

STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 2005

TRENDS IN DISPLACEMENT, PROTECTION
AND SOLUTIONS

APRIL 2007



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MAIN FINDINGS

TOTAL POPULATION OF CONCERN

- *By the end of 2005, the global population of concern to UNHCR was estimated at 21.0 million persons, including 8.7 million refugees; 773,000 asylum-seekers; 1.1 million refugees who had repatriated during 2005; 6.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) protected/assisted by UNHCR; 519,000 IDPs who had returned to their place of origin in 2005; some 2.4 million stateless persons; and 960,000 Others of concern.*
- *The global population of concern to UNHCR increased by eight per cent during 2005. The number of IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR increased by 22 per cent, stateless persons by 64 per cent, primarily due to better data availability while the number of returned IDPs more than doubled (+255%) compared to 2004. The largest drop occurred in the return of refugees (-23%) while the global refugee population fell by 10 per cent. The asylum-seeker population, that is persons whose asylum applications have not yet been adjudicated, fell by seven per cent during 2005.*
- *By the end of 2005, Asia hosted the largest population of concern to UNHCR (42%), followed by Africa (24%), Europe (18%), Latin America and the Caribbean (12%), North America (3%), and Oceania (0.4%).¹*
- *In 2005, the population of concern to UNHCR increased in three out of the six regions of the world. The increase was highest in Asia (+23%), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (+57%), and Africa (+7%). Europe (-17%) and North America (-16%) recorded a decrease in the population of concern while in Oceania the figure remained unchanged.*
- *Out of the total population of concern of 21.0 million at end-2005, an estimated 8.4 million originated from Asia (40%). Africa was the second leading region of origin with 5.6 million (26%) followed by Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe with 2.8 (13%) and 1.6 million respectively (8%).*
- *By the end of 2005, Afghans constituted the largest population with 3.2 million persons considered to be of concern to the Office (15% of the total). Colombians were the second largest population with 2.5 million or 12 per cent, followed by stateless persons (2.4 million or 11%) and Iraqi citizens (1.8 million or 8%).*
- *Only refugees and IDPs who have returned during the past 12 months (January-December) are included in the population of concern to UNHCR. Field operations may assist returnees for a longer period, however.*

Refugees

- *The number of refugees at end-2005 (8.7 million) was the lowest since 1980, when 8.4 million persons were estimated to be displaced outside their country of origin.*
- *By the end of 2005, developing regions hosted 6.0 million refugees, 70 per cent of the global refugee population. The 50 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) provided*

¹ See Table D for the regional classifications used in the 2005 Statistical Yearbook.

asylum to 26 per cent of the world's refugees.

- In 2005, the refugee population fell by 913,000 persons (-10%) with a decline being recorded in all regions with the exception of Latin America and the Caribbean (+4%) and Oceania (+5%). The level of decline ranged from six per cent in North America to 16 per cent in Europe.

- By end-2005, Asia hosted the largest number of refugees (40%), followed by Africa (32%), Europe (20%), North America (6%), Oceania (1%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (0.4%).

- Pakistan (1.1 million, UNHCR estimate) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (1.0 million) hosted the largest number of refugees at end-2005. Other major countries of asylum included Germany (700,000), the United Republic of Tanzania (549,000), the United States (379,000, UNHCR estimate), the United Kingdom (303,000, UNHCR estimate), and China (301,000).

- By the end of 2005, there were some 2.2 million Afghan refugees according to UNHCR estimates, accounting for one quarter of the global refugee population. Sudan was the second largest country of origin of refugees (694,000), followed by Burundi (439,000), the Dem. Rep. of the Congo (431,000), and Somalia (396,000).

Durable solutions

- In 2005, 1.1 million refugees repatriated to their home country, a 23 per cent decrease compared to 2004, when some 1.5 million refugees returned. Afghans constituted some 68 per cent (752,000) of all returnees during 2005. Other countries of origin to which many refugees repatriated during 2005 were Liberia (73,000), Burundi (68,000), Iraq (56,000), and Angola (54,000). In total, 19 countries of origin reported the return of more than 100 refugees.

- UNHCR country offices in first asylum countries resettled some 30,500 refugees during 2005, virtually the same level as in 2004 (29,600). The UNHCR office in Kenya recorded the highest number of assisted departures (6,800), followed by Thailand (2,500), Guinea (1,900), Ghana (1,800), and Egypt (1,300). The main nationalities benefiting from UNHCR-facilitated resettlement during the year were refugees from Somalia (5,900), Liberia (4,700), Sudan (3,200), Afghanistan (3,200), and Myanmar (2,900).

- According to government statistics, sixteen industrialized countries reported the admission of 81,600 resettled refugees during 2005, five per cent below the 2004 level (84,600) but 45 per cent above the 2003 level (55,600). The countries resettling most refugees during 2005 were the United States (53,800; during US Fiscal Year), Australia (11,700), Canada (10,400), and Sweden (1,300).

Refugee outflows

- Some 136,000 refugees were displaced as part of a mass outflow in 2005, 42 per cent fewer than in 2004 (232,000) and the lowest level in almost 30 years. Almost all mass outflows occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (80%).

- Countries receiving the largest number of prima facie refugees during 2005 included Chad (32,000), Benin (26,000), Uganda (24,000), Ghana (14,000), and Yemen (13,000). In total, six asylum countries reported the arrival of more than 1,000

prima facie refugees.

- *The main source countries of new mass refugee outflows during 2005 were Togo (39,000), Sudan (34,000), the Dem. Rep. of the Congo (16,000), Somalia (14,000), the Central African Rep. (11,000), and Iraq (11,000).*

Industrialized countries

- *New asylum claims submitted in the 38 industrialized countries fell by 15 per cent, to 310,000 in 2005.² Europe received 261,000 new asylum claims (-15%), North America received 45,000 new claims (-16%), and Australia/New Zealand received 3,600 asylum-seekers (-6%).*

- *Some 240,000 asylum requests were lodged in the 25 countries of the European Union (-14%). Excluding the 10 new member countries of the European Union (EU) who acceded in 2004, the number of asylum claims submitted in the EU-15 amounted to 213,000 (-12%).*

- *Serbia and Montenegro was the main country of origin of asylum-seekers in industrialized countries: 24,600 new claims were lodged by its citizens in 2005. The Russian Federation was the second leading country of origin of asylum-seekers (22,900), followed by China (14,600), Iraq (13,600), and Turkey (12,300).*

- *During 2005, some 85,100 asylum-seekers were granted Convention refugee status at the first instance (55,000) and on appeal (30,100) in the industrialized countries. Another 34,200 asylum-seekers were allowed to remain for humanitarian reasons at the first instance (29,400) and on appeal (4,800).*

- *Convention refugee status was granted in 19 per cent of first instance decisions taken in 2005, slightly higher than in 2004 (16%). Including humanitarian status, 29 per cent of all substantive asylum decisions taken at the first instance in 2005 were positive, the highest level of the past four years.*

- *As in 2003 and 2004, some 21 per cent of all substantive asylum decisions taken on appeal during 2005 resulted in the granting of refugee (18%) or humanitarian status (3%).*

- *The number of undecided asylum cases at the first instance and on appeal in industrialized countries decreased by 25 per cent during 2005. By end-2005, 244,000 asylum-seekers were awaiting a decision at the first instance, while another 187,000 asylum claims were pending at the appeal level.*

Non-industrialized countries

- *During 2005, non-industrialized countries received 230,000 applications for asylum or refugee status, some 45 per cent more compared to the year before (158,000). Thailand was the largest asylum-seeker receiving country during 2005 (47,300 or 21 per cent of all claims), followed by Kenya (39,000 or 17%), South Africa (28,500 or 12%), Malaysia (20,700 or 7%), and Ghana (14,100 or 6%).*

- *Myanmar was the main country of origin of asylum-seekers in non-industrialized countries: 54,700 new claims were lodged by its citizens during 2005, primarily in*

² For the classification of industrialized countries, see Annex D.5.

Thailand and Malaysia. Somalia was the second leading country of origin of asylum-seekers (28,500), followed by Togo (14,300), Sudan (13,600), Rwanda (12,200), the Dem. Rep. of the Congo (12,100) and Eritrea (10,600).

- *Some 85,000 asylum-seekers in non-industrialized countries were granted refugee or humanitarian status in 2005, most notably in Kenya (29,900), Thailand (15,300), Malaysia (10,900), and Sudan (6,000).*

Sex and age

- *Available data on 11.1 million out of the 21.0 million population of concern to UNHCR indicate that 49 per cent are female.*
- *Almost half (44%) of the population of concern to UNHCR are children under the age of 18. In sub-Saharan Africa the proportion of minors is about 53 per cent.*

Locations

- *In 2005, UNHCR received detailed data on some 320 individual camps with an average population size of 7,600. About one quarter (23%) of the camps hosted more than 10,000 residents.³*
- *UNHCR had registered or was otherwise involved with refugees in some 270 urban locations in 2005. The average number of refugees at these locations was 4,700. Over 70 per cent of urban locations hosted fewer than 1,000 persons.*

Host country capacities

- *The United Rep. of Tanzania hosts the highest number of refugees in relation to its economic capacity. During 2001-2005, the country hosted on average 868 refugees per 1 USD Gross Domestic Product⁴ (GDP) per capita. Pakistan was the country with the second highest number of refugees per 1 USD GDP (PPP) per capita (522 refugees), followed by the Dem. Rep. of the Congo (344 refugees), and Zambia (234 refugees).*
- *Taking the GDP (Current) into consideration, the Dem. Rep. of the Congo hosts the highest number of refugees per 1 USD GDP (Current) per capita (2,314 refugees) during 2001-2005, followed by Pakistan (2,276 refugees) and the United Rep. of Tanzania (2,216 refugees).*
- *Armenia hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to its national population size. During 2001-2005, it hosted on average 80 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants. Serbia and Montenegro was the second main country affected by refugee displacement in relation to its national population (28 per 1,000 inhabitants), followed by Djibouti (25), and the Republic of the Congo (23).*
- *Armenia also hosts the largest number of refugees in relation to the size of its national territory. During 2001-2005, it hosted on average 8,100 refugees per 1,000 square kilometer. The Netherlands was the country with the second highest refugee population in relation to its surface area (3,900), followed by Malta (3,100), and Serbia and Montenegro (2,900).*

³ These figures exclude camps in Pakistan.

⁴ This refers to Purchasing power parity (PPP) GDP per capita.

INTRODUCTION

The need for information on refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other persons of concern is growing for a number of reasons. First, collecting information on the population of concern is in most cases the first step for ensuring that protection concerns are addressed properly. Second, owing to the rapid evolution of refugee situations as well as the necessity to monitor progress towards achieving durable solutions, population trends data are very useful to inform decision-makers. Third, stakeholders such as Governments of countries of origin and asylum and donors progressively plan their interventions based on evidence rather than anecdotal information. Fourth, the introduction of the cluster approach⁵ requires a comprehensive understanding of the numbers, location and profile of those who will benefit from the different clusters' activities.

The 2005 Statistical Yearbook (SYB) presents the characteristics of UNHCR's population of concern during 2005 and provides an overview of changes in the recent years. As such, it provides UNHCR and its partners with a basis for evidence-based decision-making and contributes to the implementation of the principles of results-based management (RBM) for informed public discourse in an area which is often characterised by lack of information, strong and divergent opinions.

UNHCR uses the Yearbook's statistics to primarily plan, implement and monitor operations. Such information contributes to informing the Office's advocacy and fundraising activities, monitoring progress against objectives and identifying emerging patterns and trends. Protection, living conditions and welfare indicators available for selected camps and countries provide UNHCR with elements it can use to prioritize activities, allocate resources and illustrate appeals to donors in emergencies.

Governments, UN agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), donors and other UNHCR partners request and use the organization's data for their own operational support and funding activities. They also use this information to raise awareness about the situation of persons under the UNHCR mandate among the general public. Researchers and students find the Office's statistics useful for their research activities.

Previous editions of the Statistical Yearbook were limited to monitoring the size and trends of UNHCR's persons of concern, using various data collection and estimation mechanisms and tools. Although the population size is key information for UNHCR, it is not the only important determinant for the Office's activities. The quality of international protection and the well-being of beneficiaries are other significant aspects for the planning of operations. For the first time, the Statistical Yearbook is able to provide insights into the welfare and living conditions of refugees, IDPs and other populations of concern. Data generated by on-going UNHCR data collection and analysis activities, including the Standards and Indicators (S&I) initiative, the Health and Nutrition Information System (HNIS), surveys on Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) indicators and the extensive use of UNHCR's registration software "proGres" are used to document some key issues pertaining to the protection and

⁵ Recognizing that no single UN agency had the mandate and resources to protect and assist IDPs globally, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) developed a "collaborative approach" which called for agencies to pool resources and response capacity. In 2005, a Humanitarian Response Review commissioned by the UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator found, however, that critical gaps in humanitarian response remained. To ensure a more predictable and efficient response, IASC Principals agreed, in July 2005, that UNHCR would assume managerial responsibility and accountability for three of nine "clusters", namely protection, emergency shelter, and camp coordination and management. This "cluster approach" was formally endorsed by the IASC in December 2005.

living conditions of persons of concern in selected countries and camps. It is hoped that these initiatives will fill the information gaps currently existing in some of these aspects.

Both the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* (“the 1951 Convention”) and the Statute of the Office refer to the responsibility of countries to provide statistical data to the High Commissioner. In order to provide protection, assistance and durable solutions, UNHCR country offices across the world compile statistics continuously, generally based on data provided by the host country. In countries where UNHCR is operationally active, statistics are often jointly established between the host government and UNHCR. The instances where UNHCR has provided estimates have been clearly indicated.

The 2005 Statistical Yearbook consists of four sections. The first section describes data sources and methodological issues. This section is **essential for understanding and using the data contained in the 2005 Yearbook**. It presents the definitions, nature and sources of the data and provides insight into data quality and coverage (**CHAPTER I**).

The second section provides a global analysis with regard to population numbers and trends as well as durable solutions. It consists of three chapters. **CHAPTER II** presents a global overview of the size and changes in the population of concern to UNHCR. **CHAPTER III** focuses on the main population movements during 2005, with particular emphasis on durable solutions and new refugee outflows. An overview of asylum applications and refugee status determination is provided in **CHAPTER IV**.

The third section analyses the population distribution as well as living conditions and welfare indicators. Sex and age characteristics, key variables in any refugee programme, are discussed in **CHAPTER V**. This chapter also provides information on refugee locations, including camps. As already mentioned, a chapter on welfare and living conditions of refugees is for the first time included in the 2005 Yearbook. Four topics have been selected to illustrate possible use of both Standards and Indicators data as well as other data sources in refugee situations in selected countries and camps. Nutrition, water and sanitation, HIV and AIDS and protection indicators will be analysed and discussed based on case studies. The findings of these case studies are presented in **CHAPTER VI**. The issue of international responsibility and burden-sharing is addressed in **CHAPTER VII**. Here, the size of the refugee population and the duration of their stay are compared with the national capacity to host refugees.

The fourth and last section of the Yearbook contains the annex tables. **ANNEX I** provides detailed data on 2005 while **ANNEX II** provides longitudinal trends, allowing for an easy comparison of trends globally, by region as well as by country for all major subject matters (*Tables A.1 through C.24*). Regional classifications and country codes are also explained (*Tables D.1 through D.6*). In **ANNEX III**, 50 regional and 162 country profiles are provided. These profiles are preceded by a brief technical note.

To facilitate comparison with other reports, the 2005 Yearbook includes various regional classifications. The classification by UNHCR Regional Bureaux allows a comparison with UNHCR budgetary and administrative information. The more detailed grouping “UNHCR regions” is consistent with the 2005 UNHCR Global Report.

In addition, the 2005 Yearbook includes a number of regional classifications used by the United Nations common system. First, the official United Nations regional

classification ("UN major areas") is used to analyse data by continent. Second, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are aggregated into three major regions: developed regions, developing regions and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). These regions are further subdivided into 10 regional groupings. The MDG classification also comprises three special groups: Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). By applying these regional aggregates, the 2005 Yearbook allows for the systematic inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers and others of concern to UNHCR in the MDGs. Third, a group of 38 "industrialized countries" has been defined by UNHCR to facilitate analysis and comparison of asylum practices in some of the developed countries. The "non-industrialized countries" include all countries which are not listed in Annex D.5.

Some data contained in this publication may differ from statistics published previously due to retroactive changes or the inclusion of previously unavailable data. Similarly, it is expected that the data contained in the 2005 Yearbook will be subject to minor changes in the future.

In analysing data at the regional level, caution should be exercised in using the regional aggregates. Although the names of the regions may be similar, the countries covered may differ. For instance, North Africa is included in the UN major area of Africa, but excluded from UNHCR's regional Bureau for Africa.