

RUSSIAN FEDERATION



Working environment

The context

The Russian Federation is a country of asylum as well as of transit, as many irregular migrants and refugees seek to cross its territory to reach other European countries. However, an increasing number of persons apply for asylum in the Russian Federation, which currently hosts 5,625 refugees and asylum-seekers.

The Government's focus on migration management and the corresponding strengthening of the Federal Migration Service (FMS), has provided an opportunity to reinforce institutions related to asylum. This has led to a steadily increasing number of asylum applications being resolved by the competent authorities. The national asylum procedure now renders up to 3,000 decisions annually. However, the creation of adequate protection structures outside the largest cities remains a challenge.

In the Northern Caucasus, it is estimated that there are still more than 80,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in need of durable solutions, while approximately 1,000 IDPs have recently returned to their homes. UNHCR and the Government have agreed to promote a recovery strategy to reduce internal displacement in the Northern Caucasus. However, the volatile security environment in the region hinders UNHCR's access to people of concern and impedes the identification of solutions for the remaining IDPs.

The working environment is also affected by the global economic downturn. Retrenchment in the labour market of the Russian Federation has focused attention on migrants, including those from Central Asian countries as well others from further afield. An increase in xenophobic attitudes and acts of violence toward foreigners complicates efforts to protect asylum-seekers and refugees.

The needs

Legal protections for asylum-seekers and refugees in the Russian Federation have improved in recent years. This has been primarily due to a number of changes which have eased access to asylum procedures, improved documentation and provided greater authority to administrative bodies dealing with refugees. UNHCR has been invited to comment on a proposed new refugee law.

Access to the territory in order to seek asylum is a fundamental right, and UNHCR will continue to its efforts with the Russian authorities to ensure that it is guaranteed. The lack of reception facilities is a serious difficulty for asylum-seekers, who find no immediate assistance upon arrival in the Russian Federation. UNHCR is working to ensure that people of concern are included in the national medical and social assistance systems.

The efforts undertaken by the Russian Federation to reduce statelessness, along with the increased number of people who have acquired Russian citizenship in recent years, indicate that significant progress is being made in this field. An important additional step would be accession to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on statelessness. Increased collaboration among stakeholders will help to identify the extent of the remaining problem, as people residing in the Russian Federation without residence registration may encounter problems to confirm their nationality.

Though not all are officially registered, an estimated figure of more than 80,000 IDPs remain in need of durable solutions, and face problems of poverty, unemployment and housing. Local surveys suggest that up to 42 per cent of the displaced would like to integrate in their places of displacement. To that end, UNHCR will strive to ensure that both the displaced and their host communities benefit from federal government development programmes. UNHCR will provide complementary assistance, particularly housing solutions for the most vulnerable, and especially for those who have not benefited from national assistance programmes.

Main objectives

Favourable protection environment

- Build the capacity of the national asylum system to meet international standards and ensure full and unhindered access to asylum and protection.

- Promote accession to the two international Conventions on statelessness, while establishing effective partnerships aimed at reducing and resolving such situations.

Basic needs and services

- Assist the authorities with limited housing projects, in a bid to ensure access to long-term or transitional shelter for IDPs.

Durable solutions

- Identify and implement durable solutions for refugees.
- Help the authorities to establish conditions which allow IDPs to return voluntarily, in safety and dignity.
- Work with development and other actors to facilitate the return and reintegration of IDPs, as well as those who wish to integrate in their places of displacement, and support local civil-society initiatives.

Strategy and activities

To promote the building of a national asylum system, UNHCR will contribute to the development of asylum legislation; work to improve the quality of national RSD procedures, in particular by providing legal advice, analysis and training; and strengthen reception capacity.

UNHCR will seek gradually to phase out direct material assistance to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers, and hand this responsibility to other actors by the end of 2011. The Office plans to create a pilot accommodation facility for vulnerable asylum-seekers. UNHCR will work to counter racism and xenophobia, which can impede

Key targets for 2010

- No deportation of individuals pending their final asylum decision
- 95 per cent compliance of refugee status determination (RSD) procedures with the national asylum legislation
- Thirteen legal counselling centres throughout the country provide advice and support to asylum-seekers, refugees, IDPs and returnees.
- A comprehensive participatory assessment conducted with the participation of stateless people, as well as officials, identifies the root causes of statelessness as well as solutions to prevent and resolve it.
- More than 1,500 vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees receive assistance to meet their material and health needs, pending a durable solution.
- Up to 2,925 vulnerable IDPs have their shelter needs met in the Northern Caucasus.
- Up to 50 quick impact projects are implemented on behalf of the more than 80,000 vulnerable IDPs in the Northern Caucasus.

durable solutions for refugees, and to create an environment conducive to local integration.

Improvements in the current asylum practice in the Russian Federation are expected to be confirmed as a result of the new Refugee Law to be passed by Parliament in 2010. It is expected that the new legislation will include provisions for the Government to provide social, medical and material support to the most vulnerable asylum-seekers and refugees. This will enable UNHCR to relinquish its assistance activities for these groups.

Planning figures

TYPE OF POPULATION	ORIGIN	JAN 2010		DEC 2010 - JAN 2011		DEC 2011	
		TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR
Refugees	Afghanistan	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
	Georgia	700	700	700	700	700	700
	Iraq	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Various	500	500	300	300	300	300
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	1,300	1,300	1,400	1,400	1,400	1,400
	Georgia	400	400	400	400	400	400
	Uzbekistan	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Various	300	300	300	300	300	300
Returnees (refugees)		100	100	700	700	1,200	1,200
Internally Displaced		87,200	87,200	80,200	80,200	69,200	69,200
People in IDP-like situations		1,000	1,000	800	800	800	800
Returnees (IDPs)		1,300	1,300	4,000	4,000	5,000	5,000
Stateless		50,000	0	44,000	44,000	40,000	40,000
TOTAL		144,500	94,500	134,700	134,700	121,200	121,200

UNHCR's presence in 2010

□ Number of offices	3
□ Total staff	80
International	11
National	59
JPOs	3
UNVs	6
Others	1

PARTNERS

Implementing partners

NGOs:

Association of media managers of Russia
"ARS-PRESS"
Children's Fund of North Ossetia-Alania
Civic Assistance, Equilibre-Solidarity
Danish Refugee Council
Ethnosfera
Faith, Hope and Love
Guild of Russian Film-Makers
Magee WomanCare International
Memorial Human Rights Centre
"Migration and Law" Network
Nizam Foundation
St. Petersburg's Centre for International
Cooperation of the Red Cross
St. Petersburg Red Cross,
Stichting Russian Justice Initiative
Vesta

Others:

United Nations' Volunteers
IOM

Operational partners

Government agencies:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Federal Migration Service
Supreme Court
Border Guards Service
Prosecutor's Office
Office of Ombudsman of the Russian Federation
Ministry for Civil Defence
Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of
Natural Disasters (EMERCOM)
Ministry of Investment and External Economic
Relations Republic of North Ossetia-Alania
Ministry of Nationalities Republic of North
Ossetia-Alania
Local Administration Republic of North
Ossetia-Alania

NGOs:

Caucasian Refugee Council
Branches of the Russian Red Cross
Gratis

Others:

EC
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
IFRC
ICRC
IOM

UNHCR partners monitor the conditions of displaced Chechens in the Russian Federation who live in 82 temporary settlements in Ingushetia.



UNHCR will pursue existing and new partnerships to ensure that the standards of the asylum system are considerably improved at both the administrative and judicial levels. It will advocate for the coverage of refugees and asylum-seekers by State assistance mechanisms.

The Office's strategy on statelessness will address gaps in available data and promote accession to international instruments. A comprehensive study of statelessness in the Russian Federation will be initiated in cooperation with the authorities. A partnership strategy to address related issues will also be developed and implemented.

To ensure that IDPs are able freely to choose their preferred durable solution, and be supported in their decision, UNHCR will advocate for better assistance and protection for them. The Office will support the development of national legislation which would enable IDPs to recover lost property, or receive appropriate compensation or other forms of reparation.

UNHCR will focus on four priorities: the provision of free, professional and independent legal counseling; the capacity building of civil society; the dissemination of protection information; and protection monitoring. The aim is to facilitate access to public services in a fair and transparent manner and ensure that the most vulnerable IDPs receive assistance, taking into account their specific needs.

UNHCR will complement the Government's programmes for the voluntary return of IDPs and target aid

to the most vulnerable, especially those still in collective accommodation. The Office hopes to be able to disengage from direct operational involvement in the Northern Caucasus by the end of 2011, contingent on the Government's resolve to address the protracted nature of displacement.

With respect to IDPs who decide to return to their homes, UNHCR works to provide assistance for their sustainable reintegration. The strategy is implemented through extensive monitoring and a variety of interventions, including the provision of free legal assistance and, though limited in scope, shelter-related assistance.

Assumptions and constraints

The Office's strategy to address statelessness in the Russian Federation is linked to the expectation that the Government will accede to the two international conventions on statelessness. Comprehensive research into the current statelessness situation will require time and be resource intensive and require the participation of all stakeholders.

It is assumed that the overall security environment in the Northern Caucasus will allow for the planned activities, including unimpeded access to people of concern, to be carried out, as well as continued good relations with all stakeholders, in particular, the local authorities.

Organization and implementation

• Coordination

UNHCR will continue to work closely with the Federal Migration Service, its main interlocutor on migration and asylum issues. It will join forces with the Service to mobilize partnerships and generate awareness of displacement issues, alongside regional visits to renew local NGO contacts. The Office will also strengthen its work with Government bodies, the Parliamentary Committee and civil society on statelessness.

The Federal Government has made investments in the Chechen Republic and elsewhere in the Northern Caucasus, and has announced more comprehensive support for the region. UNHCR works

with the members of the UN Country Team as well as with the larger community of local stakeholders, donors and NGOs working on recovery programmes.

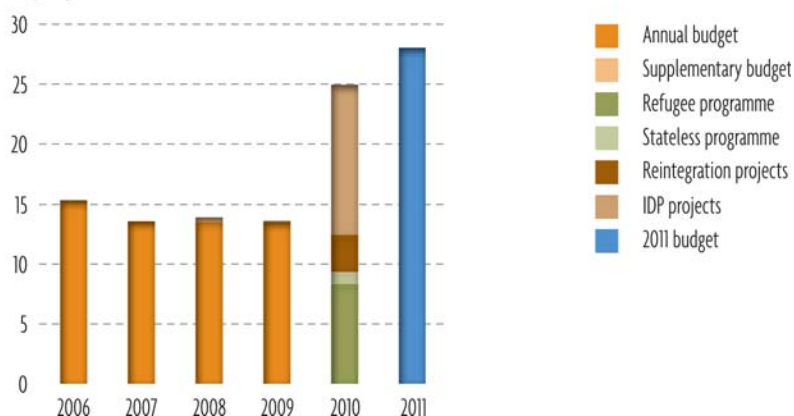
UNHCR will pursue a stronger coordination framework, including with partners such as UNICEF, FAO and ILO. It will also coordinate its approach with the ICRC.

Financial information

The 2010 comprehensive budget of USD 25 million covers refugees (32 per cent), stateless people (5 per cent), IDPs (50 per cent) and reintegration activities (13 per cent). Legal assistance and protection activities account for half of the budget. The most pressing and costly unmet needs relate to shelter, which represents a major challenge for UNHCR and the authorities.

UNHCR's budget in Russian Federation 2006 - 2011

Millions (USD)



2010 UNHCR Budget for Russian Federation (USD)

RIGHTS GROUPS AND OBJECTIVES	REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	REINTEGRATION PROJECTS PILLAR 3	IDP PROJECTS PILLAR 4	TOTAL
Favourable protection environment					
International and regional instruments	0	33,183	0	0	33,183
National legal framework	135,689	33,183	0	0	168,872
National administrative framework	72,357	0	0	0	72,357
Policies towards forced displacement	0	0	0	483,868	483,868
National and regional migration policy	115,689	0	0	0	115,689
Prevention of displacement	0	0	0	169,187	169,187
Prevention of statelessness	0	182,546	0	0	182,546
Public attitudes towards persons of concern	0	0	70,101	0	70,101
Access to territory	72,357	0	0	0	72,357
Non-refoulement	137,658	0	0	0	137,658
Subtotal	533,752	248,912	70,101	653,056	1,505,820

Consequences of a 20-40 per cent funding shortfall

- National and cross-border coordination mechanisms will not be established.
- The extension of UNHCR outreach to border regions will not be possible, referral systems will not be monitored and registration conditions will not improve.
- The Office will reduce its funding for legal counselling activities, increasing the risk that incidents of arbitrary and unfair treatment to people of concern (such as the eviction of IDPs from temporary settlements and their de-registration) will be undocumented and unreported.
- Six training sessions on human rights and gender-based violence will not be conducted.
- Some 1,500 IDPs will continue to live in squalid conditions or be at risk of eviction, because their shelter needs will not be met.
- Some 1,250 vulnerable IDPs and members of host communities will not receive basic domestic and hygiene items.
- Social work services and psychological counseling will not be provided to the extent needed.
- Comprehensive livelihood strategy to address the needs of more than 80,000 IDPs will only be partially implemented.

RIGHTS GROUPS AND OBJECTIVES	REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	REINTEGRATION PROJECTS PILLAR 3	IDP PROJECTS PILLAR 4	TOTAL
Fair protection processes and documentation					
Reception conditions	859,186	0	0	0	859,186
Registration and profiling	49,186	0	425,142	1,623,001	2,097,329
Access to asylum procedures	815,154	0	0	0	815,154
Refugee and stateless definitions	133,107	0	0	0	133,107
Fair and efficient status determination	49,186	0	0	0	49,186
Family reunification	49,186	0	0	0	49,186
Individual documentation	49,186	151,301	138,154	0	338,641
Civil status documentation	49,186	0	0	0	49,186
Subtotal	2,053,376	151,301	563,295	1,623,001	4,390,973
Security from violence and exploitation					
Impact on host communities	208,002	0	0	0	208,002
Law enforcement	53,491	0	0	0	53,491
Gender-based violence	46,936	0	0	179,067	226,003
Protection of children	33,541	0	0	0	33,541
Freedom of movement	23,188	0	0	0	23,188
Non-arbitrary detention	23,188	21,800	0	0	44,988
Access to legal remedies	142,278	85,939	345,195	379,067	952,478
Subtotal	530,626	107,739	345,195	558,134	1,541,692
Basic needs and essential services					
Shelter and other infrastructure	0	0	1,875,705	7,735,040	9,610,745
Basic domestic and hygiene items	561,264	54,906	46,853	243,552	906,575
Primary health care	743,232	0	0	0	743,232
HIV/ AIDS	53,468	0	0	0	53,468
Education	195,268	0	0	0	195,268
Services for groups with specific needs	552,589	0	0	0	552,589
Subtotal	2,105,820	54,906	1,922,558	7,978,592	12,061,876
Community participation and self-management					
Participatory assessment and community mobilization	22,980	36,298	0	0	59,278
Community self-management and equal representation	39,156	0	0	0	39,156
Self-reliance and livelihoods	99,509	0	71,211	527,197	697,917
Subtotal	161,646	36,298	71,211	527,197	796,351
Durable solutions					
Durable solutions strategy	50,428	101,291	0	0	151,719
Voluntary return	61,328	14,503	0	0	75,831
Resettlement	104,781	0	0	0	104,781
Local integration support	59,375	26,491	0	0	85,866
Reduction of statelessness	0	20,497	0	0	20,497
Subtotal	275,912	162,782	0	0	438,694
External relations					
Donor relations	32,654	0	0	115,436	148,090
Resource mobilization	33,654	0	0	0	33,654
Partnership	173,811	52,412	0	0	226,223
Public information	336,402	55,217	0	148,439	540,058
Subtotal	576,520	107,629	0	263,875	948,025
Logistics and operations support					
Supply chain and logistics	1,100,761	0	73,858	370,737	1,545,357
Programme management, coordination and support	1,076,874	91,422	73,858	529,056	1,771,211
Subtotal	2,177,636	91,422	147,716	899,793	3,316,567
Total	8,415,288	960,988	3,120,076	12,503,647	25,000,000

2011 Budget	28,116,700
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2009 Revised budget	
Annual budget	13,560,690
Supplementary budget	75,000
TOTAL	13,635,690