

SUDAN

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

- Call for, and facilitate, the voluntary repatriation of some 90,000 Eritrean refugees; protect and assist returning refugees as well as those who remain in the Sudan pending identification of durable solutions for them.
- Provide protection and humanitarian assistance to smaller groups of refugees and asylum-seekers: mainly Congolese, Ugandans, Ethiopians and Somalis, many of whom live in urban areas.
- Pursue resettlement opportunities for refugees who meet the relevant criteria.
- Promote gender equality concepts and refugee education in the camps.
- Integrate sound environmental policies and concepts into the management of all refugee-related activities, including with host communities.
- Gradually scale down the refugee programme as the refugee population in Sudan decreases.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, PROGRESS ACHIEVED, AND CONSTRAINTS

On 18 February 2002, the High Commissioner announced the decision to apply the Cessation Clause in respect of Eritrean refugees who fled their country as a result of both the war of independence, which ended in June 1991, and the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which ended in June 2000. The Cessation Clause will take effect on 31 December 2002. The legal framework for the voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees in Sudan was established through a Tri-partite Repatriation Commission, which started deliberations on 7 April 2000, in Geneva. The resulting agreements continued to provide guidance for the repatriation operation. During the first half of 2002, two meetings of the Commission were held in March and June in Asmara and Geneva, respectively. The

modalities for the implementation of the Cessation Clause were agreed during these meetings. The Commission also agreed to revise the target repatriation figure from 90,000 to 60,000 after observations of the actual repatriation trends.

Since the beginning of 2002, 47 convoys crossed into Eritrea, taking home 7,041 families composed of 18,230 individuals, which represents 30 per cent of the set target for the year. The cumulative figure of those transported in 92 convoys since the inception of the operation on 12 May 2001, is 50,970 refugees, which represents 31 per cent of the camp-based Eritrean refugees and those in Port Sudan.

UNHCR worked closely with the Ugandan Embassy in Sudan to assist the residual Ugandan refugees to repatriate to Uganda. The Embassy conducted nationality screening of all individuals seeking repatriation. As a result of this close collaboration, 184 Ugandans were assisted to return home by air transport.

UNHCR also worked with the Sudanese authorities to ensure protection for Ethiopian refugees who arrived in Sudan after 1991, and who were therefore, not affected by the Cessation Clause for those who arrived before 1991. However, the authorities have hesitated to grant refugee identity documents to this group of refugees fearing that the pre-1991 Ethiopians who were not recognised as refugees during the application of the Cessation Clause, might attempt to slip into the category of post-1991 refugees. The Governments of Ethiopia and Sudan began registration of all former Ethiopian refugees and Ethiopian migrants in Sudan in May 2002. The Sudanese authorities have stated that they will only issue identity documents once the status of the Ethiopian refugees has been determined.

The lack of identification documents caused severe hardship for the post-1991 Ethiopian refugees to ensure their freedom of movement. UNHCR provided protection and humanitarian assistance to the group of 642 pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees who are residing in Abu Rakham camp.

Resettlement of Refugees who Satisfy UNHCR Criteria

During the first six months of 2002, UNHCR continued to pursue resettlement opportunities for the pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees, as well as for other refugees with protection needs. Identified cases were submitted to various resettlement countries through UNHCR's Regional Resettlement Unit in Nairobi. Australia deployed two missions to interview eligible candidates while Canada deployed one. By 30 June 2002, 100 individuals had been resettled to a third country of asylum from the Sudan.

Promotion of Gender Equality Concepts and Education in the Camps

In the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the refugees, community participation has been encouraged, especially that of women in decision-making roles and in resource management (food distribution), reproductive health courses, and Parent-Teachers' Associations. In addition, three workshops on the protection of refugee women and children were conducted by UNHCR in April 2002, with law enforcement personnel and local authorities in Gedaref State, and with refugee women from the Umsagata and Abu Rakham refugee camps. Specific attention was also paid to refugee women and children during repatriation movements by providing buses instead of trucks to ensure their comfort. Similarly, vulnerable groups, including the elderly, sick, pregnant, and lactating mothers, were given special attention.

Refugee children attended primary school in 28 primary schools in the camps. The current school enrolment has dropped from 15,182 to 14,000 pupils, a factor attributable to the ongoing voluntary repatriation. 51 students (24 females) continued benefiting from the

DAFI scholarships for university education, for which assistance is expected to continue up to the end of the year.

Protection and Assistance to Camp-based and Urban-based Refugees

Although the majority of the Eritrean refugees were born and raised in Sudan and are apparently well assimilated among local communities around the camps and in urban areas, there is no legislation enabling long-staying Eritrean refugees to acquire Sudanese citizenship. The initial objective of having a local integration programme in the Sudan was set aside as the Government favoured the continuation of a care and maintenance programme. The end result is the continued dependence of refugees on external assistance. Consequently, UNHCR continues to provide food, water, sanitation, health, and education services to camp-based refugees and needy urban refugees.

Environment

The promotion of community-based activities for sound natural resource management and re-forestation is a fundamental element of environmental projects in Sudan. The promotional activities consisted of environmental awareness raising among refugees, host communities, implementing partners and government counterparts, while other activities covered seedling production, survey and demarcation of forests, promotion of energy-saving techniques, environmental education and camp clean-up.

Under re-forestation, 1,879 hectares of land were identified, surveyed and demarcated in four forests in Migreh, Abu Gamour, Geira, and Um Gira. Some 5,800 kilograms of mixed species of seeds were procured from the National Tree Centre for direct seeding re-forestation activities during the rain season between July and September 2002. 190,522 tree seedlings of both indigenous and exotic species were also raised in eight community-based nurseries. These will be used for re-forestation in Um Gira forest and in refugee plots/compounds.

By 30 June 2002, 1,490 women from the camps and villages were trained in the construction and use of energy-saving stoves. A total of 4,112 mud stoves and 400 “Kisira/Enjera” stoves

were constructed and are in use. Refugees will carry these stoves home when they repatriate to Eritrea.

Progress as measured against indicators

Impact/Performance Indicators	Actual Progress
60,000 – 90,000 returnees transported to Eritrea by 31 December 2002. Refugees of other nationalities are assisted to repatriate.	18,226 Eritrean returnees were transported to Eritrea by the end of June 2002, out of the revised target figure of 60,000 for the year. 184 Ugandan and 2 Burundian refugees were assisted to repatriate by air.
Resettlement of pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees and other refugees with protection concerns.	100 individuals representing 35 families were resettled in Australia and Canada.
Refugee children benefiting from access to primary and tertiary education.	14,000 refugee children continued to benefit from primary education in 28 camp-based primary schools, while 51 benefited from university education.
15-20 litres of clean water was provided per refugee per day in the camps in Sudan.	25 litres per person per day of clean drinking water was provided to all camp-based refugees in Sudan. Large quantities of water were also made available for livestock and farming.
Camp and urban-based refugees benefit from international protection pending durable solutions for them.	Approximately 339,210 refugees, both camp and urban based, benefited from international protection in Sudan.
Environmental rehabilitation completed for two closed camps. 200,000 seedlings ready for reforestation in the demarcated forests.	Selective rehabilitation activities were already initiated in Laffa and Gulsa, which formerly hosted the Eritrean refugees. 190,522 germinated seedlings in nurseries are ready for field planting.
Reduction of fuel consumption.	Up to 35 to 50 per cent reduction in average of fuel consumption was achieved in 1,490 families using efficient stoves and cooking techniques.

Phasing Out of the Refugee Programme

Upon completion of the implementation of the Cessation Clause for the pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees in 2001, UNHCR relocated the remaining 642 Ethiopian refugees from their former camps in Tenedba, Um Gulja and Um Rakuba to Abu-Rakham refugee camp. In addition, two camps at Laffa and Gulsa, which previously hosted the remaining Eritrean refugees, were closed. UNHCR, through an implementing partner, is in the process of cleaning up these two camps to prevent any health hazards to the local host communities.

REVISED OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR JULY-DECEMBER 2002

- UNHCR will concentrate on the implementation of the Cessation Clause agreed upon in Geneva in June 2002. Key activities of the implementation include enhanced information campaigns, registration for repatriation, refugee status determination and repatriation from camps and urban sites. These activities are expected to take place before the Cessation Clause takes effect on 31 December 2002.
- Additional financial resources are critical to ensure the accomplishment of these complex activities during the current year.
- The phased closure of camps that have relatively few refugees as a result of the

ongoing repatriation exercises is central to the success of the operation in Sudan. It will pass the message that the time has come for Eritrean refugees to make the

choice to return to their country of origin or to seek alternative status if they are found not to be in need of international protection.

Financial Data (USD)

Annual Programme Budget			
Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available	Obligation Level
11,707,887	12,271,948	5,823,011	5,851,500