



# East and Horn of Africa

## Working environment

Progress in the implementation of the peace agreement in South Sudan and prospects for an accord to end the conflict in Uganda indicate that durable solutions may at last be in sight for long-term refugees in the region. If the promise of peace proves true, many more of these refugees will be able to return home.

In a major breakthrough, talks between the Government of Uganda and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army resulted in the signing of a cessation-of-hostilities agreement in August 2006. With the end of the 20-year civil war in sight, more than 300,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned home in late 2006. It is hoped that refugees from Uganda will also return. In another positive development, Uganda's Parliament passed a new Refugee Bill, paving the way for the Government's greater involvement in refugee protection.

In Somalia, the emergence of the Union of the Islamic Courts (UIC), which took control of most of the central and southern parts of the country, has weakened the authority of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). Fighting between the opposing sides has prompted the flight of more than 32,000 Somali refugees to Kenya and, to a lesser extent, other neighbouring countries and Yemen. At the time of writing, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Somalia, in close collaboration with the League of Arab States, was mediating between the TFG and the UIC. In

Djibouti

Eritrea

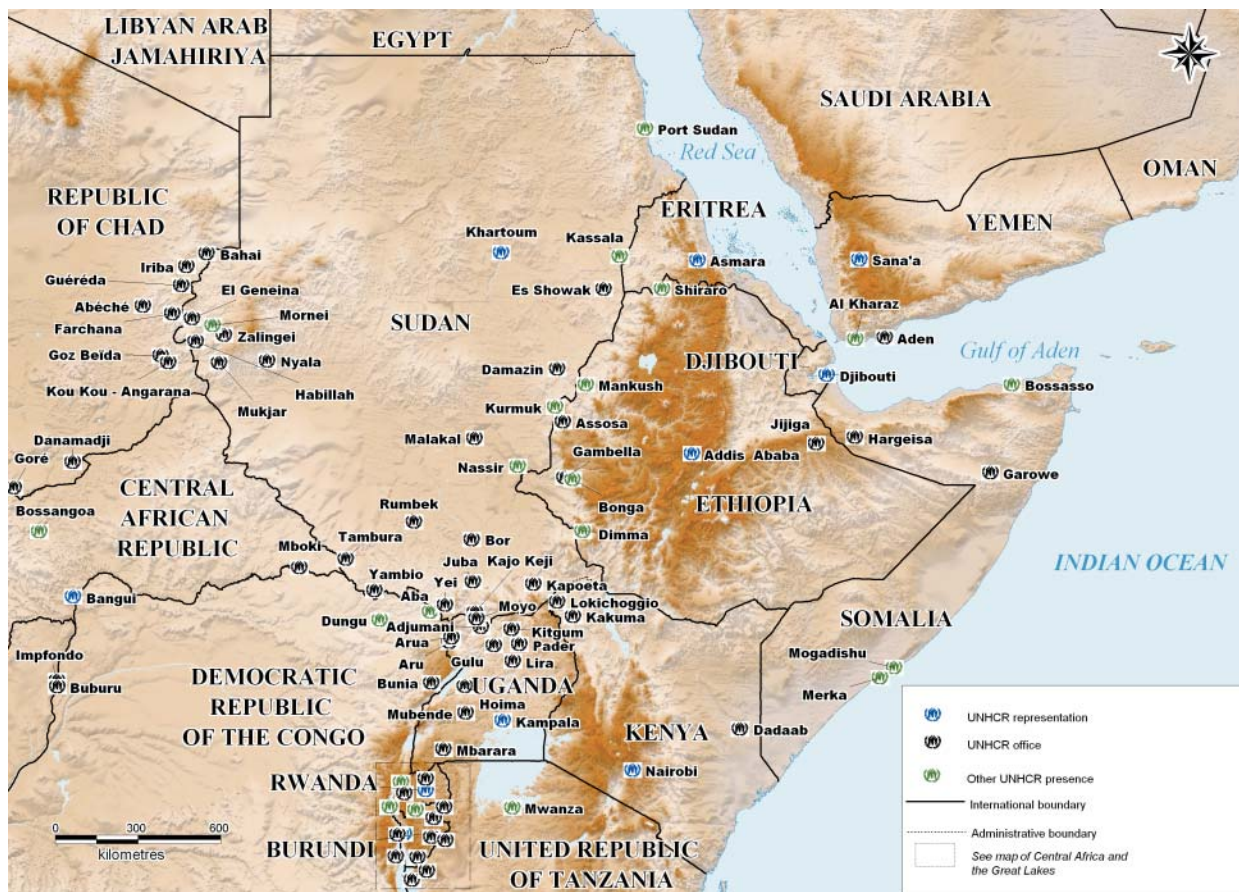
Ethiopia

Kenya

Somalia

Sudan (see Chad/Sudan Situation)

Uganda



contrast, “Somaliland” and “Puntland” remained stable and continued to advance economically and politically.

At the time of writing, there was still no solution in sight to the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia. In September 2006, the UN Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) until January 2007, and agreed to take further steps if the two sides showed no progress towards demarcating their borders by then. Restrictions on the movements of UNMEE personnel imposed by Eritrea in late 2005 continued. In the meantime, growing tensions and insecurity within Eritrea and Ethiopia have resulted in refugee influxes into neighbouring countries.

Both droughts and floods plagued various parts of the region. Crops and livestock were destroyed in areas denied rain, leaving some of the population dependent on emergency humanitarian support. On the other hand, heavy downpours caused flooding and destruction in Ethiopia and parts of Kenya and Somalia, again necessitating relief aid.

## Strategic objectives

Voluntary repatriation and sustainable reintegration will remain the priorities for UNHCR, and resettlement will be used in a strategic manner. Where voluntary return is not possible, UNHCR will pursue other initiatives to

promote self-sufficiency and local integration. In refugee-affected areas these will include the refurbishment of camps and infrastructure and rehabilitation of the environment.

The Office will continue with its capacity-building activities to strengthen refugee status determination and asylum institutions. In Ethiopia and Uganda it will support implementation of national asylum legislation; in Kenya and Eritrea it will lobby for the adoption of such laws. Particular attention will be paid to tackling sexual and gender-based violence, female genital mutilation and other harmful practices, malnutrition and HIV/AIDS.

To help resolve conflicts and build peace, especially in Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, UNHCR will optimize operational coordination with other UN agencies, governments, NGOs, donors and regional bodies such as the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), as well as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

## Operations

UNHCR’s operations in **Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia** and **Uganda** are described in separate chapters.

In **Eritrea**, UNHCR will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to both camp-based and urban refugees, paying special attention to sexual and gender-based





Somalia: Shabelle IDP camp on the outskirts of Bossaso, the main town of "Puntland". UNHCR / K. McKinsey

violence. Since the number of asylum-seekers is expected to increase, refugee status determination activities will be strengthened. The capacity of the authorities dealing with asylum issues will be built so that they can take over in more areas of refugee affairs, including status determination. UNHCR will help the Government devise refugee regulations and national asylum legislation. It will also focus on pursuing durable solutions for Somali refugees through voluntary repatriation to "Somaliland" and "Puntland", and for Sudanese refugees to South Sudan. As no Eritrean refugees have returned from Sudan for the last three years, UNHCR will phase out its reintegration assistance in the country.

In **Djibouti**, UNHCR will focus on consolidating refugee camps once the repatriation to "Somaliland" is completed. El Hol Hol camp is to be closed and the remaining refugees will be transferred to Ali Addeh camp. This will enable the Office to be more effective in the provision of protection and assistance. A registration and verification exercise will be conducted at the same time to establish accurate figures for the refugee population. UNHCR will continue its work with the Government of Djibouti and the "Somaliland" authorities on the voluntary repatriation of remaining refugees to "Somaliland".

The **Regional Support Hub** in Nairobi supports 17 UNHCR operations in the East and Horn of Africa and in Central Africa and the Great Lakes. It promotes the implementation of global policy priorities in all country operations under its responsibility. With expertise in durable solutions, registration, sexual and gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, geographical information systems and public information, the Hub plays an active role in providing technical support to all

operations. The Hub also assists offices to improve their internal control mechanisms and comply with security standards, while its staff welfare unit counsels staff working in difficult conditions. The Hub consists of 14 regional posts, two field-service posts and two experts seconded from the International Catholic Migration Commission.

### The African Union Liaison Unit in Addis Ababa

The African Union's renewed focus on addressing peace and security issues has created a strengthened platform for cooperation with many international actors. Expanding its long-standing relationship with the Union, UNHCR has played an active role in rallying regional and international support for post-conflict reconstruction and development. It believes that the problems of forced population displacement cannot be resolved in isolation from the root causes of conflict. These efforts are producing results at the political and strategic policy level. The challenge in the medium-to-long term is to ensure that plans such as the policy for post conflict reconstruction and development are translated into results on the ground.

The current focus of UNHCR's collaboration with the African Union is on raising the profile of forced displacement to the highest political level. This focus has a two-fold purpose: on the one hand, it will encourage African leaders to address the root causes of conflict; on the other, it will mobilize more international support for protection and assistance while improving opportunities for sustainable durable solutions.

Budget (USD)		
Country	Annual Programme Budget	
	2006	2007
Djibouti	3,326,894	2,565,751
Eritrea	9,212,440	4,357,237
Ethiopia	15,332,397	14,835,859
Kenya <sup>1</sup>	35,068,412	32,338,766
Somalia	7,155,371	6,103,812
Sudan	12,860,950	13,676,273
Uganda	16,250,358	17,949,014
Regional activities <sup>2</sup>	0	6,008,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>99,206,822</b>	<b>97,834,712</b>

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<sup>1</sup> Includes the Regional Support Hub in Nairobi.

<sup>2</sup> Includes provisions for regional activities in East and Horn of Africa to cover individual voluntary repatriation and intervention for malnutrition and malaria.

