the CFK with the provision of a Sunday school for 15 Afghan children from 5 to 7 years old. With regard to Chechen refugee children, UNHCR has also been assisting the CFK with the provision of a Sunday school for 22 Chechen refugee children under 7 years old. This, coupled with free access to local schools, should ensure a two-folded access to education for refugee children, allowing them to integrate in the education system of the country of asylum as well as maintaining contact with their home language and culture.
	Adolescents	Universities provide access to adolescent refugees as citizens of Kazakhstan on a payment basis.

(continued)	Other	Refugee children born in Kazakhstan cannot receive birth certificates but only birth registration papers from hospitals. Among CIS states, presumably this registration paper is valid; however, refugee children from other countries might have problems in establishing facts concerning their birth if they return to their countries of origin. UNHCR Almaty also became aware of a number of children without birth registration, either because they were born at home or simply because their parents had not paid attention to their registration. These cases were brought to the attention of the authorities so that birth registrations could be obtained. Kazakhstan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Kyrgyzstan	Separation	UNHCR assisted a 13 year old unaccompanied minor to reunify with his family in Pakistan. The family was traced with the assistance of ICRC. UNHCR has provided on-job training for the officers of the Department of Migration Services (DMS) on UNHCR guidelines regarding unaccompanied minors as well as RSD procedures for unaccompanied minors and their compliance with international standards.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In some families of ethnic Kyrgyz refugees from Tajikistan, a daughter-in-law is subject to the worst kind of treatment, as she is not only completely subordinate to her husband, but also to all his relatives. They still preserve the Kyrgyz tradition of kidnapping and raping a bride without her consent, which forces her into marriage. Apart from one incident of domestic violence, there were no other incidents of SGBV against refugee women reported to UNHCR. The Legal Clinic provided social and legal counseling to the victim of domestic violence. As part of an integrated approach to SGBV prevention and response, UNHCR conducted meetings with direct beneficiaries in refugee communities to discuss their views and to educate them about their rights. Major emphasis was made on measures to be put in place that would mitigate possibilities of sexual exploitation of refugee women and girls. Regular meetings were conducted with all UNHCR staff and implementing partners to sensitize refugees about the issue. Field visits were made to major refugee locations in Kyrgyzstan to meet with female representatives of each refugee community, Tajik, Afghan and Chechen.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Legal guarantees for the right to obtain education are not provided to asylum seekers. In practice, access to schools and elementary schools is not free of charge for local children, nor refugee or asylum seeker children. Various "maintenance fees" are charged to allow the school to continue its operations. UNHCR provided extended education assistance to refugee children. The accelerated learning programme for primary and secondary education was promoted for Tajik refugee children living in rural areas. Many children had missed several years of school due to war in Tajikistan and could not join their peers in regular classes because of the gap in training. In 2002, 105 Afghan refugee children were educated in the Afghan primary/secondary school. Additional classes in Dari, English, dress-making for girls, computers and music were provided to 115 children through the Social Rehabilitation Centre for Afghan Refugee Women and Children. Vocational training was offered to 107 young refugees and tertiary education was promoted through the DAFI scholarship, funded by the German government.
	Adolescents	UNHCR, together with UNFPA, developed a project being implemented by the Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance on HIV/AIDS awareness, reproductive health, and family planning issues. A total of 1,480 refugee youth and adults were instructed in 2002, in addition to the 480 trained in 2001.
	Other	Currently, birth certificates are not issued to children of refugees and asylum seekers. In 2001, UNHCR and UNICEF sent a joint memorandum to the Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic expressing their concern over the fact that birth certificates are not issued to refugee children, children of asylum seekers, or to the other categories of children whose parents are foreign citizens, even though these children are born on Kyrgyz territory. The government retains its position that a birth certificate is an official document establishing citizenship of Kyrgyzstan and therefore, cannot be given to non-citizens unless the Law on Citizenship is amended. Kyrgyzstan acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols.
Lebanon	Separation	In 2001, UNHCR received applications for recognition of refugee status from some 37 unaccompanied minors. Because of their vulnerable status, the children are normally interviewed immediately upon application. On Iraqi minor has been recognized as a refugee, the remainder is rejected. UNHCR counsels rejected minors that it will facilitate return to their countries of origin and reunification with their families. To date, none of the minors have consented to return home and UNHCR has made clear that it cannot accept responsibility for their continued illegal presence in Lebanon. In 2002, two unaccompanied minors were recognized as refugees.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugee children are offered through MECC remedial courses soon after arrival to allow them to follow the regular classes in national schools. In July 2002, a summer camp in Maad was organized by MECC. 57 refugee children spent 10 days with the Child Trainers. These days included visits to touristic and archeological sites in the area. During 2002, RO Beirut assisted 452 refugee children to attend primary school and another 57 at the lower secondary level. Due to financial difficulties, RO Beirut was forced to stop assisting refugee children to attend secondary school at a higher level. An agreement, reached in 1998 with the Lebanese Ministry of Education, permitted them to attend public school based on availability of space.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Only Lebanese men may confer citizenship to their spouses and children. There are limited provisions under Lebanese law that permits the presumption of Lebanese nationality for children of unknown parents and for fatherless children of Lebanese women. They may apply for nationality upon reaching adulthood. Lebanon is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Morocco	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have the same rights as nationals with regard to education, i.e. all refugee children have access to free education, and can attend public schools without suffering any discrimination . In 2002 and 2003, approximately 60 refugee children were assisted.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	A new law on nationality and citizenship, confers to aliens (e.g. refugees) married to Moroccan citizens the right to apply for residence permit while their children can apply for Moroccan nationality upon reaching adulthood. Refugee children in Morocco are registered according to the civil status of the father and birth certifications are issued by the local authorities. The provisions of the new law on entry and sojourn of aliens and illegal immigration, aims to strengthen control measures along the borders to limit the increasing flux of illegal sub-Saharan immigrants. As most of asylum seekers enter Morocco illegally, such measures would likely impeach many of them to reach the office. Morocco is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Libya	Separation	The Office has not been successful in reunifying family members outside Libya due to certain embassies refusing to grant entry visas to refugees. This is mainly affecting the Palestinian refugees with family members residing in Egypt. For family members to be reunited in Libya there are no problems encountered. The Office tried to reunite three Sudanese refugee children with their father who was accepted as a refugee in Burkina Faso but currently residing in Ghana. Moreover, the Office tried to reunite six Iraqi children of two family members living in Denmark after being granted the humanitarian status but the Danish government refused to readmit the children, as they were over 18 years of age. UNHCR will pursue its efforts in 2003 to solve these problems.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No sexual exploitation, abuse and violence against refugees have been reported to the Office during the period
	Military recruitment	Involvement/recruitment of refugee children in armed conflicts is not relevant to the Office.
	Education	Refugee children are entitled to free primary and secondary education in the Libyan public schools. Palestinian and Arab speaking refugees have no problem in enrolling in public schools. However, because of the language barrier, African refugee children, had to attend non-Libyan schools, and faced the problem of having to cope with school fees and buy textbooks. In this connection, UNHCR supported the most needy refugee children to acquire school bags and other educational stationery. The Office often wrote to the concerned school and requested exemption or reduction of fees for the African refugee children. However, this was not always achievable.
	Adolescents	Refugee children are also, in principle, entitled to join free of charge the public secondary schools, subject to the local requirements.
	Other	UNHCR Tripoli planned to enlarge in 2002, the capacity of the clinic, established at the Somali compound, to cover wider medical services to medically needy refugee children. Unfortunately, the Office was not able to take such measures after the relocation operation was completed in October 2002. Since then, a new clinic was established in the new compound and managed by the IP, the Libyan Red Crescent. Libya acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Pakistan	Separation	Throughout 2002, a number of cases of unaccompanied minors came to UNHCR's attention and were referred to selected national NGO welfare institutions. The proposed project for the safe shelter had to be deferred due to funding constraints.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Tangible achievements were made with regard to the protection needs of women and children in the field. In the older camps in NWFP, Field Assistants helped sustain a field protection presence through its broad network of refugee social animators and Pakistani District Coordinators. The animators are trained to monitor, and seek active responses to incidents of SGBV such as rape, early marriage, forced marriage, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, child labor, land mine awareness and other women and children's rights issues.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	While school attendance is still regarded as the most effective initial means of ensuring protection to refugee children and youth, by shielding them from exploitative, such as child labor, attendance of Afghan children in primary schools remains below 50 per cent throughout Pakistan. The main constraint to access, affecting both boys and girls, being poverty the other being that of cultural and social taboos which continue to limit school attendance on the part of girls. UNHCR and its partners continuously seek to counter these taboos through recruitment of female teachers, facilitation and support of home-based schools. The Community Services and Education sectors both introduced non-formal education activities in order to complement formal schooling in the old camps of both provinces in the emergency phase. After a productive meeting of the protection staff with the Afghan Consulate on the issue of educational levy for all repatriating Afghan students, the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs finally accorded authorization for waiver of the validation fee on educational documents in August 2002.
	Adolescents	UNHCR also partially funded a Save the Children UK programme to ensure that children and youth's protection needs were monitored and appropriate recommendations for action were made. The basis of this programme implemented in NWFP was a Child Protection monitoring tool which had been developed by Save the Children Alliance partners during the emergency phase and which was implemented in one camp as a pilot project. UNHCR sought to have the tool and its "reflect-action" methodology of engaging children and youth in discussion groups leading to awareness raising, implemented throughout the new camps. In the older camps UNHCR's Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC) training continued to be utilized by SWC staff in order to detect child protection issues and the means to raise awareness amongst children and adults on children's rights as based on the Convention for the Rights of the Child.

(continued)	Other	Community services efforts on increasing involvement of the refugees in both refugee villages and urban communities in all assistance projects with the aim of increasing self reliance. Despite economic problems, refugees participated in increasing numbers, particularly women and girls, but also male adolescents. Pakistan is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Saudi-Arabia	Separation	As far as the procedures to deal with unaccompanied children are concerned, there were only a couple of such cases in the camp that were granted temporary asylum together with the rest of the Iraqis on "prima facie' basis. They were adopted by Iraqi families and resettled in a third country.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In Iraqi society, a minor girl can be given for marriage to an adult. UNHCR Rafha is trying its best to counsel refugees against such practice through social counseling but convincing parents is extremely difficult. The parents say that according to Islamic law, a girl can be married when she reaches puberty. The age of girls range between 12 to 16 years. Upon an initiative made by FO Rafha, the Camp Medical Center launched a Health Education Program for Refugee Women. This program is based on meetings held by a female doctor from the medical center during which she provides them with general health information and first aid. As in all traditional communities, it takes some time for members of the community to recognize the social and health problems emanating from marrying children.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children are enrolled at the different educational facilities provided by the government. There are two schools (up to secondary level) both for boys and girls staffed by refugee teachers using the Iraqi curricula. The total number of male students as of December 2002 stands at 739 while the number of female students is 668. There are 53 class rooms both for boys and girls equipped with air-conditioners. The camp management provides transportation to and from the school. However, advanced education after secondary school is not available. It is worth reporting that so far 518 students have graduated from the secondary schools in the camp, 422 male students and 96 female students.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	In Rafha camp, births take place in the camp hospital as well as in the camp where specialist female doctors as well as well-trained midwives attend the deliveries. UNHCR and IIRO (an NGO funded by the government) update birth records. Saudi Arabia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Syria	Separation	A number of refugee children who had separated from their families during the flight were counseled. Efforts were made to locate family members prior to initiating any resettlement action. Meantime, implementing partners were requested to provide special care and assistance. In some cases, resettlement on family reunification grounds was found to concur with the best interest of the child. The number of applications submitted by unaccompanied minors was very low. In case an unaccompanied minor was identified, in line with the standard operation procedures of the office they were processed for RSD on a fast track basis, and when the need arose, an immediate referral was made to implementing partners for assistance and care-taking.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In the country of operation we do not have any serious instances of sexual exploitation, abuse. However, in the claims made by asylum seekers from different nationalities such as Sudan, there are claims of sexual exploitation in their country of origin. Such cases are dealt in accordance to the relevant guidelines by the staff. .
	Military recruitment	In the country of operation there is no military recruitment of children taking place. The state is party to the CRC. However, asylum seekers from some countries like Sudan have in their claims indicated of being forced to serve in military organizations. Such cases during the refugee status determination stage are dealt in accordance to the relevant UNHCR guidelines.
	Education	The number of refugee children was 1,302 and they constituted about 44.6 per cent of the urban caseload in Syria. The office continued its assistance to school age refugee children to receive primary and secondary education. Similarly, the refugee children in El-Hol camp were recipients of UNHCR's assistance, which enabled them to pursue their education. The refugee students are enrolled in Syrian schools and are treated like Syrian students and as such, they do not pay registration fees. Through UNHCR's assistance program they receive educational aid consisting of uniforms, shoes, jackets, winter clothes and school supplies. The children who have not reached the school age are assisted by the Syrian Women Union (SWU) to attend kindergartens.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Syria is also faced with a large number of stateless persons, which are mostly Kurds who by operation of law remain stateless. A large number of Kurdish children become "Maktoumeen" or undocumented when one of the following conditions apply, namely if they are children of Syrian-born Kurdish foreigners who marry women who are Syrian citizens, if one of the parents is a foreigner and the other is a "Maktoum" or undocumented or if both parents are "Maktoumeen" or undocumented. Syria is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, acceded to the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Tajikistan	Separation	In March 2001, 55 persons were deported to Tajikistan from Uzbekistan. These people were all ethnic Uzbeks from mainly southern Tajikistan, who had left for Uzbekistan during 1992-1999. Local militia and security officials carried out the deportation from Uzbekistan allegedly for lack of legal status to live in Uzbekistan. According to the deportees, they were loaded from their residences aboard several trucks and taken to the Uzbek-Tajik border where they were released beyond the Uzbek territory. During embarkation, they were not allowed to collect their belongings; some even left their family members behind, including children who at that time were in school or at homes of friends or relatives. The deportees stranded on the border were assisted with food and non-food items, medical aid by international organizations including UNHCR, OSCE and MERLIN. By the end of May 2001, the people left the border area to go back (clandestinely) to Uzbekistan.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	While there were no reports of individual cases of sexual violence/abuse of women and children of concern to UNHCR during the reporting period, violence against women is a common occurrence, especially domestic violence. Public awareness and affirmative action by the government has only been recent, due to the issue being actively raised by a number of local NGOs and international organizations, resulting in various seminars and conferences throughout the country. An internal working group was established and separate meetings were held with, inter alia, UN agencies and OSCE, UNHCR implementing partners, NGO's, Afghan Refugee Committee and physiological counsellors working in the UNHCR/NRC training centre. A metal post box with a lock has been placed near the guard's room at the entrance of UNHCR where individuals can anonymously inform of such incidents.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugees have the right to education under the Refugee Law. Refugees can enroll into Tajik primary-secondary schools, specialized vocational schools and educational institutions. The Ministry of Education of Tajikistan closed the Afghan school Ariana last year due to invalid registration and is likely to do the same with "Istiqlal" for the same reasons. Istiqlal which has approximately 100 pupils was funded by Afghan Refugee parents and in an effort to legalize their status was encouraged by UNHCR to merge with the "Somoniyon" school. Thus, the only remaining Afghan school is the Somoniyon school with around 660 pupils, which is financed by UNHCR (rent for the building, salaries for teachers, materials, maintenance, and equipment). Also, additional courses are offered in the Refugee Social Centre, run by our Implementing Partner 'Refugee Children and Vulnerable Citizens' (RCVC), notably English and Computer Classes. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the civil war, the educational system broke down in Tajikistan. For this reason, a large number of qualified teachers had to leave Tajikistan or search other means of employment. Most of the schools that are operational lack the most basic teaching material. Refugees are facing the same difficulties, but are in a slightly better position than Tajik children of poor families, as their school (Somoni) is funded by UNHCR.
	Adolescents	The government of Tajikistan requested LO Dushanbe to provide financial assistance for the voluntary repatriation of Tajik refugees from Pakistan, mainly young students of madrasas who were sent to Pakistan as children from Afghanistan by their parents. Prior to the request the government had already assisted the return of 300 Tajiks from Pakistan by air and had depleted their funds for further airlifts. Following the UNHCR Dushanbe/Islamabad's assessment of the status of these individuals and interest of the Tajiks in Pakistan to repatriate, 256 Tajik refugees in three separate airlifts were assisted to repatriate.
	Other	Tajikistan acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols.
Tunisia	Separation	The Office knows no case of unaccompanied refugee children. No adoption of refugee children has ever taken place in the country to UNHCR's knowledge.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	The involvement of refugee children in armed conflict is of no relevance in the country.
	Education	In theory, refugee children, like foreign children are granted the same rights to education as Tunisian children. UNHCR facilitates the enrolment of the refugee children into public schools free of charge. For the pupils who do not have the required documentation (education records) or who came in Tunisia after the usual registration period, have not access to public schools. For these children UNHCR facilitates the enrolment into private schools.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	The financial and medical assistance granted to the refugees aims to cover the basic needs of the refugees so they are not considered to be a burden for the authorities. This minimum support should in particular avoid women to be exposed to prostitution or other forms of abuse and children to be forced to work rather than attending school. The limited assistance granted to some needy asylum seekers aimed at limiting the occurrences of irregular movements of desperate asylum seekers in search of better opportunities. Tunisia is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Turkmenistan	Separation	-
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In 2002, the Office conducted a workshop for its present and potential implementing partners where the issues of Sexual and Domestic Violence as well as the role of UNHCR to protect refugee women and prevent such cases were addressed. In light of the Human Rights Day Campaign "Help End of Violence Against Women", the office disseminated the Facts and Action Sheets among the participants, which were received from HQs, for analysis and making proposals. The Office took into consideration the received proposals while elaborating its plan of action for 2003. The Office planned a number of events targeting refugee women in 2003, as to actively involve women in the design and implementation of the self-reliance program, to organize more frequently training and seminars for addressing issues related to gender related persecution, protection of women, and sexual violence against women.
	Military recruitment	It has been noted that there are adult children who were called for the military draft in the regular Turkmen Army and upon completion were given military booklets. This has been done in violation of the 1992 Constitution and the 2002 Law on the Military Service, where it is clearly stipulated that only nationals of Turkmenistan can be called for military draft. Nevertheless, the immigration authorities are reluctant to admit the eligibility of such persons to acquire Turkmen nationality whereas the international law refers to a practice where naturalization is/should be often facilitated if an applicant made services to the country of habitual residence, such as military draft. None of the UNHCR arguments succeeded in convincing the Turkmen government to grant Turkmen citizenship to the young refugees who have served in the regular Turkmen army. On the contrary, after UNHCR had raised this issue with the government, the military offices have been instructed not to call refugees for military services at all.

(continued)	Education	Refugees have the right to primary and secondary education as set forth in the 1951 Convention and the Turkmen Law on Refugees. In rural areas and in Turkmenabad and Mary, school authorities do not distinguish between the types of status of students or even between foreigners and nationals. All children receive both a primary and secondary education through the ninth grade in Turkmen schools and the tenth grade in Russian schools. The majority of the refugees in Turkmenistan are in the process of integrating locally. Therefore, the construction and restoration of schools benefits both refugee children and children from the host communities.
	Adolescents	The problem of individual IDs for adolescent refugees still exists in certain provinces of Turkmenistan. Many of these children are unable to seek employment and higher education possibilities, due to the absence of IDs. UNHCR held several meetings with local and central immigration authorities in order to discuss this problem. Following the new presidential decree on Residence Permits, which has been adopted in August 2002, the immigration authorities assured UNHCR that all adolescents will be issued separate IDs within one year, as soon as the relevant instructions will be delivered to all local authorities. The Office has also hired a legal NGO, Bosfor, which has been tasked to address these issues through negotiation with the local authorities and government bodies concerned.
	Other	UNHCR and its implementing partners regularly monitor the situation of refugee children. Regular trainings and workshops by implementing partners specially targeted women and girls in the form of reproductive health training for adolescent girls and vocational training such as sewing and carpet making classes. Incentives are also given for girls to attend local secondary schools. The vocational training courses were introduced in order to facilitate the access of the refugees to education. Vocational training was also organized in the field of agriculture, technical maintenance and the garment industry, with the equal participation of young female and male refugees. Turkmenistan acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Uzbekistan	Separation	Cases of refoulement/ deportation of male refugee heads of families back to their country of origin, notably to Afghanistan across the border, has been registered by this office in 2003. This has resulted in two known cases to the office of wives and children being left behind in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan is not a party to 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol there is no domestic legislation that offer protection to refugees. Uzbekistan, has however, signed several international human rights instruments and this office has used the UN Child Rights Convention to intervene in these cases, and at least prevent mass deportation of the entire family. Refoulement also affects cases in which Afghan refugees marry Uzbek nationals and have children. Although the children can acquire Uzbek citizenship, their refugee parent cannot, nor can they get residence permits as of right, and due to their tolerated but illegal status in Afghanistan, the risk of deportation and separation of family remains a real threat to the family unit.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Since the majority of the refugees still reside in the country illegally, they are under constant mental pressure and are without any prospects for local integration. Refugee children at times have to be witnesses of humiliating treatment of their parents during spot-checks made by law enforcement bodies which can in some cases even be considered as physical abuse. As most of their parents have no formal access to the labour market, refugee children are often engaged in some form of child labour, whether it is assisting their parents on the bazaar in order to create some limited form of income for boys, or helping in the house for girls. UNHCR provides limited material cash assistance to the most vulnerable parts of the refugee population who are in their majority multi-children families, as well as limited medical services. However, many refugees are still experiencing extreme economic hardship and often leave in overcrowded apartments with inadequate basic facilities. Thus improving educational opportunities has been a very important element in ensuring that children are kept out of the labour market for as long as possible. In this connection, UNHCR has used the Child Rights Convention to ensure that refugee children have access to government public schools up to Grade nine. Additionally, through implementing partners, a variety of educational and training classes, including language and computer classes, are also being offered to improve vocational and learning skills amongst children. Additionally, UNHCR gender focal point meets with refugee women directly to discuss all various aspects of family life once a week at the refugee centre.

(continued)	Military recruitment	In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Art. 52 and The Law on Universal Military service of 1992 No. 644-XII, Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan, military service is the duty of every citizen of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Male adolescents from multi-children families, and sick persons of call-up age have to perform alternative military service in accordance with procedure prescribed by law .The call-up age in Uzbekistan is 16 years old. In case if the person entered for study to any high school (university or institute), military service is postponed until he finish his studies. In families without a male head of household, if the mother does not work and she has only one male child, the government releases her child from his military service obligation.
	Education	Since 1 April 2000 in accordance with provisions of a Cabinet of Ministers Resolution of 24 March 2000, all foreigners who do not have permanent registration in Uzbekistan have to pay all fees related to medical and educational facilities (except primary school, which remains payable in local currency) in US dollar, This development significantly decreased the possibility of refugee children to go to school. UNHCR, while using the Convention of the Rights of the Child as well as Uzbek Constitution as a normative frame of reference for its discussions with the authorities to promote free access to schooling for refugee children, was forced to pay for their school fees for one term. In November 200, after long negotiations with the government authorities, the Ministry of Education issued a special instruction that refugee children registered with UNHCR would be allowed to attend public schools from grade one to nine free of charge.
	Adolescents	The problem of national passports for adolescent refugees of legal age exists in Uzbekistan. Multi-children families are not able to provide the payments for getting passport. The only identity document of most of them is the certificate of a mandate refugee. Adolescents are not able to continue their education, because studying at grade nine and ten is chargeable in Uzbekistan. Access to universities is still problematic as students will have to present their national passports. Via the DAFI scholarship programme, UNHCR was able to facilitate university studies for a few refugees.

(continued)	Other	There are around 1180 refugee children registered with this office, of which 559 are female and 621 are male. Refugee children, because of their illegal status in Uzbekistan, have no access to free medical facilities. However, they are not denied access to the medical treatment as long as they can pay for the services. Therefore as part of its care and maintenance programme, UNHCR provides direct cash assistance to cover the basic medical needs and costs. The Medical Unit of UNHCR's implementing partner at the refugee social service centre also provides services and monitors the needs and state of health of the children refugees on regular basis, and supports disabled children providing them with necessary accessories. UNHCR through its implementing partner organized vocational classes, small income generation projects for adolescents. Every year UNHCR sponsors the participation of a select number of Afghan children to the annual UN summer camps. Uzbekistan acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
Yemen	Separation	Of special concern to UNHCR are the unaccompanied minors who are crossing to Yemen from Somalia. UNHCR has noted an increase in 14 to 16 years old coming alone to Yemen, as parents sent them to Yemen to seek education. Unaccompanied minors who apply for RSD are rare both at BO Sana'a and SO Aden. However, in 2001, UNHCR BO Sana'a recognized a 16-year old girl Ethiopian girl as a refugee after RSD. In 2002, UNHCR facilitated the release of a 14 year old Somali unaccompanied minor from detention and released a Somali girl who was kept hostage in a house of a Yemeni man Another Somali girl, who was taken by a female relative to Yemen to be a babysitter, escaped her relative's house because she was mistreated. SO Aden moved the girl to the camp where she was placed in a foster family under the close observation of the Social Counselors in the camp.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In 2001, UNHCR concluded that although there were no reported cases of sexual abuse or exploitation of refugee children and women, UNHCR should double its efforts aimed at early detection and prevention of sexual abuse or exploitation of refugees. These vulnerable groups of children and women were provided legal protection and awareness. In this regard, an International UNV Community Services Officer, closely working on social issues pertaining to refugee children and women, was recruited. UNHCR continued to monitor the situation and did not receive reports of sexual abuse and/or violence against refugee women and/or children in the camp. One of the biggest problems faced by refugee women is female genital mutilation, which is widely practiced in the Somali community.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Basateen primary school in Aden is run by the Ministry of education and provides tuition to refugees in the area. Save the Children Sweden, Radda Barnen, is UNHCR's implementing partner and monitors the attendance and performance of 33 teaching and 4 non-teaching staff. In the 2001-2002 school years, 2,412 students registered in grades 1-9 and took the final examination in June 2002. This presents a drop by 2.2 per cent as compared to the enrolment in 2001 (2,416 students). The Somali refugee school in Kharaz camp consists of a kindergarten, pre-class and classes from grades 1-8. In the school year 2001-2002, 566 students (323 boys and 238 girls) registered in grades 1-8, which is an increase of 8 per cent. Refugee children in urban areas are able to go to local schools among Yemeni children. If however, there were complications, Partners for Development (PAD) officially helped to enrol the refugee children and gave them a one-time in-kind assistance for the school year. Refugee children normally do not face problems in enrolling themselves in Yemeni schools, but if they do not have fathers or other male sponsors, schools often do not except them.
	Adolescents	The DAFI project gave scholarships to assist deserving refugees from the camp and urban cities in Yemen to pursue academic studies that eventually qualify them for professional careers. The target population was refugee students with excellent results in secondary schooling and/or those who had interruption in their university studies due to their flight from their countries of origin. UNHCR Yemen has directly implemented this project in which 30 beneficiaries were assisted with registration/tuition fees, monthly subsistence and book allowances in order to ensure good academic atmosphere for students and to avoid any possible obstacle to study.
	Other	A feeding program for malnourished children is also implemented in the camp. Sport facilities together with a library provide leisure and learning opportunities. Radda Barnen carries out a Community Based Rehabilitation scheme, in which disabled Somali children and their parents receive appropriate training on how to reintegrate themselves into the refugee society. Some of those children received hearing aids in order to overcome isolation and to be able to fully participate in school and camp life. Further, prison conditions in Yemen are poor, as they are overcrowded and food, sanitation and health facilities are inadequate. Children are often incarcerated with their mothers. Yemen is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

EUROPE

Republic of Albania	Separation	Regarding legal guardianship, the Asylum Law stipulates that the mentally disabled and the unaccompanied minors and separated children are entitled to a guardian whose appointment has to be ensured by the National Commissioner. No such appointment has in practice ever been made. The Legal Clinic was to initiate for the first time procedures itself through the court, for a mentally ill young asylum seeker whose asylum application was rejected in first instance. No unaccompanied minors have so far applied for asylum in Albania. By the end of 2002, two unaccompanied minor asylum seekers were still in Albania. Special assistance was provided to them including accommodation and social work. They are both living in the reception centre with other asylum seekers with whom they came to Albania.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No cases of harassment or sexual violence against refugee women or female asylum seekers were reported to UNHCR. To prevent any sexually related incidents in the mainly male populated NGO-run reception centre, some families with female members were taken out of the collective centre and accommodated in private shelters. It came to the attention of BO Tirana that some Kosovar parents beat their children. BO Tirana staff has provided strong advice in these cases. Similarly, BO has received reports that family violence also occurs against some refugee/asylum seeker women who are beaten by their husbands. In most cases these women do not address this because of their culture, tradition, and because they are used to this way of living. BO Tirana discussed these matters with its partners and agreed to address them in a more general manner, by organizing focused discussions with refugee/asylum seeker children and their parents, as well as for refugee/asylum seeker women and their spouse/partners to address and eliminate family violence. Individual counseling will be given where appropriate.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	One of the main goals of UNHCR has been to provide education opportunities to the refugee/asylum seeker children in cooperation with the Albanian Ministry of Education and Science. During 2002, 25 children attended Albanian schools, 20 children were registered in primary schools and 5 in secondary schools. Among them, two Turkish refugee children were registered in a Turkish speaking school in Tirana. All refugee and asylum seeker children got registered in the Albanian schools owing to RMSA's intervention. The Ministry of Education did not provide the pupils with books, instead the implementing partner did. The refugee/asylum seeker children seemed to be fully integrated into Albanian schools, due to their long stay in Albania and friendship with other children in the neighbourhood. With regard to the very small children there was a kindergarten available in 2001, but not in 2002. The office's policy was to provide kindergarten only for children whose both parents work.
	Adolescents	UNHCR's partners have implemented non-formal educational, informative, medical and recreational activities in the collective centre and other places. Such activities included sports, arts and crafts, music, introduction and knowledge sharing regarding Albanian history and regular children's performances for parents and the refugee community. The objective was to provide relief of stress, entertainment and treatment of trauma.
	Other	Trafficking of children in Albania appears to be mainly for the purposes of forced labour, including begging and drug dealing. A growing number of people, especially adolescent girls, are being trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. An additional problem is the blood feud that has constrained hundreds of children, mostly male, to stay locked in their homes. Among the most compelling attacks to the basic human rights of the children in Albania today are the ill-treatment/torture by state police and human trafficking. Albanian NGOs claim that police routinely physically ill-treat children during arrest or in police custody. The lack of specialized juvenile justice system in Albania, and of training of police to deal with minors, contributes to this problem. The Legal Clinic for Minors reports that 99 per cent of the minors detained in custody, have been subjected to physical violence and beatings in police stations. BO Tirana undertook considerable efforts to arrive at an understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking in persons. BO participated in various activities, followed-up with international developments on this issue and produced a discussion paper on the matter which was shared with DIP. Albania is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Armenia	Separation	The absence of the explicit right for a child to seek asylum in the Law on Refugees leads to denial of access to RSD by the child. Although there have not been any cases so far, separated children may well fall outside of the whole scope of the Law on Refugees, were it to be strictly applied. The government of Armenia has in principle accepted the need to revise the Law on Refugees to remove the implicit age-specific barrier to asylum procedures. It has also agreed to include a procedure specifically designed to assist separated children.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The issue of violence and abuse against (refugee) women is still culturally very sensitive. Even though there are indications of a high percentage of women suffering from it, they view it as a personal problem that should not be discussed openly. Two pilot surveys were carried out on trafficking, but neither of the reports gives any figures on whether or not refugee women are included in trafficking, while poverty, "hopeless unemployment" and male migration are considered as main reasons by both reports. Given the vulnerability of the refugee population, refugee women can be considered at "high risk" to become potential victims of trafficking. UNHCR continues to promote gender mainstreaming through assistance programs. In preparation for the consultations with refugee women in Geneva and regional consultations in the South Caucasus countries, UNHCR organized a two day in-country discussion. The refugee women were invited to discuss issues related to the human rights of women. The in-country consultations were followed by the regional and global consultations in which Armenian refugee women-leaders actively participated, and a workshop enlarging the group of participants.
	Military recruitment	The present legal framework does not require refugees to perform compulsory military service, although it has been reported that many refugee youths volunteer to serve in armed forces.
	Education	Refugee children in Armenia, almost exclusively ethnic Armenians originally from Azerbaijan, enjoy almost the same rights as their local peers. They have access to education, health services and other public facilities and services. They attend the same schools as the local population. It should be mentioned, however, that the strict implementation of the Law on the National Language deprived the vast majority of refugee children and adolescents of a suitable education, as the language of the majority of refugees is Russian. This affected the rural schools in refugee communities even more, as many teachers were from the same community and had not received any professional assistance to adapt teaching practices to their new circumstances. One outcome was that refugee children, as compared with their local peers of the same age, have lower scores and do not receive enough assistance from their parents. This limits their life chances and increases school drop out and non-attendance.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	<p>UNHCR has been made aware of numerous cases of non-registered newly born children in remote rural refugee villages. Due to the complete collapse of infrastructure and medical/state service outreach rural areas, combined with poverty, mothers often choose to deliver their babies at home without official medical assistance. After the delivery, the birth is often unreported at local civil registration offices. One of UNHCR's implementing partners identified over 300 cases of non-registered birth in one region. UNHCR has been following up on the issue with grave concern not only because a disproportionate number of refugee villages are affected but also because unregistered births lead to future statelessness. Armenia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.</p>
Austria	Separation	<p>UNHCR continued to be involved in follow-up activities to the Separated Children in Europe Program. These included, inter alia, participation in regular meetings of the NGO working group on separated children as well as the translation into German of the Separated Children in Europe Training Guide. While there are still no public statistics available, data on separated children seeking asylum are now produced by the Minister of Interior. In his response to a parliamentary interpellation the Minister stated that between July 2001 and December 2001, 1,741 separated minors applied for asylum in Austria. It can therefore be estimated that around 3,000 separated children applied for asylum in 2002. This number does not take into account any "age-corrections" during the eligibility interview informing the authorities not to be a minor. Nevertheless, it seems that much more separated children apply for asylum every year as estimated in previous years.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>To UNHCR's knowledge child-specific persecution has been hardly ever claimed, but one exception was the case of a 14 month old Oromo child from Ethiopia who was granted asylum on account of her fear of being subjected to female genital mutilation. In addition, in a second case rejected by the IFAS as manifestly unfounded concerning a young woman from Sierra Leone who after her parents death was kept by a mother's friend in slavery-like conditions and arrived in Austria as a separated child, the Higher Administrative Court referred the case back to the IFAS, indicating that the latter should examine whether the applicant could fear persecution for reasons of his membership to the social group of "orphan children and youth living in slave-like conditions and abused". However, in a case concerning a Ukrainian orphan child, the IFAS did not find the existence of a social group of "orphan children" and granted the applicant subsidiary protection.</p>
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Schooling is mandatory for all children between the age of 6 and 15 irrespective of their status. Refugee children who are granted asylum in Austria have the same access to education at all levels as Austrian nationals. For the purpose of classifying the educational level children have to pass an examination prior to admission. Pursuant to the law, children who do not sufficiently speak the language of instruction can be admitted as special students for a maximum period of two years. In practice, however, due to the lack of knowledge of German children refugees are often initially referred to schools for children below a normal education standard. The requirements for admission to university vary. However, in no case is there a special financial assistance from the government available to asylum seekers, but there are some very limited private funds for students, especially from developing countries, which are also available for asylum seekers.
	Adolescents	Minors of 14 to 18 years whose interests can not be defended by their legal representatives are entitled to file asylum applications. Upon the initiation of a procedure, a legal representative is appointed for the Asylum Procedure, which is the locally competent Youth Welfare Agency. Problems occur in practice as the legal representatives of the Youth Welfare Agency do in general not obtain adequate training in asylum related issues nor do they have the necessary time and resources to guarantee proper representation. Often the minor asylum seeker does not have any contact to his/her legal representative prior to the status determination interview at the Asylum Office. However, some Youth Agencies have started ongoing efforts to improve this situation.
	Other	To UNHCR's knowledge, minor asylum seekers were generally not detained. There have been, however, exceptional instances where asylum seekers were detained, as they were considered by the alien's authorities to be 18 years of age, although NGOs and, in some cases, the youth welfare authority, considered them to be under 18. Austria is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Azerbaijan	Separation	The number of unaccompanied children among BO Baku's caseload has increased during the reporting period. Most of the cases registered are male adolescents over 16 years old often without ID documents from where the exact date of birth could be ascertained. However at the end of 2001 BO Baku detected two very vulnerable cases of minors with pressing protection needs. Care arrangements and durable solutions for these cases had been found on an ad hoc basis. However as the number of unaccompanied and separated children appears to be increasing UNHCR feels there is currently a need for a more comprehensive approach in order to systematically detect such cases and their special protection needs and timely address them. Thus possibilities of cooperation with a NGO on these issues were actively sought in 2002. Besides this, three representatives of NGOs were trained on the modules of Action on the Rights of the Child (ARC) in mid-January 2002, as a result of which a network of the participants in the Southern Caucasus was created. At present these NGOs are conducting different training on ARC modules, as well as CRC among IDP children all over Azerbaijan.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were three cases of sexual violence and one case of domestic violence reported and referred to the psychological rehabilitation centre. The case of domestic violence was successfully resettled to the Netherlands and other cases are currently in the process of resettlement. Besides this there were 15 cases of gender based violence noted by BO Baku that were referred to the UNHCR Clinic and psychological rehabilitation centre. It should be noted that such cases are hardly revealed, since they happen mostly in the countries of origin and BO Baku staff is putting a lot of efforts to find out about such cases by the help of the refugee communities.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	The 1999 Law on Refugees and IDPs guarantees the right to education for all refugees and IDPs. Because of the dire economic situation in Azerbaijan, the government is unable to allocate more funds for education. With the exception of children in Baku and other large, urban centers, most refugee and IDP children receive only the most elementary education. Schooling is further complicated by the lack of facilities and materials, as schools in camps and settlements are often prefabricated buildings without proper insulation from the extremely cold and hot weather. In Baku, children frequently do not attend school because they must contribute to the financial situation of their family. As a result the number of street children is increasing. The majority of asylum seekers and refugee children were denied access to public schooling in Baku, as the number of asylum seeker's children progressively increased in relation with the influx from the Northern Caucasus. UNHCR addressed the issue with the Deputy Prime Minister and the Head of the State Committee for Refugees. In 2002, UNHCR actively supported 2 centers for Chechen children, who have difficulties to enrol in local schools.

(continued)	Adolescents	The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) together with the help of 'Buta', a local NGO, helped 4,000 IDPs in Sumgait to set up basic maintenance of buildings, as well as to set up children's, youth and women's action groups that can improve the well-being of the community on the long-term. UNHCR's local partner 'Umid' provided an opportunity for 49 young IDPs and other disadvantaged young people living in the area to learn a trade through an apprenticeship program in local enterprises.
	Other	Baku noted a detention case of a 15 years old girl-child. BO Baku immediately contacted the authorities and the child was released. After this event UNHCR staff met the child a few times, was given financial assistance and was referred to the psychological rehabilitation centre. BO Baku together with an IP was planning to give some vocational skills training to an Afghan boy by placing him in one of the NGOs dealing with unaccompanied and separated children. But recently the boy opted for repatriation and his case is currently in the process of repatriation. Further, a psychosocial rehabilitation program was made available to asylum seekers and refugees of whom 381 children, aged 3 to 15 years completed the rehabilitation. The children became more confident, active and willing to participate in the games proposed by the psychotherapist. The improvement of the children's psychological state had a positive impact on their parents and on the general ambiance in the family. Azerbaijan acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.
Belarus	Separation	In 2001, UNHCR registered 5 cases of unaccompanied or separated minors. A missing father of two minors returned to Belarus in autumn 2001 and two 17-year old Afghan boys continue to receive assistance from LO Minsk. Their return to their families in Afghanistan and Uzbekistan respectively was not feasible. One separated 9-year old Afghan boy is residing with his paternal uncle. In 2002, a 15-year old Afghan boy was separated from his family during their travel to Europe. LO Minsk traced, with the assistance of UNHCR Nurnberg, the parents of the minor, but family reunion to Germany was not feasible due to the status of the parents (asylum seekers). According to unconfirmed reports the boy left Belarus illegally in an attempt to join his family in Germany. UNHCR discussed with authorities the issue of guardianship of unaccompanied minors. Taking into consideration that the respective child protection authorities are passive in the cases involving foreign separated children, UNHCR has taken several steps to address this problem, including discussion with the Ministry of Education and submission of formal complaints on the lack of action from the side of local authorities.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	One case of family violence was reported. Following a letter from UNHCR the Belarusian authorities separated the case of an Afghan woman with her two children from the husband's refugee status application and settled the woman with the children in the temporary accommodation facility for asylum seekers in Vitebsk. The woman later applied for voluntary repatriation.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Most public schools permit asylum seekers to enrol their children if they possess a UNHCR registration letter. In many cases, the Belarusian Red Cross (BRC) writes also a letter to a school to enrol those children. UNHCR observed a small number of cases when a school did not allow enrolment of asylum seekers' children even upon the request of the BRC. The lawyer of the RCS (UNHCR's implementing partner) intervened and explained the right of children to education under the CRC. As a result, these children were admitted to schools. The language problems of asylum seeker children are one of the reasons why a school is reluctant to accept them. In order to prevent such situations, UNHCR launched, through the Centre for Children and Adolescents, Russian classes for children and also organized tutors for those who need to catch up with regular classes at public schools. UNHCR also concentrated its efforts on supplementary education and cultural activities aiming to promote development in childhood.
	Adolescents	A sub-agreement was signed in 2001 by the Centre for Children and Adolescents, Green Cross Belarus and UNHCR to organize music, cultural and ecological classes, sports activities, native language and sewing classes, and so on for asylum seeker/refugee children together with Belarusian peers.
	Other	With regard to birth registration, asylum seekers who give birth receive a certificate from a hospital indicating the date of birth, but not an official birth registration issued by the authority due to an absence of registration with the agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. With the assistance of UNHCR or its implementing partners asylum seekers obtain birth certificates for their children despite the absence of police registration. UNHCR will continue to monitor this issue and will intervene on individual cases. Belarus is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and acceded to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Belgium	Separation	There are at present no special services that address the needs of unaccompanied and separated children. These children are often alone in trying to cope with integration and all of its related practical aspects. During 2002, 912 unaccompanied alleged minors requested asylum in Belgium. After the wrist x-ray aimed at determining the applicant's actual age, this number falls to 606. Belgium does not have a system of guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children who are seeking asylum and for this reason unaccompanied and separated children face numerous problems. Unaccompanied minors who arrive at the border and seek asylum are usually detained in the transit centre if they do not meet the entry conditions. If once admitted on the territory, separated children seeking asylum are usually accommodated in a special section of an open reception centre. There are presently 6 centers hosting unaccompanied and separated minors seeking asylum. A new centre will be opened early 2003. Disappearance of unaccompanied and separated children has been considered by some NGOs and the authorities as a worrying phenomenon.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	The issue of trafficking, prostitution, and exploitation of migrant women, including asylum seekers (some of whom are under 18), has been a matter of concern for many years now. The authorities have increased their attention and in some places control by police and the public prosecutor has born fruit. Women who are victims of people-smuggling, e.g. for prostitution, may be detained in closed reception centers when it is not possible to verify their identity or when they are illegal in the country. Practicing, facilitating or promoting the genital mutilation of girls with or without consent is made punishable by a prison sentence of three to five years. UNHCR is not aware that this practice occurred or that persons responsible for such acts were sued in Belgium.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Asylum seekers in open reception centers can benefit from the national education system in the same manner as any Belgian citizen. Even children of illegal aliens, i.e. including rejected asylum seekers, can attend school. There are instructions to the effect that police are not to check the legal/illegal status of children near school premises.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	For minor asylum seekers detention remains a significant problem in Belgium. In 2002, 627 persons have been detained at the border. Out of these, 65 were unaccompanied and separated minors, but no figure was available regarding the number of accompanied minors detained in this centre, nor on the exact length of the detention. Belgium is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Bosnia and Herzegovina	Separation	Refugee Status Determination interviews for unaccompanied minors under the age of 18 were conducted in accordance with the joint statement of good practice between Save the Children Fund and UNHCR concerning separated children in Europe. UNHCR received asylum applications of two minors from FRY during 2001. Two unaccompanied minors from Iran whose asylum applications were rejected in 2001 remained in the Centre. In cooperation with Save the Children (US), a social worker was assigned guardian of the two minors. Their possible voluntary return was explored. During 2002, UNHCR received asylum applications of four minors from FRY and two minors from FYROM. In addition, the asylum claim of one unaccompanied minor from Iran who approached UNHCR is being examined. UNHCR initiated an ICRC tracing request for close family members of an unaccompanied FRY refugee who was accommodated in a RAC. In close cooperation with the Bosnian authorities the minor was admitted to a child program available locally, pending the outcome of the tracing request.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There have been several complaints about sexual harassment and abuse of refugee children and women which have come to the attention of UNHCR. UNHCR seriously considered these complaints and carried out the necessary investigations and follow up. Often resettlement was considered to be the only appropriate durable solution for refugees who suffered from violence/torture. Among refugees from FRY, a number of resettled refugees were women who had suffered trauma, including rape, sexual violence and torture as well as persons in mixed marriages. Refugees from outside the region fall under the Law on Immigration and Asylum. However, until the Law fully becomes effective, refugees have serious problems in enjoying their rights in BiH. Therefore, in the absence of any reliable local integration assistance, UNHCR submitted seventeen recognized refugees from outside the region for resettlement to third countries.
	Military recruitment	There is no reported compulsory child labor in BiH.

(continued)	Education	All refugee and asylum seeker children have a right to primary education in BiH and in addition, BiH authorities allow refugees access to secondary and university education. However, education in BiH continues to be divided along 'national' lines, as school curricula is used to continue to reflect the nationalist ideology of the dominant national group in any locality, thus deterring the return of 'minority' families. Children of returnee families often continue to reside with relatives or friends in their place of displacement or where they are in majority, or will travel great distances in order to attend school in an area where the curriculum taught is that of 'their' group. Furthermore, the perceived insecurity, the continued lack of trust in 'non-minority' teachers and the fear of discrimination in class continue to be subjective factors to not send children to school. An Interim Agreement on Returnee Children was signed in 2002, which stipulates that all children will be taught on the basis of the curriculum wherever they are living. Concrete action from the authorities as well as pressure from the international community and close monitoring at all levels continue to be necessary to ensure significant change on the ground.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Trafficking of women and girls for forced prostitution is widespread in BiH, and also affects refugees to some extent. Although no figures are available, it is known that a number of the victims of trafficking in BiH are minors. It is also to a matter of concern that Roma children in BiH, including Roma refugee children, are contributing to their families/ income through begging and informal activities, such as collection of scrap materials for resale. BiH succeeded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Bulgaria	Separation	During 2001 a total of 128 appeal cases were presented by BHC at first judicial instance and 65 at second judicial instance. It should be noted that not all cases were represented by BHC lawyers in the court. Unaccompanied refugee minors are represented by a guardian or a tutor appointed by the court. Unaccompanied minors are to be accommodated in registration and reception centers or in private lodgings, and measures shall be taken to prevent them from physical or mental ill treatment or any other form of violence. Unaccompanied minors are entitled to financial and material assistance as well as to free education in public schools until one graduate from high-school. Unaccompanied minor refugees shall be placed in State Children's Homes, and measures shall be taken for their protection against physical or mental ill-treatment and any other violence.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR BO Sofia organized different training events on the special protection issues of refugee women and children, separated children and elderly refugees. The purpose of the workshop "International protection of refugee women and children" was to raise awareness of the special needs of women and refugees, establish a National Action Plan within the framework of UNHCR's Europe wide programs for separated refugee children and it targeted state officials from SAR, MOI, State Agency of Child Protection, Institute for Public Administration and European Integration and other NGOs.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have free access to primary and, where feasible, also secondary school education. According to Bulgarian legislation child asylum seekers and refugees benefit from the right to free primary and secondary education. Through the Bulgarian Red Cross, UNHCR BO Sofia provides textbooks, assistance for notebooks and other school items for these children. Parents of pre-school refugee children are encouraged to enrol them in kindergarten. The kindergarten fee for refugee children is covered by UNHCR through the BRC sub-project. Main problems encountered were language issues of some of the refugee children. An annual summer camp with intensive language classes for all those children who needed extra training takes place in the mountains and special Bulgarian language courses are organized for children parallel to the school curricula. Contacts were established with the school authorities and teachers with the purpose to monitor the school performance of all refugee children and identify their needs in terms of additional training. In order to help refugee children to follow school curriculum and improve their performance an additional training started in 2002.
	Adolescents	BO Sofia program and protection work continued to strive to better integrate the special needs of refugee children and adolescents. BO Sofia continued to ensure that relevant guidelines are distributed and implemented by eligibility officers. Through efforts made by UNHCR and its partners in Bulgaria, important progress has already been achieved with regard to access of refugee children to the national education system.
	Other	There is a food allowance for first-born refugee babies, who are given one-time financial support by the Bulgarian government. Child asylum seekers/refugees, as long as the parents are entitled to the full food allowance, are also entitled to the full sum of the monthly assistance. Bulgaria is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols to the Convention under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Croatia	Separation	The Centre for Social Policy Initiatives (CSPI) represents Croatia under the Separated Children in Europe Program (SCEP). In 2001, 308 separated children were reported, of which only one minor sought asylum in Croatia. 227 separated children were reported in 2002, and four of them were registered as asylum seekers. There is no specific accommodation for separated children, third country nationals, provided by the Croatian government. Most of the separated children are accommodated in an institution for children with behavioural disorder in Zagreb but this facility is considered inappropriate. Some separated children asylum seekers have been accommodated at the Aliens Reception Centre, which is a detention facility. UNHCR has strongly urged the government to identify an appropriate centre for the reception of separated children, third country nationals. The creation of such a centre was delayed. In the interim period UNHCR accommodated two separated children asylum seekers in the UNHCR reception centre. UNHCR supports the model of foster care placement, which though implemented in Croatia during the conflicts of the 1990s, is no longer used for separated children third country nationals. UNHCR has expressed concern about and has discouraged the practice of appointing guardians from among the group of foreign nationals in which the child entered the country. This is done without a proper determination of the link between the child and the guardian. UNHCR Croatia participated at the SCEP Seminar in April 2002, which included a joint UNHCR/NGO meeting. Among other related activities that took place in Croatia included a Workshop on the SCEP jointly organized by CSPI and UNHCR.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR was concerned about the situation for young females detained together with a majority of young men in the Aliens Reception Centre (Jezevo). In the case of a 16 year old girl who resided in Jezevo together with her family, UNHCR decided to move the family to its reception centre as the girl reportedly was being harassed and receiving unwanted attention from the male population.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	<p>Although not based on a formal agreement, children of recognized refugees and third country nationals in the UNHCR reception centre were allowed to attend school. However, for the majority of children due to the language barrier this was not an option. Croatian classes in the asylum home were not popular. UNHCR provided schoolbooks as required. UNHCR remains concerned that the right to education for children of asylum seekers and separated minors is not properly recognized in the draft Law on Asylum and will discuss the issue further with the authorities. All registered refugee children with temporary protected status (mainly from Bosnia and Kosovo) are integrated into the Croatian primary school system and also have access to high schools when places are available. Refugees who wish to enrol at Croatian universities have to pay fees as foreign students. UNHCR assisted with notarizing of previous school certificates and enrolment of refugee and returnee children. UNHCR provided protection and care to children of concern through its network of local NGO IPs, with an emphasis on education, reconciliation, social development and psycho-social and health care. In particular the NGOs Merhamet, MI, Centre for Disaster Management and Suncokret focused on care and activities for children in their centers as well as through out-reach teams comprising of qualified social workers and counselors.</p>
	Adolescents	<p>The Youth and Women Group focused on capacity building of local NGOs involved in women's issues and activities and developed a donor matrix with the intention to connect local organizations with potential funding sources. The American Refugee Committee focused on activities that alleviate conditions for returnee children and adolescents, their integration in local schools, their socialization and developmental opportunities in general. Suncokret targeted mainly children and adolescents regardless of the ethnic affiliation and focused on youth as a way of peace building, community reconstruction and social reconciliation through educational, recreative and psycho-social activities. UNHCR's funded assistance was fairly distributed to vulnerable beneficiaries of all ethnic groups and respecting the existing vulnerability criteria.</p>
	Other	<p>Though Croatia is not a hot spot of trafficking activities in Southeast Europe, UNHCR nevertheless monitors the situation within its activities aiming at the strengthening of the asylum procedure. UNHCR stresses the need for adequate procedural safeguards to be put in place to protect asylum seekers, especially those among trafficked women. Raising awareness and cooperating with government bodies and related NGOs is crucial in the identification and protection of such cases. In 2002, the Croatian government established a National Committee to Combat Trafficking of Human Beings, which prepared a national Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking of Human Beings, especially women and children. Croatia succeeded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>

Denmark	Separation	In 2001, a total number of 157 separated children arrived in Denmark. Among these 52 were from Afghanistan, 23 from Somalia and 12 from Sri Lanka. Under the current legislation there is no obligation to appoint a legal guardian for asylum-seeking children. UNHCR has repeatedly pointed out the need for the Danish authorities to revise their law and procedure to permit asylum seeking children to be represented by legal guardians during the determination procedure. No special refugee status determination procedures exist for separated children. The decision whether or not to apply the asylum determination procedure to a minor is made by the DIS according to an evaluation of the child's maturity. In practice, however, separated children are not treated according to the same asylum legislation as adults. Children under the age of 15 would hardly ever enter the normal determination procedure. UNHCR has said that even children under 12 should be also allowed to be interviewed in the asylum procedure if they so choose. Once they are admitted to the asylum procedure they should go through the normal refugee status determination procedure.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Children of asylum seekers do usually not have access to the normal Danish school system. However, they are entitled to approximately 15 hours of classes per week at the reception centers, including a short course on the Danish language. All children granted residence permits in Denmark have the same right to education as Danish children. If a child does not speak Danish when he or she begins school, there are special classes to bridge this language gap. The children of persons with temporary residence permits are allowed to enter the normal Danish school system. RO Stockholm has prepared a series of educational materials including packages of overheads in all relevant languages for the countries covered, as well as visits, workshops and lectures geared towards schools, youth organizations and municipalities to raise awareness on the plight of refugees and combating racism and xenophobia.
	Adolescents	Special arrangements are in place for the care of separated refugee children. They are accommodated in one of three special centers established by the Red Cross. These centers have facilities which are specifically adopted for children and are run by specialized staff. Some older minors, 17-18 years, may also be accommodated in a special section of the centre 'Margrethholm', where they are trained in domestic skills with the aim of subsequently providing them with accommodation in private housing 'annexes'.

(continued)	Other	Birth registration of refugee children follows normal Danish rules. Children born on Danish territory take the citizenship of their parents. When the parents are granted Danish citizenship minor children are automatically included in the application. Denmark is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Estonia	Separation	An unaccompanied minor is represented in the asylum procedure by the head of the reception centre or a person authorized by the head of the centre. UNHCR does not consider it to be appropriate that the head of the reception centre represents an unaccompanied minor in the asylum procedure as the head of the reception centre has no qualifications of a guardian. A general procedure in which the court appoints a qualified guardian should be applied in the case of asylum-applicants. UNHCR has emphasized that it should be clearly laid down in Estonian Law that children should never be detained or denied access to the asylum process. There has technically been only one applicant who qualified as an unaccompanied minor although she arrived together with her husband (through traditional marriage). A representative was appointed to her by court in 2001 to represent her in the asylum procedure.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In 2002, a workshop on sexual and gender-based violence was organized by the Social Competence Project of the Regional Unit in Budapest in which a member of the ERC participated who is interested in working with issues relating to the provision of social assistance to refugees.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	In theory children have a right to have access to education. Minors staying at the reception centre are sent to a local school. In practice, it has been problematic as teachers have no experience in teaching children with different cultural backgrounds and language skills. In 2002, two school-aged children had to stay at the reception centre and it was fairly complicated to convince the local school to accept them. It was agreed that the children would start by attending certain classes together with the social assistant of the reception centre. In 2001 a project called 'The Estonian and the Balkan Friendship Schools' was started by the Estonian Refugee Council and was concluded in 2002. The purpose was to facilitate contacts between the Estonian and Balkan school-children so that the Estonian school-children would learn more about the causes and consequences of ethnic war, the life in post-war society, and take initiative in collecting funds for 'friendship packages'.
Adolescents	-	

(continued)	Other	A general problem is that officials conducting asylum interviews, lawyers and the reception centre staff have received very little training on how to work with minors. Special training possibilities have to be identified in this matter for all three Baltic States. Estonia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Finland	Separation	In 2001 Guidelines for Interviewing Separated Minors was produced, which lead to the establishment of a separate child group inside DOI. From the beginning of the year 2002 applications from children are systematically processed in this group. Within this framework of developing child-focused interviewing guidelines for asylum seeking children efforts were made to disseminate information concerning the Separated Children in Europe Program as well as the protection issues arising out of the Machel Study. In 2001 approximately 30 unaccompanied minors arrived to Finland. In 2002, a total of 70 unaccompanied minors arrived to Finland. During the procedure, separated minors live in a special group home in connection to the reception centers. In 2002, there were two group homes of active use, which have reported difficulties with adults already living in Finland approaching residents and staff in the centers claiming to be parents to separated children hosted by the centers. Special representatives are supposed to be appointed to look after minors' interests as soon as possible; however, there have been cases where the appointment has been delayed for 3-4 months. During this time the child cannot receive help from a lawyer, nor be interviewed by the immigration authorities.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	All children, including refugee and asylum seeking children, from 7 to 16 years of age, are entitled to free education. Girls and boys have equal access to primary education. Children of the appropriate age also have the possibility to participate in academic secondary education or attend vocational schools on the same basis as nationals. In many schools there are special preparatory classes for refugee and immigrant children to help them acquire basic knowledge of Finnish and Swedish. In reception centers children are entitled to receive education in their own language provided that a group of four children with the same language can be formed within the school. In some municipalities it was reported that teaching in a native language was not possible due to lack of resources. Some municipalities also established special classes for Kosovo Albanian children who were temporarily in Finland. In these classes the children were taught in Albanian for the purpose of supporting repatriation and maintaining links to ethnic language.

(continued)	Adolescents	RO Stockholm has prepared a series of educational materials including packages of overheads in all relevant languages for the countries covered, as well as visits, workshops and lectures geared towards schools, youth organizations and municipalities to raise awareness on the plight of refugees and combating racism and xenophobia.
	Other	Regarding access to health care, separated refugee children are entitled to the same medical care as Finnish children, and/or in special cases also to private health services if they require urgent medical or essential dental treatment. It should be noted as well that a nurse is attached to each reception centre, and on arrival all asylum seekers undergo a basic health screening. Finland is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
France	Separation	In 2001, 1070 unaccompanied minors presented themselves at the border, with 1013 being admitted into French territory. For its part, during 2002, 463 of them were reported. The treatment of the minors in the transit center does not sufficiently take into account their specific needs, thereby putting them at unnecessary risk. Most notably, it is increasingly evident that once these minors enter French territory, these unaccompanied minors end up being taken care of by networks of human traffickers. However, the opening of a transit center in the course of 2002 (in Taverny) seems to have led to an improvement as to the fate of unaccompanied minors. The principle of family reunification is applicable to refugee minors, with minority being determined upon the children's entry into France. Whether the child of the refugee attains the adult age the day the authorities decide on his / her case does not have an impact upon the principle of family reunification. Once the child reaches adulthood, (s)he keeps the refugee status without having to prove that (s)he is being persecuted.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Prostitution networks have been emerging for the past several years, and some inquiries have been launched as to some 'deals' concluded in transit areas and at whose roots lie criminal networks, most notably at Paris' Roissy Airport. Upon coming into power in May 2002, the new government has inserted some propositions in the domain of sexual exploitation into the project on security voted in early 2003.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	There is a clause stipulating the obligation for children to stay in school until they are 16 years of age, no matter their nationality or their parents' residence permit status. Periodically, social services report of certain difficulties with regard to the refusal (or in some cases obstruction) of certain schools to admit certain children. In principle, though, refugees have thus the same rights as the national with regard to access to scholarships and the awarding of diplomas.

(continued)	Adolescents	-
	Other	Cooperation agreement with Romania, in which the problem of unaccompanied children is addressed, most notably with regard to the domains of prostitution and small delinquency. France is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Georgia	Separation	No cases of unaccompanied or separated child asylum seekers came to the attention of UNHCR or MRA in individual status determination procedures.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Primary education in their mother language is available for Chechen refugee children. School certificates are issued to Chechen kids as per arrangement with the Georgian Ministry of Education. In 2002, UNHCR expanded its school activity by including 41 schools elsewhere in Abkhazia and 9 schools in the Gali district to give as many children as possible access to primary education in more decent conditions, thereby modestly contributing to the stability of the population. UNHCR distributed 22 school-in-a-box kits provided by UNICEF as additional support to the schools. UNHCR continued to assist schools in the Pankisi Valley through the supply of classroom materials and student supplies. Environmental awareness in Pankisi was encouraged through ecological education classes for refugee and local children. The German government provided DAFI scholarships to 14 refugee students and the Norwegian Embassy contributed an additional 9 scholarships on the same conditions as DAFI. Children's winter clothing was procured for refugee children in Pankisi and a pre-school program was supported. In addition, UNHCR worked together with UNICEF and IRC to help facilitate a UNICEF donation of school furniture and other necessary supplies in Pankisi.
	Adolescents	UNHCR, through a local implementing partner, implemented a project aimed at supporting youth development opportunities and assisting communities in reaching self-reliance by developing social and professional skills amongst IDP and vulnerable host community adolescents. It was implemented through a network of youth clubs in Zugdidi, Kutaisi, Senaki, Tskhaltubo and Poti attended by 750 children in 2002. White Crane, a monthly magazine for peace building and reconciliation amongst children throughout Georgia was printed in cooperation with UNV and distributed monthly to 11,500 children (IDP, refugee and local) throughout Georgia.

(continued)	Other	<p>UNHCR Tbilisi hosted a regional workshop on training trainers on refugee children's rights in the context of the Action for the Rights of the Children (ARC). UNHCR researched in 2002 the issue of birth registration of newborn refugee children. Having discovered lack of coordination among the local authorities and improper application of the existing regulations by the responsible local officials, UNHCR prepared a plan of action to address this issue, to be implemented both in Akhmeta and on the level of the relevant ministries in 2003. Georgia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
Germany	Separation	<p>In 2001, the Federal Office counted 1,068 separated children under 16 years of age who applied for asylum through their guardians. In 2002, there were 873 separated children under 16 years of age who applied for asylum through their guardians. Separated children from the age-group 16 and above constitute the bulk of separated children applicants in Germany. They are considered to have the legal capacity to file an asylum application independently and to undertake required procedural acts and duties. They are treated as adults. To increase the protection of the 16 to 18 age-group, UNHCR Germany suggested to government officials and administrators to abstain from treating these minors like adults. The joint lobby efforts of UNHCR and NGOs have already led to some positive development regarding the nomination of guardians for 16 to 18 year old minors. Supported by funds from the European Refugee Fund guardianship projects have been instituted. Further, UNHCR stressed that children under 16 should always be accompanied by an adult in whom they have confidence when attending a hearing. UNHCR Germany also participated in and promoted the SCEP.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>A number of girls were granted refugee status or protection from return on humanitarian grounds owing to impending Female Genital Mutilation. UNHCR was invited to various expert meetings in 2002 on FGM. Women and girls sometimes also referred to impending forced marriage, honor crimes and spousal abuse. Trafficking / forced prostitution also became an issue of increasing importance for UNHCR, as women/girls without legal status were apprehended in brothels or on the street and subsequently lodged asylum applications. UNHCR pleaded for special protection measures for young girls who are especially at risk of being sexually assaulted and harassed in collective centers. To inform about the issue of sexual violence against refugee women and children and to raise awareness, UNHCR Germany in 2002 continued to distribute UNHCR's Guidelines on Sexual Violence, Prevention and Response, which are available in the German language. Several visits were paid to large initial reception centers .and the quality of the accommodation has improved with special measures being undertaken to prevent sexual violence. UNHCR has not learnt of fresh instances of sexual violence in reception centers</p>

(continued)	Military recruitment	With reference to their military recruitment age, a considerable number of minor asylum seekers from Afghanistan were recognized as refugees in 2001; the majority of them belonging to ethnic minority groups. Three boys from Sierra Leone were granted either refugee or humanitarian status based on the measures they had suffered, as they were all forcibly recruited by the RUF. The youngest of them was already recruited at the age of ten; all three suffered from a post-traumatic stress disorder. Humanitarian status was also granted to two child soldiers from Angola.
	Education	Minor asylum seekers and refugees are obliged to, or in any case permitted to attend school during the nine years of compulsory education. They can often attend transitional classes for aliens prior to the normal ones. They are generally given the necessary school materials. Adolescents, however, have only limited opportunity to attend classes beyond the compulsory nine years. After a negative outcome of the asylum procedure, they are generally not allowed to complete vocational training, depending on the federal state they live in. Several events have been co-organized with schools and youth initiatives. The distribution of educational materials increased. Several school materials were adapted for electronic publication on UNHCR's German language website. As a result, approximately 300 "Refugee and Human Rights" teacher sets are downloaded electronically per month. UNHCR will continue its efforts in drawing a positive picture of refugees, supporting tolerance education, providing PI material to schools, and in increasing missions.
	Adolescents	Since minor asylum seekers between ages 16 and 18 have legal competence with regard to asylum and aliens laws, they are also rarely placed under guardianship or granted other youth welfare benefits under the German Youth Welfare Act. In the majority of the federal states they have to stay in an initial reception centre and then in a collective accommodation centre together with adult asylum seekers. They do not receive any particular counseling or care.
	Other	Some children were granted protection on medical grounds, for instance since they were infected with HIV/AIDS or could not get medical treatment for other illnesses. Minors who are not found to be refugees may be placed in detention to secure deportation. This happens, for instance, when the rejected asylum seeker is suspected of trying to go into hiding. Furthermore, if a minor alien is found to have already stayed illegally in Germany for more than four weeks he/she may be detained. Although no federal figures are available, cases where children under 16 years of age are detained seem to be rather rare, although undocumented minors may face difficulties in proving that they do not exceed this age limit and may be detained nonetheless. Also, juveniles have sometimes been detained for longer periods of time, especially if the country of origin refuses to issue the necessary documents for return. Germany is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Hungary	Separation	The number of separated children seeking asylum in Hungary in 2001 was 2,018 and 658 in 2002. Representatives of Menedek, a local NGO and implementing partner to BO Budapest, and OIN were involved in the SCEPT coordinated by UNHCR and the Save the Children Alliance. Menedek with the coordination of BO Budapest conducted a survey and analysis on the situation of separated children in Hungary in 2001. In 2002, focal points of Menedek, OIN and Bo Budapest were trained in the framework of the regional program. As a follow-up, a National Plan of Action was drafted and adopted by all three organizations to address shortcomings of the system dealing with asylum. The Plan covers a time span of two years and enlists the main actions needed to address the gaps and shortcomings of the system in force since January 2002. There is no special status determination procedure established for separated children. However, a legal guardian must be appointed for them to defend their rights in the refugee status determination process. The legal guardian is to be appointed by the municipality in the administrative procedure, while in the court procedure it is the court who appoints the guardian. Unfortunately, not necessarily the same person gets appointed to represent the case in both stages of the case and this is actually against the best interest of the child. The physical safety of vulnerable asylum seekers such as separated children is of particular concern in quarantines where no separation or protection provided.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	There were a few reports of violence against or abuse of (including sexual) refugee children. There were no reports of domestic violence. However, no system for or consultation meetings with asylum seekers at the community shelters of border guards and/or reception centers of OIN had been set up to ease their reporting. A workshop organized by HQs through the Regional Unit in Budapest and Menedek in 2002 focused on gender based violence and a proper reporting system to address recent gaps. Proper follow up is being carried out .Problems have been experienced due to gender insensitive recruitment in certain field offices (Bicske). BO Budapest detected two individual cases where female claimants invoking gender-related persecution (FGM, rape) were interviewed by male interviewers and interpreters. A female officer/interpreter can only be available if the claimant expressly asks for it which is not a good solution as female claimants might feel embarrassed to ask for a right gender officer and/or might wish to please the officer/interpreter by not asking for it. BO Budapest has lobbied for gender sensitive recruitment and will continue to do so in the future.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have had access to elementary and secondary schools. A major breakthrough is that an amendment to the Act on Public Education extended obligatory education to asylum seekers under the age of 16 and by doing so introduced access of children seeking asylum to education in Hungary. Refugees have access to higher education, though, university education is not free of charge in Hungary, and recognized refugees pay the same tuition fee as nationals.

(continued)	Adolescents	Hearings on the situation of young refugees in member countries of the Council of Europe took place in Budapest in 2002. The meeting heard the moving testimonies of six young refugees residing in Czech Republic, Hungary, Rumania, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. The meeting was organized jointly by BO Budapest and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.
	Other	While in detention, children were denied education as well as daily exercise and recreational activities. Women had often to share overcrowded sleeping quarters with non-family males and thus were potentially exposed to physical and sexual abuse. Unaccompanied minors were accommodated together with adults. Breakouts, hunger strikes and suicide attempts have been reported during the years 2000 to 2002. Hungary is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Iceland	Separation	No cases of separated children were reported
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee children have the same rights as Icelandic children in terms of education and health service. They are also entitled to mother tongue tuition if a qualified teacher is available. There is no special provision for separated children.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Protection concerns regarding third country returns, minors in the asylum process, gender-related protection measures, the length of the decision making process, developments in the area of complementary forms of protection will also require focused attention. Close liaison with NGO partners, especially the Icelandic Red Cross, and regional policy-making for asylum and international protection issues will continue to be an important part of this process. Iceland is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Ireland	Separation	Refugee status determination interviews of unaccompanied minors were suspended in early 2000 following a sharp increase in the numbers of applicants, namely from 300 in 2000 to 603 in 2001. However, following intensive training by UNHCR of all parties, interviews of unaccompanied minors began in September 2001. The procedures for processing cases of unaccompanied minors were agreed informally by all involved parties and partially formalized in interim guidelines issued by ORAC and RAT, following consultation with UNHCR. The Health Board makes the decision as to whether the minor should apply for asylum and supports the child through the process. It also provides for the immediate and ongoing welfare of the child, through placement and referral to appropriate health, psychological, social and educational services. The Health Board does not operate a guardian ad litem system for unaccompanied minors. At the end, 120 unaccompanied minors received a decision at first instance, 3 were transferred under the Dublin Convention, 22 were granted refugee status and 95 were refused.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Refugee and asylum seeker children all have the same right to primary and secondary education as nationals. All schools are entitled to apply for language support for non-English speaking pupils. This support is provided by the Refugee Language Support Unit, which is funded by the Department of Education. However, no psychological support is provided within the school context and no mother-tongue classes are available. 2001 saw the establishment of two pilot projects on education provision for separated children by the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC). It was agreed that two summer schools should be run for children in city centre and at the Dublin suburban area. The two projects included classes on English language, computers, forum theatre, percussion, art, music and sport as well as a number of excursions. CDVEC concluded that they were generally successful and should run these projects again next summer.
	Adolescents	The Health Board's Social Work Team made a proposal to create a reception centre specifically for separated children seeking asylum, where a thorough needs assessment can be carried out and which includes the establishment of small residential units for those client groups identified as particularly vulnerable. e.g. separated girls in the 12-16 age group, pregnant girls, girls with babies, traumatized minors, and young persons with particular medical needs. The establishment of a dedicated medical centre for unaccompanied minors and the further expansion of the Social Work Team are also included in this proposal.

(continued)	Other	<p>There is a system of informal family reunification of minors who arrive in the State unaccompanied but who transpire to have family in Ireland. An investigation is carried out at a preliminary stage to determine whether the minor has family members in Ireland. The problem is that it is difficult (due to lack of resources) to verify whether an alleged family member really is the relative they claim to be. In a situation of suspicion reunification will be delayed, pending the outcome of a further investigation which may include a DNA test. There were a number of cases which raised concerns that the minor had been trafficked and was destined for a prostitution ring in Ireland or in transit to a prostitution ring elsewhere. LO Dublin considers that the present process of verifying family links lacks systematically and is therefore open for abuse. Ireland is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
Italy	Separation	<p>Unaccompanied or separated children seeking asylum are an extremely rare occurrence. During 2000 and 2001, the presence of more than 14000 unaccompanied and separated children was reported as stipulated by the law to the Committee for Foreign Minors out of which, only 40 resulted to have applied for asylum. It is to be noted that there is only one single centre for unaccompanied and separated children asylum seekers accommodating as few as 18 minors and is located in Turin. Those who apply for asylum are usually only barely below the age of majority, and usually attain it before the procedure is completed. Often there is reason to believe they are actually not minors. The low rate of asylum requests submitted by unaccompanied minors is mainly caused by misinformation among the social workers and institutions in charge of assisting unaccompanied and separated children, lack of legal assistance at the disposal of potential asylum seekers and more importantly the better standards of assistance granted to unaccompanied and separated children who do not apply for asylum. In the absence of a comprehensive asylum law, which would include provisions on minors, the presence of UNHCR Rome in the Committee is aimed to monitor the condition of unaccompanied and separated minors, to assure that an unaccompanied minor, a potential asylum seeker, receives proper information and, thus, is not de facto denied the right of asking asylum and to prevent repatriation before the RSD procedure, if any, is accomplished.</p>

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	With the increase in the number of foreigners residing in the country (of which refugees are only a small part), the issue of what constitutes a 'right' is being debated, particularly in the context of a growing alarm of certain cultural practices that conflict with rights recognized as inalienable under the law. Female genital mutilation, harsh physical correction of children, and even refusal to be photographed for documents are some of these issues. Children regardless of their status and nationality may be removed from their family of origin and entrusted to a foster family or to an institution in case of abuse and or neglect.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Free and compulsory education is provided to all children between 6 and 16 regardless of nationality and status. Refugees have furthermore full access to secondary education and to university. Cultural rights are guaranteed by law, but their practice is however starting to become an issue as schools are not able to provide teachers who speak in the same language as the refugee children.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Family reunion is granted to unaccompanied and separated children only once they are recognized as refugees. Unaccompanied foreign children can not, except on grounds of public order and national security, be expelled. Further, Save the children continued to coordinate activities with UNHCR. The guide on best practices elaborated within the program was translated into Italian by SSI and distributed to the main institutions and associations dealing with separated children. A Training of Trainers (TOT) was organized in 2001. Italy is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Latvia	Separation	The current lack of child care has not yet been problematic in practice as there where no (unaccompanied) child asylum seekers during the reporting period, although it could well become one day when there will be children staying in the centre.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Asylum seeking children have in principle the right to education, but no funds have been allocated for this cause in the State budget. Thus, children of asylum seekers are in practice therefore not guaranteed the right to education today. Ad hoc agreements have been reached between the local school close to the reception centre in Mucenieki and the reception centre administration regarding the right for these children to attend the local school. Such a solution may however not be feasible the day the number of asylum seeking children increase. Due to the current low number of asylum seekers in Latvia, the government has not considered the inclusion of a budget line in the State budget for such education a priority, because of many other pressing needs in the society.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	One major problem with regard to refugee children concerns the right of children born by asylum seekers in Latvia to receive birth certificates. According to the present system, children born by parents who are not legally residents in Latvia can not be issued formal birth certificates by the hospitals or relevant authorities. However, the hospital in which the child is born issues a document stating the time and place of birth and the name of the mother. This gap in the Latvian legislation was raised by UNHCR in the Country Assessment prepared within the framework of the Separated Children in Europe Program. Other problems indicated in the Country Assessment were the lack of a network of guardians as well of procedural rules on appointing a qualified guardian, the concern of minors being detained and the lack of regular health care facilities for children seeking asylum. Latvia acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention.
Lithuania	Separation	In 2001, 24 new applications were made, but no positive decisions were made with regard to separated children. In January 2002, legislative amendments introduced the right of the minor to submit his/her own asylum application, the obligation to assign a temporary guardian and represent the minor's interests during the asylum procedure and participate in court hearings regarding the minor's placement, and to apply alternatives to detention. As a result, officials from the authorities responsible for conducting the asylum interviews increased their cooperation with the Lithuanian Child Welfare Institution. Representatives of the Child Welfare Institution started to participate in interviews with separated children, conducted in the Foreigner's Registration Centre. The practice of authorizing detention of asylum seekers, including children by the courts has not been satisfactory in 2001.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No incidents of sexual mistreatment or harassment of detained female asylum seekers were reported during 2001, which reflects an improvement in comparison to previous years, when UNHCR received complaints on a fairly regular basis. Female asylum seekers in detention are currently being separated from male detainees and are being held in separate premises where they have access to private sanitary facilities. The number of female guards in the Foreigners' Registration centre has also been increased. An effective internal complaint system is still lacking in the centre which women would feel secure to use for reporting incidents of mistreatment by the administration or other asylum seekers. Psychological assistance by a specialist is provided.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	It was revealed in 2001 that asylum seekers and refugees in the Refugee Reception Centre lacked winter clothes and footwear. The situation was particularly serious for children attending school. Additional funding for covering the most acute needs was provided by UNHCR, as the UNHCR funded Red Cross project implemented in the Centre, did not allow accommodating these needs due to its limited scope.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	UNHCR continued to fund the Socialization Activities Project for Refugee Children. Within the framework of the project, various socialization activities were organized in order to facilitate the integration of refugee children into Lithuanian society and to relieve the children from suffering due to previous traumatic experiences. UNHCR has been promoting the need for special treatment of refugee children through training and public awareness activities organized for the Lithuanian authorities and NGOs. Lithuania acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Luxembourg	Separation	Separated children are automatically appointed a lawyer to represent them during the asylum procedure. No interview may take place without the presence of the child's lawyer. In addition, separated children can be allocated a guardian by a special judge appointed to the Children's Court, responsible for guardianship issues. In principle, separated children staying in Luxembourg are not entitled to reunification with their family, as it is considered that the minor should join his or her parent abroad. There is no statistical data available for 2002 when it comes to the registration of unaccompanied and separated children. Separated are given accommodation near the centre of Luxembourg's capital, allowing easy access to schools and guardians.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugee children and children seeking asylum have free access to the Luxembourg school system. Like other children they may attend reception classes in primary schools or classes with special language provision in secondary schools. In order to facilitate the integration of children of asylum seekers and refugees in Luxembourg schools and to improve communication between school personnel, the children and their parents, the Ministry of Education has appointed a number of intercultural mediators, originating from the asylum seekers main countries of origin. Upon request from the school, the mediators may provide various types of assistance. As there is no university in Luxembourg, students opt to go to Belgium, France or Germany. However most opt for Belgium as refugees benefit from the same rights as Luxembourg citizens i.e. a reduction on Belgium tuition fees. However there seems to be a tendency on the part of the authorities in Luxembourg to encourage refugees to attend vocational training courses rather than to proceed to further studies, because this responds better to the present employment demands.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	There has been no report of adoption of refugee or asylum seekers during the reporting period. Luxembourg is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Separation	Unaccompanied refugee children granted THAP status were placed under permanent guardianship of the Center for Social Work (CSW), which are throughout the country, and accommodated in appropriate foster families in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Family. UNHCR has undertaken a project with the CSW under the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. The activities of this project were aiming to assist the vulnerable individuals, most frequently children and women. During their one-year project they have assisted 185 individual cases. According to the CSW report, they have registered 13 separated children, 1 unaccompanied minor, and 5 minors abandoned by a parent. The children were either placed in a foster family or in a foster home. CSW has also assisted in providing birth certificates to new-born, giving professional opinion on specific cases, recommendation on guardianship in cases of separated families and separated children, provided counseling services.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	No cases of sexual or other types of violence (inclusive of abuse of refugee children) against persons of UNHCR's concern were reported to the Office. No legislative changes were introduced to provide for adequate sanctions against domestic violence. The NGOs and the Office continued to refer victims of domestic violence to the Inter-municipal Center for Social Work in the City of Skopje which provided counseling to 18 cases of domestic violence. In December 2002, American Refugee Committee (ARC) in collaboration with UNHCR hosted a workshop on Domestic Violence for interested NGOs. Following an introduction to the topic and several activities prompting strategies on how collective action could be taken to combat domestic violence, the group of NGOs decided to form a coalition against domestic violence, taking on board members of certain ministries, the judicial system, and the police, with a member of the CSW as the coordinator.
	Military recruitment	UNHCR Skopje is not aware of any cases involving the recruitment of refugee children and adolescents into the armed forces of Macedonia or into irregular armed forces.
	Education	The right of foreign nationals and stateless persons to have access to primary education is guaranteed through the FYR Macedonia Constitution and the 1995 Law on Primary Education, and there have never been any legal obstacles for refugee children to access education in FYR Macedonia. However, there have been major difficulties observed in maintaining the continual attendance of the refugee children in the school system due to a number of cultural and practical constraints, such as language barrier, difficulties of integrating in the local schools, lack of self-reliance, lack of support from the parents, and low value of education. These constraints have become the basics for developing programs which are geared towards the supporting of the parents and the children in efforts to overcome the difficulties encountered in the education process. Basic incentives for the children who regularly attend school have been provided, such as the provision of bus tickets and snacks for those children enrolled in schools where this service is foreseen for other students. In addition to this and upon UNHCR's recommendation, UNICEF is also providing school support classes and Macedonian language classes in the settlements where most of the refugees are located. UNHCR jointly with UNICEF visits the local primary schools on a regular basis in order to follow up on the attendance of the refugee children. Access to evening school classes has been provided to the refugee children and adults who never received primary education. UNHCR collaborated with the Soros Foundation regarding the provision of scholarships for refugee students in secondary schools and universities.

(continued)	Adolescents	In order to promote the safe return of refugees from Kosovo it was determined that the repatriation package will comprise of both a monetary and a food component which is to be distributed in the sum equivalent to four hundred dollars for those over 15 years of age and to all unaccompanied minors and half the amount to those under 15 years of age. This cash grant will only be disbursed upon the returnees' arrival in Kosovo. Further, there have been Community Services activities in the Collective Centers as well as in Community Centers located in the settlements where most of the refugees are accommodated. The Community Services activities included psychosocial workshops, computer and English classes, health education for women and youth, and recreational and sport activities.
	Other	A common problem that was indicated was the large number of minors giving birth due to early marriages. The problem has been addressed in counseling sessions and group work with minors. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia succeeded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Republic of Moldova	Separation	The 'National Minors' Screening Center, a division of the Ministry of Interior was established as a temporary shelter for unaccompanied children. The Center receives children between 3 and 18 years who are abandoned, got lost, lack custody of their parents or guardians and are under 16 years old. The National Minors' Screening Center is the only governmental institution to provide assistance and protection to the above-mentioned minors. It receives also minors with a foreign citizenship whereupon it normally contacts similar institutions abroad to ensure their accompanied transport to the country of origin. Difficulties arise when unaccompanied minors are apprehended together with aliens who claim to be asylum seekers as in their case the Screening Center refuses to admit minors claiming lack of jurisdiction (there is no legal guardian to whom such a minor could be eventually handed over to). The conditions in the Screening Center are generally satisfactory with the exception of the so-called "isolator" when newly admitted minors are interned before a rudimentary medical check can be carried out. The Screening Center cooperates well with NGOs who have been helpful in providing basic furniture and funds to ensure sanitary conditions. In case minors with a foreign citizenship are admitted to the National Minors' Screening Center, UNHCR will be informed and they will be referred to its implementing partner 'Save the Children', which has regular access to the Screening Center for Minors.

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR Moldova has not received any indications for SGBV targeting refugee women. However, the implementing partner 'Save the Children' employs female Social Counsellors who are in close contact with potential victims and even conduct home visits. To ensure that women participate in the management and distribution of food and NFIs, particular attention has been paid to addressing the needs of the most vulnerable including women and children. Funds were earmarked for accommodation of single women, single mothers with children and families with more than three children. UNHCR's implementing partners distributed the aid with the help of female refugee volunteers. UNHCR Moldova provided sanitary materials to all women and girls of concern as standard practice. Packages of humanitarian aid include besides medical care and food also hygiene kits. Trafficking for sexual purposes is a serious problem in Moldova; however, UNHCR is not aware of any cases when refugees and/or asylum seekers were victimized.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	All children (including refugee children and children of asylum seekers) with foreign citizenship and stateless children have free access to primary schools and to secondary and higher educational institutions with tuition. UNHCR's implementing partner Save the Children monitors the educational situation for the children of asylum seekers and access is guaranteed when parents agree. Education in Moldavian in the Latin script as opposed to the Cyrillic is not foreseen in the Transdnestrian educational system, as the official state languages are Russian, Ukrainian and Moldavian in Cyrillic script. This poses difficulties for many IDP families in Transdnestria, where Moldavians account for 40% of all inhabitants. Six schools follow the education curricula set by the government of Moldova and teachers of these schools have been subjected to threats and harassment from the de facto regime in Transdnestria and up to date the situation remains unsolved. Between 1997 and 2001 UNHCR implemented a limited program to assist IDPs and reconstructed an apartment block for 12 IDP families as well as educational and medical institutions. Schools received much needed furniture and in addition, four hospitals and two educational institutions were rehabilitated in Chisinau. Cooperation exists with UNICEF that contributed to some school reconstruction projects with books and equipment. Some assistance also helped asylum seekers and refugees. Currently, UNHCR's sole involvement in Transdnestria was the monitoring of the project 'Reconciliation through General Secondary Education in the Transdnestrian Region of the Republic of Moldova'. To this end, the Japan Social Development Fund channelled a grant through the World Bank, and a grant agreement was signed between the Moldavian government and the World Bank in 2001.
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	Minors in detention are remanded in separate rooms from adults. When distributing minors to separate rooms, their age, physical and intellectual development, and moral qualities should be taken into account. Minors are entitled to increased rations, in addition they are permitted to receive parcels and have the right to daily walks up to two hours. They are offered the possibility to practice sport games and, if possible, they are allowed to purchase and receive books and school supplies above the amount set for purchasing food products and articles of daily necessity. Moldova acceded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.
Norway	Separation	During 2002, Norway received 894 separated children, which is a considerable increase compared to 2001, when 358 separated children arrived. Special problems have arisen concerning the settlement of separated children in municipalities. Some local authorities consider that receiving the separated children costs more than the government has agreed to finance. This in spite of the fact that the government pays in addition to the normal amount of NOK 300.000 per refugee, an additional NOK 10.000 per year if the refugee is a separated child. The age limit for receiving this benefit has been increased from 18 to 20 years. A major aim of the Ministry of Local Government and regional Development is to strengthen the competence in the local communities to deal with separated children. A separated child has an automatic right to family reunification only if he/she is younger than 12 years of age or has been granted asylum. However, very few of the separated children seeking protection as refugees are formally granted asylum (only 8). Instead they are given residence permits on humanitarian grounds. UNHCR Stockholm has stressed at the seminar held in Oslo 2002 that the separated children should never be denied access to the asylum procedure, and that they should go through the normal procedure and be exempted from all special procedures that may limit their chances of protection. Many children are allowed to stay simply because the authorities are not able to locate the parents or with another person with parental responsibilities. The inter-departmental group handling the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children has stipulated that their stay at reception centers should be as short as possible. In reality, separated children stay often over one year in reception centers.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	UNHCR has encouraged the Norwegian authorities to consider these issues more attentively in the Refugee Status Determination Procedure in the future.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	The school-aged children of asylum seekers (7 to 16 years), staying in the reception centers attend local schools. Schools may also choose to take young people aged 16 to 18 years. They are placed in normal classes, but receive additional lessons in Norwegian when appropriate. Mother tongue tuition will be provided if a qualified teacher is available and at least three children speak the language. The children of refugees have access to the state school system on the same basis as Norwegian children. Schooling is compulsory for all children between the ages of 7 to 16. The Norwegian State pays for all education. Public information staff at the Regional Office carries out outreach programs in the schools in Norway in order to bridge the increasing gap between the host and refugee populations, so as the combat xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments. In 2003 ROBNC will prepare an e-learning project for 2004 and 2005 to promote integration of refugees.
	Adolescents	-
	Other	Norway is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Poland	Separation	<p>According to reports available in the university, there were several hundred separated children in different Polish care institutions in 2002. The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy estimated that in 2001 close to 200 alien children were placed in foster families. In the Small Children's Home in Warsaw, which cooperates with BO Warsaw in a pilot project on foster families, there were 83 very young separated children, namely 24 boys and 44 girls throughout the period 1999-2002. UNHCR is aware of one case of an adoption of a refugee child who was born in Poland and whose parents were unable to provide adequate care. Separated are often placed in the State Emergency Care Centers. The emergency children's award in Warsaw is overwhelmed by problems related to finding permanent solutions for unaccompanied minor aliens referred directly to it by the police, border guards or emergency health care unit. According to a detailed ordinance regulating the status and structure of the minor care institutions, sojourn in an emergency care institution should be no longer than 3 months. Due to a variety of legal and logistical problems unaccompanied minors are often required to remain much longer at the emergency care center. Staffs in these institutions require training to learn how to deal with refugee children in need to access the RSD procedure. The situation of alien children in the emergency care units was notified by BO Warsaw to the Committee on the Rights of the Child through HQ. In the school year 2001-2002, there were a total of 201 separated children at the largest emergency care center on Bonifacego Street in Warsaw. It is likely that most of these children never enter the RSD procedure, and in many cases disappear. To remedy some of the problems related to the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children, UNHCR trained the Refugee Department personnel in interviewing techniques for children and vulnerable groups, and aims to continue in 2003. BO Warsaw organized a children workshop in 2002 for the officers from the Office for Repatriation and Aliens.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	<p>All children who are in the procedure for refugee status have the right to free elementary education. All secondary schools required payment of general fees from asylum seekers and refugees. Parents who cannot afford paying such fees were able to apply to the headmaster for reduction of the fee or exemption. Several refugees continue their studies at the university level, and a few of them have access to scientific careers at research institutes. In most refugee centers the children of applicants are able to attend local schools. In some cases Polish classes were provided for adults and children. However, due to transfers between centers, administrative hurdles, and the financial concerns of authorities, not all children were enrolled in local schools. Unaccompanied minors in Debak Center can attend Polish language classes, but their regular attendance at a local school is not arranged. NGOs host a number of educational and recreational activities with the support of UNHCR and other donors. The long-term TOT educational project "Understanding Others", launched in 1999 and followed up in 2000, resulted in a publication in 2001 of a guidebook for teachers on how to teach about refugee issues. Special information materials on refugees were also prepared for schools which refugee children attend.</p>
	Adolescents	-
	Other	<p>The detention of unaccompanied minors in the criminal custody for illegal entry remains an issue of great concern to UNHCR, especially since interventions with national authorities regarding such persons have not resulted in their release and provision of specialized care. Poland is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>

Portugal	Separation	<p>Social support is mainly provided by the Portuguese Refugee Council (PRC), which directs aid to assist, in particular, single female asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors. An improvement was achieved in terms of legal representation for minors through the full implementation of article 56 of the Asylum Law, which contemplates that minor asylum applicants have to be represented by an NGO. In this sense, the authorities entrust legal representation throughout the asylum procedure to PRC, after having been informed by the SEF that a minor is in need of legal representation. An area that still gives rise to concern is the lack of special attention to the needs of the child in terms of psychological follow up. Up to June 2001, Santa Casa da Misericordia de Lisboa (SMCL) provided unaccompanied children with shelter, food, medical care, social counselling and financial assistance. As this public institution claims that it does not have the expertise and resources to deal with the specific assistance required for unaccompanied children, assistance activities were discontinued. This resulted in a serious social protection gap for minor asylum seekers. The matter is now under discussion with the Social Security Services that, it is hoped, in the future will take on that responsibility. During the period under review, 9 claims for refugee status were lodged by unaccompanied minors.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>The current asylum law devotes a section to, particularly vulnerable cases, the provisions of which cover the situation of minors and victims of torture, rape, or other abuses of a physical or sexual nature. These provisions stipulate special care and follow-up by the social security center of their area of residence or other entities with which the center has concluded cooperation agreements.</p>
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	<p>Asylum seekers with a temporary residence permit have access to the public education system under the same conditions as nationals. The access of refugee children to education at primary and secondary levels is fully guaranteed. As regards the access to tertiary, technical schools and universities, refugees and asylum seekers have to sit the competitive examination along with Portuguese nationals to qualify for enrolment. Lack of language skills can cause problems.</p>
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	<p>The PRC, in line with UNHCR policy guidelines, relentlessly sensitized the authorities on the necessity of paying special attention to refugee children. However, in terms of policy making and creation of mechanisms intended to meet the basic needs of children, further developments are required. In this regard, the PRC, as a partner of the SCEP, advocates more efforts towards building up a specific capacity in this area and launching an awareness campaign that could bring about more attention to the issue. In the same sense, the PRC embarked on an information campaign to disseminate the policies advocated in the “Statement of Good Practice” jointly by the UNHCR and Save the Children. Portugal is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
Russian Federation	Separation	<p>As of end 2001, 13 cases of unaccompanied minors are registered with UNHCR; however it is assumed that there are more cases who never manage to approach UNHCR. The number of unaccompanied minors, known to UNHCR, arriving and seeking asylum in the Russian Federation has increased in comparison with 2001. As of the end of 2002, some 58 cases were registered with UNHCR Moscow. However, it is assumed that there are more cases which never approached UNHCR. In the autumn of 2002 UNHCR noted for the first time a small influx of unaccompanied minors from Somalia. RO Moscow arranged for several of them to live in a private children’s shelter where they receive appropriate care and supervision. The office also undertook an analysis of all separated children, most of whom are Afghan adolescents living with relatives. They were interviewed to learn about their family and social situations. Family tracing was initiated when necessary. In practice, access to the refugee status determination procedure for unaccompanied minors is hampered due to lack of valid documentation and lack of a guardian. The legislative gap is that no State authority sees itself responsible to identify a guardian for non-citizen children. Not a single unaccompanied minor asylum seeker got access to the RSD procedure in Moscow during 2002. UNHCR addressed this issue to the federal migration authorities in 2002 and expects the first eligibility interviews with minors to be conducted during the first quarter of 2003. In parallel UNHCR is undertaking efforts to find proper shelter and to identify a guardian.</p>

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	An increased number of cases of domestic violence have been reported in 2001 and 2002 to UNHCR RO Moscow. UNHCR believes that this is due to better awareness raising/sensitization of implementing partners' social workers and psychologists, which has led to more cases being brought to UNHCR's attention. The domestic violence mostly targets women and children. No effective protection is available from the Russian police in case of domestic violence as law enforcement agencies in the Russian Federation consider this to be a private matter and does not interfere. Even more difficult is it for persons of concern to UNHCR as they often lack documents and have no residence registration. Reporting to the police is most likely to end up in having to pay a fine and or eviction of the domestic violence victim instead of receiving appropriate protection. Two cases of domestic violence against refugee children were reported to UNHCR by social workers. In both cases, children did not have parents in the country of asylum and suffered beating and degrading treatment from their relatives. The children were accommodated with foster families under supervision of UNHCR's social workers. Apart from domestic violence, there were not any sexual or gender-based violence incidents of IDP women to UNHCR.
	Military recruitment	Prevention of military recruitment of children/adolescents has not been directly addressed by UNHCR RO Moscow/field offices in the Caucasus. While there have been unconfirmed reports of recruitment of IDP children/adolescents into Chechen fighting units, UNHCR's current inability to operate in Chechnya prevents it from properly assessing or addressing this issue.

(continued)	Education	<p>Access of refugee children to primary and secondary education is hampered by registration rules and protracted refugee status determination procedures that results in lack of valid documentation for lawful stay in Russia. Due to lack of proper documents, many asylum seekers try to avoid travelling more than necessary through the city, fearing police harassment and xenophobic attacks. To bring children to school is sometimes simply seen as too dangerous. In addition, due to the difficult economic situation of far-abroad asylum seekers and refugees, many parents can not afford to send their children to school. Lack of proper clothes, school supplies, coverage of school fees hinders children's school attendance. Furthermore, some children, mainly boys, have to financially contribute to their families' income. Many children are working with their fathers/relatives or friends at the markets. There is no specific legislation, which would ensure access to education for refugee children. While some parents have managed to enrol their children in State schools through unofficial arrangements with the Directors, the automatic right of these children to education is not guaranteed. Furthermore, many children are hampered by lack of adequate Russian language skills and or missing years of education in basic subjects that prevent them from entering appropriate grades in Russian schools. The main goal of UNHCR is to establish adequate mechanisms to prepare asylum seekers and refugee children to enter the local education system and to increase their access to local schools. An agreement was signed with the Moscow Committee of Education and the Moscow school No 729 in 2000 to prepare asylum seeker and refugee children for enrolment in regular classes at this school. In order to mitigate the financial constraints keeping children from school, UNHCR provides all asylum seeker and refugee children in Moscow City and Moscow region attending any kind of schooling with necessary clothing and school supplies and covers school fees and transportation costs. These 'school kits' are also available in St. Petersburg, but for a limited number of children.</p>
	Adolescents	<p>Adolescents too old for enrolment in local schools can take external school exams to obtain an official graduation certificate (only in one community center which may not be 'accessible' for all adolescents due to the long distances people have to travel in Moscow). UNHCR's implementing partner, Solidarity, prepares adolescents in basic subjects who are e.g. too old to catch up having missed significant years of education. Tutoring of those children attending local schools is offered well. Limited support is also provided for young adults pursuing further education/training.</p>

(continued)	Other	<p>UNHCR's activities for children in the Northern Caucasus have somehow decreased as much has been handed over to other UN bodies and/or NGOs. However, UNHCR has provided food and non-food items to schools being open over summer for IDP children to undertake recreational activities. Approximately 8000 children benefited from this assistance. Psychosocial counseling services are available in several camps, particularly targeting needs of women and children, and UNHCR provides technical support to other agencies involved in this activity. A mine-awareness training program has been implemented together with UNICEF, focusing on awareness raising among the children and adolescents. The Russian Federation is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
Slovakia	Separation	<p>3 Afghani unaccompanied minors were identified by UNHCR's implementing partner Goodwill Society (GWS) during a monitoring mission to a Detention facility in Secovce, Eastern Slovakia. Following consultations with BO Bratislava, GWS advised the Detention facility to inform the District Court on the presence of 3 unaccompanied minors in order to start the procedure of appointing a guardian. The District Court had appointed a guardian and a Child Care institution where they were to be placed for six months. Within these six months the District Court would take another decision on the longer time care of separated children. In the mean time, the children were in regular contact with their mother, a recognized refugee in Germany and who was to initiate family reunification. The children are attending school, have been communicating through an interpreter at the beginning of their placement and are in contact with recognized refugees originated from Afghanistan. The 3 Palestinian siblings were identified on the street in Bratislava in 2002 and were placed in care of the Slovak Committee for UNICEF. They have been placed in an institutional care and have been in regular contact with their parents, who were residing in Norway. They have initiated a family reunification and in November 2002 they were reunited with the parents with assistance of IOM and the Slovak Red Cross. 2 Separated children from Afghanistan were granted refugee status. Their older brother is Slovak citizen and he had initiated through the IFRC their legal arrival to Slovakia. BO Bratislava organized a two days training on SCEP Statement of Good Practice in July 2002. The BO Bratislava attended SCEP Training of Trainers and has used SCEP training material. The BO Bratislava also organized two visits of Slovak authorities to centers for separated children in Germany and Austria.</p>

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	A young Ukrainian girl who was detained, deceived and beaten up by a group of men during the flight was monitored in the refugee center. The case also referred to the problem of criminal smuggling and trafficking, and, suspicion on sexual abuse and exploitation. Legal counseling and psychological assistance was provided by implementing partners, and external cooperating with a women organization was arranged. In 2002, attention was further paid to the problem of domestic violence within the families of asylum seekers in the centers and to efficient mechanisms of response to the domestic violence. Although no cases of women exposed to domestic violence were directly reported by implementing partners, a certain incidence of the problems related to domestic violence in the centers has been anticipated.
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Primary and secondary education is obligatory and refugee children have the same rights to access to education as Slovak children. Their access to the universities is dependent on the status of each university. Refugees are, however, generally considered as nationals for the purpose of the studies at the universities, and therefore they do not have to pay for studies. They can ask for a scholarship, but often fail to achieve the scholarship. As they do not have the means to support themselves, UNHCR provides scholarships which cover their living expenses and provides for books. The students that are achieving good grades are encouraged and supported by UNHCR to apply for the DAFI scholarship, or alternative support from non UNHCR sources. Younger refugee children are also assisted to attend kindergarten in refugee camps in order to enable their parents to enroll in vocational training activities and/or to work.
	Adolescents	In 2002, UNHCR and its implementing partners continued to monitor the needs and conditions of female asylum seekers and women refugees and sought to improve the capacity to respond to particular needs and risks faced by women and adolescent and separated girls. In case of specific needs or psychological problems, psychological or social counseling was provided. Special attention was also given to strengthen safety and security measures.
	Other	Due to the considerable increase of asylum seekers in the refugee centers in 2001 part of asylum seekers was accommodated in military tents in refugee centers. There were no reports of refugee women living in the tents, or in inappropriate conditions. However, UNHCR intervened in some cases of pregnant women or female asylum seekers with young children, where women were not provided with adequate care in refugee centers in the initial phase of their stay and were left outside the camp to wait for registration, food and accommodation for a long time. Slovakia succeeded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

<p>Slovenia</p>	<p>Separation</p>	<p>In 2001, triggered by the Separated Children in Europe Program, UNHCR called a meeting with the Asylum Home, IOM, Center for Deportation and several Government and NGO participants to discuss issues of separated children and launch a national project aiming to improve their protection in Slovenia. The majority of participants agreed on the necessity to tackle the issue of separated children, but the police had serious doubts on the extent of this problem as according to their evaluation there were only a few cases per year. Statistics prepared by the Asylum Department showed another reality. 430 decisions for guardianship to minor asylum seekers were issued by the Center for Social Work since the Asylum Law entered into force in 1999. Out of 430 cases, 424 disappeared in a few days and the appointment of guardianship was merely a procedural act which allowed the authorities to close their cases. The existence of this caseload in the asylum procedures indicates that there are also separated children who do not apply for asylum, but who cross the territory of Slovenia through illegal channels for whom statistics are not known or not available. To further increase awareness on separated children issues, UNHCR, IOM and OIR organized the first training for social workers in the Centers for Social Work. In addition, a brochure on separated children was published in cooperation with the Government of Slovenia. The Statement of Good Practices, produced under the Separated Children in Europe Program, was translated in Slovene language and shared in the training. In 2002, separated children applying for asylum in Slovenia have been above 16 years of age. One of the difficulties encountered in the asylum procedure, as expressed by the deciding authority, is the determination of asylum-seekers' age. For the time being, however, the authorities have not established an age assessment procedure. In 2002, the Asylum Department started to officially gather statistics on separated children on monthly/yearly basis. Twenty-four separated children (7 girls) applied for asylum in 2002. In 22 cases a local NGO Slovene Philanthropy (SF) was automatically appointed as legal guardian, while in two cases children left Slovenia before the official appointment of the guardian. The procedure to appoint a legal guardian can take from a week to a month. In 2002, majority of separate children originated from Sierra Leone (5), Moldova (5), Turkey (4) and FRY (4). Separated children are accommodated in the reception center for asylum seekers, but very often they leave the center without notice in a week after their arrival (please note that 95% of asylum-seekers in Slovenia abscond before the first interview). Except for separate accommodation provided in the reception center (within special department for minors), there is a near total lack of institutional awareness on the special needs of separated children. Considering that not all separated children apply for asylum, UNHCR requested the Centre for Foreigners to keep statistics of those that are caught as illegal migrants and accommodated in their facilities. In 2002, 117 separated children were registered by the Centre for Foreigners. Many were deported back to</p>
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(continued)		<p>their country of origin, but since the authorities do not keep statistics on deportation of separated children, no figures were made available. It should be also noted that separated children, like other illegal migrants, when issued permit to leave the Centre for Foreigners for one ore more days, fail to report back and disappear towards EU. Until recently, separated children illegally in Slovenia were not entitled to a legal guardian. This difficulty has been addressed at the last revision of the Aliens Law in October 2002, when UNHCR successfully advocated for a compulsory appointment of a guardian to separated children in the deportation procedure. Further, the Center for Foreigners in Postojna is a closed facility that is not an adequate accommodation for children. UNHCR expressed to the authorities its concern over this situation and suggested the use of more lenient measures and alternatives to detention as foreseen by the Law on Aliens. The detention practice has however not be not changed.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>The question of sexual exploitation of female unaccompanied and separated minors by their co-national asylum seekers in the reception center was of concern to UNHCR. Upon the arrival of a small group of female unaccompanied and separated minors from Sierra Leone, SF reported to have suspicions. The issue was addressed with the authorities, especially social workers in the Asylum Home. After individual interviews with young girls, these suspicions could not be confirmed. The whole group left Slovenia illegally in a very short time and thus the initial suspicions regarding human trafficking to the EU were not fully cleared.</p>
	Military recruitment	<p>Issues such as adoption, in country adoption, military recruitment, compulsory child labor are not applicable to the Slovene context.</p>

(continued)	Education	Asylum seekers are entitled to primary education while refugees have the same rights as Slovene nationals or, in other words, free primary, secondary and university education in public schools. The same applies for TP refugees. The high fluctuation of asylum seekers, the language barrier and a rather expensive medical examination are among the main difficulties as regards children asylum seekers enrolment in Slovene schools. To overcome this problem, the competent authorities started the enrolment procedure with a local school only upon completion of a basic Slovene language course followed by a medical examination. The language courses are organized in the Asylum Home in cooperation with SF volunteers, mostly retired teachers. To provide equal access to education for asylum seekers, temporary protection and convention refugee children, adolescents and young adults, a sub-agreement was signed with the Ministry of Education and Science for the tenth year. UNHCR funds enabled the most vulnerable young persons to continue their studies by providing them with specific support which their parents would otherwise not be able to provide. As the average failure rate of the national and refugee population is approximately the same, circa 5 per cent, it appears that the refugee children have equal opportunities with national children and hence very good prospects for integration. In 2002, 232 children attended primary school. 158 adolescents attended secondary school. 91 young adults were enrolled in university programs.
	Adolescents	The needs of refugee children enrolled in Slovene schools are addressed in cooperation with teachers or psychologists from Slovene schools. Children with more serious psychological problems are included in effective programs carried out by a specialized institution “The Slovene Counseling Centers for Children, Adolescents and Parents”.
	Other	BO Ljubljana focused its activities in raising awareness and capacity of responsible institutions in the field of human trafficking. Of particular importance was the inclusion of BO Ljubljana in the working group created by the government of Slovenia to address human trafficking and smuggling issues. The group held several meetings and by the end of 2002 presented a comprehensive plan that included necessary legislative changes as well as implementation arrangements and gaps to be looked at by responsible governmental and other bodies in the future. The role of BO Ljubljana, IOM and NGOs have been particularly praised, especially the expert input and readiness to cooperate in victims assistance projects. Further, the Center for Foreigners in Postojna, as a closed facility, is not considered an adequate accommodation for children. BO Ljubljana expressed to the authorities its concern over this situation and suggested to use more lenient measures and alternatives to detention as foreseen by the Law on Aliens. Slovenia succeeded to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the two Optional Protocols under the same and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Serbia and Montenegro	Separation	According to the 2001 census in Serbia of the refugee population, there were 557 unaccompanied minors among the refugees. All unaccompanied minor refugees have been taken care of by the competent Serbian and Montenegrin social security institutions. There were 14 unaccompanied refugee children in Montenegro, who were taken care of by the competent social institutions.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	Serbia has an extensive network of local women associations who respond to the many different needs of women including refugee and IDP women. These Associations offer a range of services and activities for women and children. Some of them are very committed to violence against women, and offer shelter as well as psychological counselling sessions with victims. Refugee and IDP women, victims of domestic violence and other forms of abuse have been referred through the community services network to these associations for assistance. In Montenegro, UNHCR gave material assistance to a Safe House NGO that provides shelter to victims of trafficking and domestic violence.
	Military recruitment	Refugees do not serve in the armed forces of FRY.
	Education	According to the legislation of SCG, all children have access to primary and secondary education. This applies to all children, including refugees. Refugee children from former Yugoslavia have the same access to education, health and social facilities as nationals. In addition and in order to address the specific needs of the refugee and IDP children, educational, social, recreational activities and vocational training were directed to refugee and IDP children and adolescents. 20,000 school kits were distributed through the community services network and the local centers for Social Welfare to the most needy primary school refugee and IDP children. Regarding asylum seekers/mandate refugee children (originating from outside Former Yugoslavia), UNHCR continues to carry out educational and social activities through the IRC. 55 children/mandate refugees benefited from UNHCR care and maintenance program through the IRC in the refugee accommodation facility outside Belgrade.
	Adolescents	UNHCR community services projects for children and adolescents focused mainly on youth clubs and vocational training programs. Different creative workshops were organized for children such as sport activities, excursions, visits to cultural events and homework support. As regards health care, UNHCR's medical project provided health care to refugee and IDP children and adolescents less than 18 years of age with special needs. The main objectives of the medical program were to raise awareness among health professionals and authorities on the health situation and needs of all refugees and IDPs and to visit vulnerable beneficiaries and provide them with essential medicines.

	Other	<p>UNHCR Field Offices identified and implemented through community services a number of projects aimed especially at assisting Roma children. Child labor is widespread among the Roma population and parents often refuse to enrol their children in school so that they can contribute to the family's budget. One of the main objectives for Roma to prepare the Roma children to attend school and educate their parents along the way to support their children's education. Lack of hygiene and health education among the Roma population is directly reflected in a high infant mortality rate and therefore health awareness, protection, education and assistance in disease prevention and protection needs to be promoted. Another project focused on a campaign against trafficking women in southern Serbia. It aims at raising awareness on the issue in Serbia, which is one of the major transit routes of traffickers. The project also assisted victims of trafficking. National authorities refrained from imposing administrative detention on children of asylum seekers originating from outside the former Yugoslavia and allowed UNHCR to accommodate them upon arrival. The FRY succeeded the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the two Optional Protocols under the same Convention and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
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Spain	Separation	<p>According to the aliens law, when a minor is identified as unaccompanied and his/her age cannot be established, the child will be referred to the Minors Prosecutor for age determination and, after the age minority is confirmed, the child will be transferred to the Protection of Minors Department of the correspondent Autonomous Community or City for the appointment of a legal guardian, interim care, etc. Family reunification or return to country of origin will be contemplated as primary options, unless the minor has expressed his/her willingness to apply for asylum. Nine months after the minor has been put under the care of the competent services for the protection of minors, and if attempts to repatriate fail, the minor should be granted a residence permit lasting till s/he turns 18. The wrist-bone x-ray continues to be used for the age assessment of undocumented children. The number of separated minors seeking asylum in Spain, remains minimal (1 in 2001, and 2 in 2002, according to the official figures) compared to the rest of the European countries and with the total number of UAMs. With exceptions, all of them are juveniles and originate from Africa. On 23 October 2003, the Public Prosecutor General issued an instruction to prosecutors to interpret that a foreign unaccompanied minor over the age of 16 is considered to be emancipated from his/her parents, i.e. an adult, and therefore not in need or entitled to the special child protection foreseen for any child under 18. Consequently, unaccompanied minors over the age of 16 can expect to be repatriated like any other adult disregarding children's legal safeguards. This Instruction 03/2003 was widely criticised by the Ombudsman and human rights associations. Being Morocco the country of origin of the overwhelming majority of UAMs in Spain, a bilateral agreement to facilitate the repatriation of unaccompanied Moroccan children was signed on 23 December 2003 between the Moroccan and the Spanish Governments. Separated minors (Spanish, asylum-seekers, aliens in general) are placed in Public Protection Centers for Minors run by the different Regional Autonomous Governments. There are three qualified NGOs with reception centers and "monitored flats" in Spain specialised in unaccompanied refugees and asylum-seekers, as well as alien immigrants.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>The CRC in June 2002 expressed "its concern at reports of child prostitution in the suburbs of large cities and in holiday resorts, involving vulnerable children living on the fringes of the society" (CRC/C/15/Add.185). Spanish press echoed reports of cases of Moroccan girls working as domestic servants, as well as cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation of Eastern European and African girls. Worrying violence amongst inmates and sexual abuse by personnel in the Centers for Minors have been denounced publicly. See below -Adolescents-, for reports on reception conditions and documented abuses.</p>

(continued)	Military recruitment	There is not recruitment of foreign/children
	Education	According to aliens law, separated children all foreign nationals under eighteen years of age have the right and obligation to receive an education under the same conditions as Spanish citizens. This right includes access to basic, free and obligatory education, to the obtainment of the corresponding academic qualifications and to the public system of grants and aid. In the case of pre-school education, which is voluntary, the public administrations shall guarantee that there are sufficient openings to cover the needs of the population that requests schooling. Foreign residents have a right to non-obligatory education under the same conditions as Spanish citizens. Specifically, they have the right to gain access to levels of education and learning not covered by the above section, to the obtainment of the corresponding academic qualifications and to the public system of grants and aid. Public authorities shall take steps to provide education to foreign residents who need this in order to facilitate their social integration, while recognising and respecting their cultural identity. Refugee reception centers work very closely with schools and education institutes where separated children are registered, in order to monitor their progress and adaptation process to the new environment. Some of these schools count with support teachers and compensation school-hours for asylum-seeker minors.
	Adolescents	During 2002, different institutions, including the CRC (concluding observations June 2002), CAT (November 2002), the Spanish Ombudsman (annual report), HRW ("State abuse of unaccompanied migrant children by Spain and Morocco"), Amnesty International ("Spain: Crisis of Identity, race-related torture and ill-treatment by state agents") Doctors without Borders, and NGO PRODEIN, denounced irregular expulsions and arbitrary proceedings of foreign minors, amongst other issues. See above -Separation-, re: Instruction 3/2003 and Agreement on the Repatriation of Moroccan juveniles.
	Other	Because of their geographical location and migration flows, Canary Islands, Ceuta, and Melilla are important points of entry and the main receiving areas of foreign separated minors. Most of the reports on reception conditions and abuses were documented in their crowded Centers for Minors.

Sweden	Separation	A child less than 18 years old who enters Sweden without a parent or guardian and applies for asylum is considered to be a separated child. In 2001 there were 461 separated children in Sweden, whereas in 2002 a total of 550 separated children arrived in Sweden. The Swedish Migration Board focused a lot on children in the asylum process. Issues related to how to organize the reception of separated children and how to train staff involved in the reception were analyzed with a view to making improvements in the system. The findings of the study lead to the articulation of a need to shift the general legal and administrative responsibility of the children from the Migration Board to the municipalities where the children are accommodated, and which, in accordance with the Law on Social Welfare, have the responsibility to care for all children in their geographical area. However, no final decision was taken by the government. The appointment of social and legal guardians is an important aspect of the Swedish system in regard to the set-up for separated asylum seeking children. A concern relating to the role of guardians is that their roles have not been clearly defined. There is a lack of written information and guidelines for guardians, and until recently no particular training was provided to individuals appointed as guardians. In addition, no specific knowledge is required to be appointed as a social guardian. Consequently the type of involvement and quality of the support provided to separated children has varies considerably. Efforts have however been made during 2003, in particular by Save the Children and The Swedish Refugee Council to organize for legal guardians. This is however still an area which needs to be developed and monitored. UNHCR continued to meet with the Swedish Migration Board, and NGOs advocating refugee children's' rights, to discuss protection issues concerning separated children and in particular to monitor developments with regard to guardians, the interpretation of the best interest of the child and the overall responsibility for asylum seeking separated children.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	In June 2003 the government proposed to introduce more severe sentences for trafficking of individuals. It is also proposed that temporary residence permits could be issued for victims of trafficking and other witnesses in order to facilitate the prosecution of traffickers. The proposal includes provisions to allow children victims of trafficking access to education and daycare while they stay in Sweden.
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	Refugees have the same access to the Swedish education system as Swedish citizens, and are entitled to the same educational assistance (grants and loans). Refugees with less than the equivalent of 6 years schooling are entitled to attend basic adult education classes. Lessons include reading skills and mathematics. Refugees not attending such basic adult education classes are still entitled to attend basic Swedish lessons for immigrants. Afterwards, the refugees may attend additional courses of a more vocational nature. Both asylum seeking children and recognized refugees are admitted to the regular primary and secondary schools, as soon as they are able to attend.
	Adolescents	While awaiting a decision on their asylum applications, separated children can stay in special group homes for children, established in close connection to regional reception centers. They may also stay with relatives in Sweden. As noted above, during their stay in Sweden the children remain the responsibility of the Migration Board. The Swedish media reported about psychological unrest among separated children and adolescents. It was also reported that some children disappeared from the group homes, and that trafficking or exploitation was suspected in some cases. The Swedish authorities, at different levels, including the responsible minister, took the reports very seriously and the police and other Migration Board authorities got involved in related investigations. Discussions on how to counteract and prevent such cases in the future have also been undertaken.
	Other	The Ministry of Justice informed of its intention to submit a Bill to the Parliament on October 2002. The proposal aimed at putting an end to the exceptions granted to children of immigrants from countries where marriages are authorized for those under the age of 18 can apply for and obtain special permission to get married from the age of 15. The Bill also contains provisions to prevent immigrants from circumventing the legal age limit by sending their children to their home country to get married. If they do so, the marriage will not be recognized in Sweden. Sweden is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Switzerland	Separation	In 2002, 6, 9 per cent of all asylum seekers in Switzerland (1,809 persons), were unaccompanied minors. The great majority of them were aged between 15-18 years and of masculine gender (87, 7 per cent). These unaccompanied minors originated mainly from Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Algeria, Iraq, Angola and Yugoslavia. In cases of doubt as to the age of the asylum seeker, the burden of determination lies with the Swiss authorities, who regularly make use of scientific age assessment methods. The use of these methods, however, is somewhat questionable, as the exact age can not be determined by such methods. After assignment to a Canton, a person of confidence is appointed immediately to assist the unaccompanied minor asylum seeker during the whole procedure. He/she will ensure the interests of the child. As a minimum requirement the person of confidence should have some basic legal knowledge. At the register center, the authorities will listen to the unaccompanied minor for the first time and try to trace family members. All efforts are made to attribute the unaccompanied minor to a Canton as soon as possible, so that he/she spends the least time possible at the center. Relatives that live in Switzerland will be taken into consideration. If the unaccompanied minor does not fulfill the criteria for refugee status, the FOR must check the possibility of enforcement of sending him/her back to his/her country of origin. If the unaccompanied minor can not be returned, she/he will be granted temporary admission in Switzerland.
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-
	Education	Children of asylum seekers as well as temporarily admitted persons may start primary or secondary school the latest three months after having arrived in Switzerland. They attend school at least up to 9 th grade. The subsequent completion of an apprenticeship is only allowed exceptionally, or within the context of a voluntary return program. Asylum seekers do not generally have access to universities. In some Cantons, there are special language classes in the language of the Canton for the first year pupils. Depending on the school and the Canton, children of asylum seekers may also receive instruction in special classes given in their mother tongue. Children of recognized refugees have the same rights as other children in Switzerland. They enjoy compulsory education up to 9 th grade and have the possibility either to do an apprenticeship after having finished school, or to study at university. The funding of the studies may sometimes pose a practical problem as most of the refugees are dependent on social assistance during the first couple of years after they have been recognized. In some exceptional cases, grants are provided by the Cantons
	Adolescents	-

(continued)	Other	<p>In spite of the right of recognized refugees to family reunification, the costs arising in connection with the family reunification are not regulated by law. The Federal Office for Refugees does not generally cover these costs. In some cases, travel costs have been covered and arrangements have been made by UNHCR. Switzerland is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
Turkey	Separation	<p>During 2002, UNHCR Turkey received 59 applications (60 persons) from separated children, which was double the number received the previous year. Four separated children were reunited with family members through resettlement. UNHCR Turkey provides regular training and refresher courses for its staff to increase knowledge and sensitivity in dealing with separated children seeking asylum. Eligibility staff and interpreters trained on “child-friendly” interviewing techniques. They are also instructed to give priority to promptly finalizing cases involving separated children. In 2002, two national staff members from UNHCR Turkey were invited to share their expertise in this area as resource persons for a Workshop on RSD Procedures for Child Applicants, held in Moscow as part of the Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC) training and capacity building project. In 2002, UNHCR Turkey began making formalized Best Interest Determinations (BID) for all separated children, in cooperation with consulting Psychologists in Istanbul and Ankara. Resettlement countries initially raised the need for a formal BID after observing an increasing tendency for Baha’I parents to send or leave their children alone in Turkey. UNHCR Turkey has since decided, as a matter of policy and good practice, to ensure that BID interviews are conducted for all separated children, regardless of their status. UNHCR Turkey has also updated its registration forms, in order to ensure that separated children seeking asylum are identified early in the process. The new form also solicits expanded information from separated children, so that their vulnerabilities and special needs for financial support, accommodation and medical care are assessed and addressed as soon as possible after they request asylum. UNHCR occasionally accommodates separated children in local hotels, as an interim measure pending finalization of their applications for refugee status. Following consultations with UNHCR, the MOI agreed to receive some separated children at the Yoga Refugee Guesthouse, which is used primarily to accommodate persons with specific security problems in Turkey. While providing a relatively more secure environment and a degree of supervision, the Yozgat facility does not offer the services or specialized care need by children. The Office worked closely with the Child Protection and Social Welfare Institute, the government agency responsible for child welfare issues, regarding the safe accommodation of separated children seeking asylum.</p>

(continued)	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	<p>UNHCR Turkey recognized the refugee status of 15 women who presented gender-based claims, out of a total 20 applicants. Some of the political claims also included elements of gender-based persecution, such as rape and other forms of sexual violence. In 2002, the Office developed mechanisms for ensuring that such claims are properly captured in statistical reporting. UNHCR Turkey handled several cases involving situations of domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, forced prostitution, as well as cases of separated children. In six such cases, at UNHCR's request, the MOI transferred refugees and asylum seekers at risk to Yozgat or elsewhere to ensure their physical safety. The Yozgat facility is not an ideal solution for vulnerable individuals or those with special needs; however, it is the only facility currently available for persons of concern to UNHCR who are in need of special protection. UNHCR Turkey has formed a Gender and Children Team to encourage and monitor progress on mainstreaming global policies in these priority areas. The Team's membership was expanded to include the Office's main implementing partners in August 2001. During 2001, UNHCR also commissioned research projects on legal and psychological issues related to the protection of refugee women and refugee children (i.e. domestic violence, rape, separation, sexual exploitation, abuse and violence etc.). The Office will transform this research into practical protocols for caseworkers and a manual for refugee women in 2002. It also organized internal training for eligibility staff and external training for government officials both include a specific focus on gender issues in refugee protection, including the gender-based persecution and gender sensitive interviewing techniques.</p>
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	<p>Refugee and asylum seeker children with valid residence permits have the right to primary education in Turkey. Until recent years, however, the actual rate of school attendance among UNHCR Turkey's caseload was low. Parents were reluctant to send their children to local schools for several reasons; including a lack of awareness of their children's right to primary education and, even where this was not the case, a lack of resources for uniforms and supplies. Many also expected that their stay in Turkey would be short and did not believe the children could adapt to instruction in Turkish. UNHCR Turkey actively promotes formal education among the refugee and asylum seeker community, working to sensitize and raise awareness among parents of their children's right to attend school. UNHCR also provides families with education grants intended to cover basic educational expenses, such as books, stationary, uniforms, sport clothes and shoes. UNHCR monitors the impact of the grants through a systematic review of student attendance. Records during the year. The refugee and asylum seeker caseload included some 720 primary school age children. Almost 70 per cent of this group is attending local schools, nine out of ten of these children received assistance from UNHCR during 2002. The Turkish Educational Volunteers Foundation (TEGV) includes refugee and asylum seeker children in its vocational and recreational programs and employs volunteer teachers from the refugee and asylum seeker community, which ensures that children receive some instruction in their first language.</p>
	Adolescents	<p>UNHCR's medical assistance programs address the special health care needs of refugee and asylum seeker women and adolescent girls. They are provided with sanitary materials, which are distributed through local contract pharmacies on a 20 per cent co-payment basis.</p>
	Other	<p>A four-day workshop on Community Services responses in Emergencies for personnel of the Turkish Social Services and Child Protection Agency, held in 2002. The workshop was held in connection with the Iraq crisis and was supported by resource persons seconded by Save the Children Norway. Turkey is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>

Ukraine	Separation	<p>According to the <i>Law of Ukraine on Refugees</i>, an unaccompanied minor is a person under eighteen years of age who is arriving or has arrived into the territory of Ukraine without parents or parent, grandfather or grandmother, adult brother or sister, guardian or tutor appointed pursuant to the legislation of the country of refugees' origin or other persons of full legal age who voluntarily or due to traditions existing in the refugee's country of origin assumed responsibility for upbringing of the child prior to arrival in Ukraine. The same law obliges migration service together with guardianship agencies to provide for temporary accommodation of such children with appropriate foster families or children institutions. Some Regional Migration Services have been trying to implement these provisions – most recently regarding one unaccompanied minor asylum-seeker from Liberia. This child went ashore in the Nikolayev region from the vessel, on which he was found as a stowaway. Now he is being processed and accommodated in the TAC for refugees by the authorities of Odessa. In other regions, however, authorities do not yet at all implement the international and national law provisions regarding unaccompanied minor asylum seekers. UNHCR and its partners have been approached by more than ten cases of unaccompanied minors, who applied for refugee status in Kyiv City, but were rejected any admission into procedures or care on the basis of aforementioned deadlines of Art 9, although exactly the same article expressly stipulates that these deadlines must <u>not</u> to be applied to unaccompanied minors. Neither migration service or guardianship agencies have yet received clear instructions on how to fulfil these new duties under the <i>Law of Ukraine on Refugees</i> nor yet developed a strategy of communication and cooperation in this. The number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in Ukraine is not very high for the moment. But again, UNHCR recently convened a first meeting between migration and guardianship agencies and responsible ministries to increase their know-how and cooperation in an adequately humane reception and processing of unaccompanied minors asylum seekers. NGO partners of UNHCR also established close cooperation with refugee communities to identify suitable temporary foster families for unaccompanied minors until authorities are willing and ready to assume their responsibilities. Stateless children and separated children coming from countries with which Ukraine has not concluded a visa-free agreement need to obtain a visa to enter Ukraine legally. According to its Refugee Law, separated children entering the country illegally, with the intention to apply for refugee status should not be detained. Instead, Migration Services have to place such children in a child care institution or in a host-family. No cases of separated children (unaccompanied minors) application for asylum were reported in 2002.</p>
	Sexual exploitation, abuse and violence	-
	Military recruitment	-

(continued)	Education	<p>Approximately 90% of school-aged refugee children attend primary school. Children also participate in secondary and vocational education. However, very often these children have missed several years of schooling due to instability or war in their countries of origin and their flight to Ukraine. Once they arrive here, they have problems with Russian/Ukrainian language, which may tempt some local schools to unduly reject their admission. To address this problem NGO partners of UNHCR organise language and catch up classes. Some school principals and teachers are very open to accept refugee children in their schools, in other cases UNHCR intervenes so that refugee children can attend school in the district they are living as foreseen by the law. In some instances refugee children help their parents at home or at their work markets – the only income of many refugees in Ukraine – instead of attending school. To increase school attendance, NGO partners of UNHCR provide refugee and asylum-seeker children that attend school with school uniforms and sets of stationary. This year, around 260 children benefited from this programme. UNHCR is also aware of cases of segregation of refugee children in local schools and xenophobic attitude towards them. The best way to prevent xenophobia and promote mutual understanding among refugee and local children is to conduct joint activities (festivals, summer camps and extra-curricula classes). UNHCR supports various tolerance programmes in schools, as well as the training of teachers and school psychologists. According to the CRC, every child has the right for development. With the assistance of UNHCR, refugee and asylum-seeker children may also attend day-care (for the youngest), computer courses, and other activities where they can develop their individual skills and talents.</p>
	Adolescents	<p>In summer of 2002 a Youth summit gathering representatives of Ukrainian youth non-governmental organizations (100 delegates), alumni of Model UN in Ukraine and representatives of refugees was held in Kyiv. Summit aimed at focusing attention of the Ukrainian youth on the Millennium Development Goals determined at the UN Millennium Summit; creating the recommendations for MDGs achievement in Ukraine; passing the agreed upon recommendations to Verkhovna Rada (the Parliament of Ukraine), the President of Ukraine and to the United Nations in Ukraine; encouraging youth collaboration with UN worldwide as well as raising awareness of the importance of MDGs. Preparatory works for conducting training seminars for school deputy directors and psychologists on building and strengthening tolerance among Ukrainian and refugee adolescents were completed in December 2002. The seminars will be conducted in the first quarter of 2003 and will involve representatives from 30 schools in Kyiv. It is expected that the trained staff will arrange further training sessions for adolescents in their respective schools based on the methodical materials, which contain detailed exercises, training plans and guidelines for trainers.</p>

(continued)	Other	<p>Long-lasting detention, mostly on the borders of so called illegal migrants, includes considerable numbers of asylum seekers and children. Children staying in such detention centers (mostly in Zakarpattya region) have no access to any kind of formal or informal education. Psychological counseling is also unavailable, and these leads to various psychological disorders of detained children. Usually, children detainees are not separated from their parents, or at least mothers. However, there have even been cases were unaccompanied minors lacking proper documentation are being detained. The lack of documentation of newly born asylum seeker children is another issue that needs to be solved. According to Article 7 of the <i>CPC</i>, each child should be registered upon his/her birth and has a right to obtain nationality. However, in Ukraine the practice of registration and subsequent issuing of birth certificates very much depends on the status of parents. As a rule, recognized refugees do not face difficulties with obtaining a birth certificate for the newly born child. Difficulties, however, arise with regard to asylum seekers. Asylum seekers can be registered officially as parents if they produce the certificate confirming that their documents are pending in the refuge status determination procedure. The authorities of Kyiv City alone, however, unduly refused to issue such certificates to nearly 500 asylum-seekers over the last year. That is why – loftily legal provisions notwithstanding - it is almost impossible for asylum-seekers to obtain birth certificate for newly born children. This clearly violates the above-mentioned provision of the international instrument, which Ukraine has acceded to. Further, UNHCR facilitates access to medical services in Odessa and Kyiv. Whereby recognized refugees have no problems with access to hospitals and polyclinics, asylum-seekers lacking due official registration, often face problems in being granted such access. Due to their poor socio-economic situation, refugees cannot pay for their treatment. In Kyiv and Odessa, UNHCR has agreements with local hospitals, where refugee and asylum-seekers, including their children receive basic medical assistance. For example, during the first half a year 2003, 570 refugee and asylum-seeker children, some suffering under TB, received free-of-charge treatment at the UNHCR partner hospital in Kyiv. Ukraine is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, ratified the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and ratified ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.</p>
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