



Internally displaced children in El Pozón, a neighbourhood on the outskirts of Cartagena, Colombia. El Pozón is not only one of the poorest areas of Cartagena but is also considered the most dangerous one. Most of the displaced arriving in the region settle here upon arrival, as they cannot afford to go elsewhere.



3 Durable Solutions and New Displacement

WHILE UNHCR⁵⁷ has a responsibility to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees, the Office also seeks to find durable solutions that will allow refugees to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity, through voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement to a third country. Yet despite the efforts of the international community and UNHCR, for millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, such solutions were nowhere in sight. For many, the long-term absence of a solution aggravates their protection and security problems, and deprives them of any hope for the future.

Over the years, voluntary repatriation has benefited the largest number of refugees. While it remains the preferred solution among most of the world's refugees, persistent conflict, fear of persecution or lack of basic services in the areas of return often prevent them from returning to their countries of origin. Resettlement is a key protection tool and a significant responsibility-sharing mechanism. For some refugees, resettlement to a third country is the only way to find permanent safety and the enjoyment of fundamental human rights. Local integration is a complex and gradual process, involving legal, economic and socio-

cultural components. In many cases, acquiring the nationality of the country of asylum is the culmination of this process. Local integration as a process is difficult to measure in numerical terms, given the variety of legal and practical forms it can take. The analysis of local integration data appearing below is therefore limited, and subject to available statistics on the naturalization of refugees in host countries.

Since progress in achieving durable solutions has been partly offset by new outflows of refugees, this chapter looks at both durable solutions achieved, and at new displacements that occurred in 2010.

Durable solutions

VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION: LOWEST LEVEL IN MORE THAN TWO DECADES⁵⁸

Based on consolidated reports from countries of asylum (departure) and origin (return), an estimated 197,600 refugees repatriated voluntarily during 2010. This was 21 per cent less than in 2009 (251,500). Repatriation figures have continuously decreased since 2004; the 2010 figure was the lowest in more than 20 years. Globally, an estimated 9 million refugees have returned home over the past 10 years, most of them with UNHCR assistance.

The main countries of return in 2010 included Afghanistan (118,000), Iraq (28,900), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (16,600), Rwanda (10,900), Sudan (7,100), and Sri Lanka (5,100). The largest numbers of refugee departures for voluntary repa-

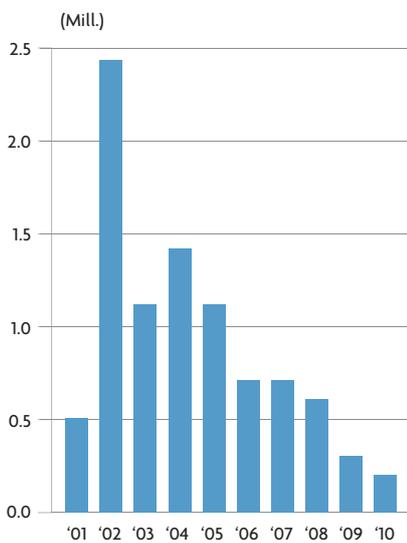
triation were reported by Pakistan (109,400), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (14,500), and the Islamic Republic of Iran (10,200).

Afghanistan continued to be the main country of return, with 118,000 registered returns during the year

⁵⁷ The need for durable solutions is not limited to refugees; IDPs and stateless persons also require lasting resolution to their legal and physical protection needs. However, due to the lack of reliable data on solutions for these groups, the analysis in this section is confined to durable solutions for refugees only.

⁵⁸ For statistical purposes, only refugees who actually returned during the calendar year under examination are included. However, UNHCR's assistance towards reintegration within the country of origin may cover longer periods of time, exceeding the calendar year in which the return takes place.

Fig. III.1 Refugee returns | 2001-2010



- twice as many as the previous year (57,600). Overall, close to 5.5 million Afghan refugees – or roughly one-fifth of Afghanistan’s population – have returned home since 2002. As part of its monitoring responsibilities, UNHCR conducts interviews with returning Afghans to assess reasons for return. In 2010, the factors most often-cited were economic concerns, difficulties in Pakistan, and local improvements in security in some parts of Afghanistan.

RESETTLEMENT

Resettlement can provide protection to refugees when their lives, liberty, safety, health or other fundamental human rights are at risk in their country of asylum. As such, it is a vital protection tool and an interna-

tional responsibility-sharing mechanism, and can be key to comprehensive solution strategies.

Only a small number of countries offer resettlement programmes, accepting an annual quota of refugees. The number of resettlement places available has neither kept pace with global resettlement needs, nor with increased submissions by UNHCR. In 2010, UNHCR’s multi-year projected needs were for 747,000 resettlement places. In 2011, this figure has been increased to 805,000, a record high. However, annual quotas offered by States remain largely unchanged, with 80,000 places available globally.

Resettlement thus benefits a comparatively small number of refugees: in 2010, only 1 per cent of the world’s refugees directly benefited from resettlement. During the past five years, some 447,000 refugees were resettled compared to 2.5 million refugees who repatriated. For every refugee resettled since 2006, approximately six have repatriated. UNHCR has therefore worked with States to increase the use of resettlement as a vital durable solution, helping to resolve some protracted refugees situations, to maintain protection space, and to open up solutions otherwise unavailable.

The 2010 Yearbook has used two sources for resettlement statistics: UNHCR’s records in countries of asylum on numbers of refugees resettled under its auspices, and official statistics from resettlement countries on the total number of resettled refugees, including those not facilitated by UNHCR.

(a) Resettlement under UNHCR auspices

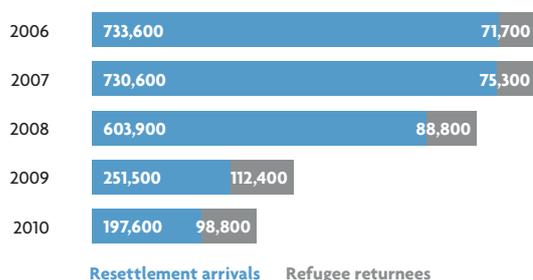
Individuals whom UNHCR supports for resettlement are people recognized as refugees under the Office’s mandate and who correspond to UNHCR’s resettlement criteria.⁵⁹ These criteria include specific protection needs when the physical or legal security of a refugee is at stake, such as cases of women-at-risk, individuals faced with *refoulement*, or when specialized services such as psychosocial or medical are required but are not available in the country of asylum. Resettlement is also used to reunite refugee families.

In 2010, UNHCR submitted more than 108,000 refugees for resettlement. Nine per cent of these submissions were for women and girls at risk, the highest percentage in the last five years. With the recent tripling of resettlement submissions by UNHCR, resettlement countries have faced backlogs in processing applications and admitting refugees. In a particularly welcome development, Japan, Paraguay and Romania accepted resettled refugees for the first time in 2010.

During the year, almost 73,000 individuals departed with UNHCR’s assistance, 14 per cent less than in 2009. This decrease was due to new security clearance requirements. By nationality, the main beneficiaries of the UNHCR-facilitated resettlement programme in 2010 were refugees from Myanmar (19,400), Iraq (16,000), Bhutan (14,800), Somalia (5,400), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (4,500), and Eritrea (3,300).⁶⁰

UNHCR’s operations in 86 countries facilitated resettlement submissions during 2010. The largest number of refugees who were resettled with UNHCR assistance departed from Nepal (14,800), Thailand (11,400),

Fig. III.2 Distribution of resettlement arrivals and refugee returns

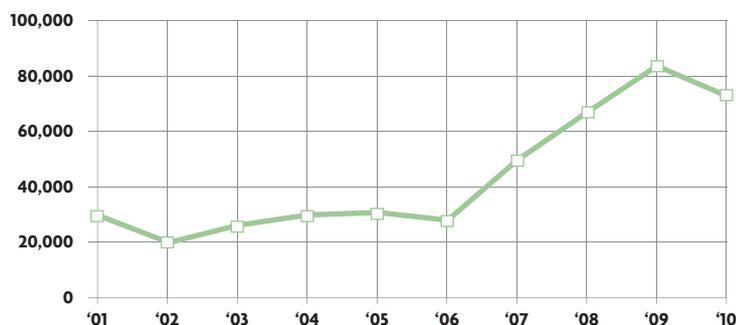


⁵⁹ See *Resettlement Handbook*, UNHCR, Geneva, 2004 at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a2ccba76.html>

⁶⁰ The disparity between submissions and departures is partly explained by the time delay between a submission by UNHCR and the decision by a resettlement State to allow the refugee to travel. In many cases, a decision by a resettlement State is made several months after receiving a submission; hence refugees submitted for resettlement in 2010, may travel in 2011, particularly cases submitted in the last quarter of 2010.

Fig. III.3

UNHCR-assisted resettlement departures of refugees | 2001-2010



Malaysia (8,000), the Syrian Arab Republic (7,200), and Turkey (5,300). The five UNHCR offices involved accounted altogether for six out of every ten resettlement departures in 2010.

An important milestone has been achieved in Nepal. Departures for the resettlement programme launched in November 2007 to resettle refugees from Bhutan from camps in eastern Nepal exceeded 40,000 by December 2010. Refugees originating from Bhutan have been resettled in eight countries, most of them to the United States of America (34,130). When the programme began, there were 108,000 refugees from Bhutan residing in the camps in eastern Nepal's Jhapa and Morang districts. Of the 72,000 remaining in these camps, nearly 55,000 expressed an interest in resettlement, and are expected to depart within the next four years.

○ (b) Resettlement arrivals (including those not assisted by UNHCR)

A number of resettlement States such as Australia, Canada and the United States of America continue their humanitarian programmes, including family reunion or sponsorship programmes, which address the specific needs of refugees and people in refugee-like situations. While these programmes generally have limited direct UNHCR involvement, a signi-

ficant portion of persons benefiting from these programmes are refugees. This explains the difference between overall resettlement figures and those resettled with UNHCR's assistance.

During 2010, a total of 98,800 refugees were admitted by 22 resettlement countries, including the United States of America (71,400),⁶¹ Canada (12,100), Australia (8,500), Sweden (1,800), and Norway (1,100). This was 13,600 less than in 2009 (112,400).

For purposes of comparison, the 22 countries resettling refugees during 2010 accepted more than 110 different nationalities. The largest groups were refugees from Iraq (24,500), Myanmar (19,600), Bhutan (14,500), Somalia (6,200), and Cuba (4,900).

LOCAL INTEGRATION

Measuring the degree and nature of local integration in quantitative terms remains challenging. In instances where refugees acquire citizenship through naturalization, statistical data are often limited as the countries concerned generally do not distinguish the naturalization of refugees from that of others. In many other countries, national laws or restrictive interpretations of these laws do not permit refugees to be naturalized. Hence, the naturalization of refugees tends to be restricted or under-reported.

Nevertheless, the limited data on the naturalization of refugees available

to UNHCR show that during the past decade more than one million refugees have been granted citizenship by their asylum country. The United States of America alone accounts for two-thirds of this figure. During 2009 and 2010, the United Republic of Tanzania granted citizenship to more than 162,000 Burundian refugees, ending the plight of this population which had been living in exile since 1972. For 2010, UNHCR was informed of refugees being granted citizenship in Belgium (1,700), Ireland (710), Viet Nam (430), and Montenegro (350).⁶²

■ New displacements

This section is limited to individuals who have been recognized as refugees on a group or *prima facie* basis. Those who have sought asylum on an individual basis, by requesting refugee or complementary protection status through an individual asylum claim, will be discussed in Chapter IV.⁶³

New, large-scale displacements during 2010 mainly took place from Somalia, as nearly 120,000 individuals fled the country primarily to Kenya (73,700), Ethiopia (24,100), Yemen (18,400), and Djibouti (3,300). Other large-scale displacements took place from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with close to 25,000 individuals fleeing the country in 2010, primarily to the Republic of Congo (21,000) and Uganda (4,000).

Although the total number of people who left Iraq during the year is not available, approximately 31,200 new registrations were recorded by UNHCR in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and other countries in the region in 2010. Excluding Iraqi refugees registered by UNHCR throughout the Middle East, some 192,700 people were newly displaced across an international border during the year, virtually all originating from Africa.

The largest numbers of new arrivals of refugees were reported by Kenya (73,700), followed by Ethiopia (42,700), the Republic of Congo (21,000), Yemen (18,400), and Liberia (18,100). ■

⁶¹ During US Fiscal Year 2010, some 73,300 refugees were resettled by the United States of America.

⁶² The 2010 figure for the United States of America is not available.

⁶³ Some 850,200 individual asylum claims were submitted worldwide in 2010. An estimated 223,000 people received a positive decision on their asylum claim in the course of the year.