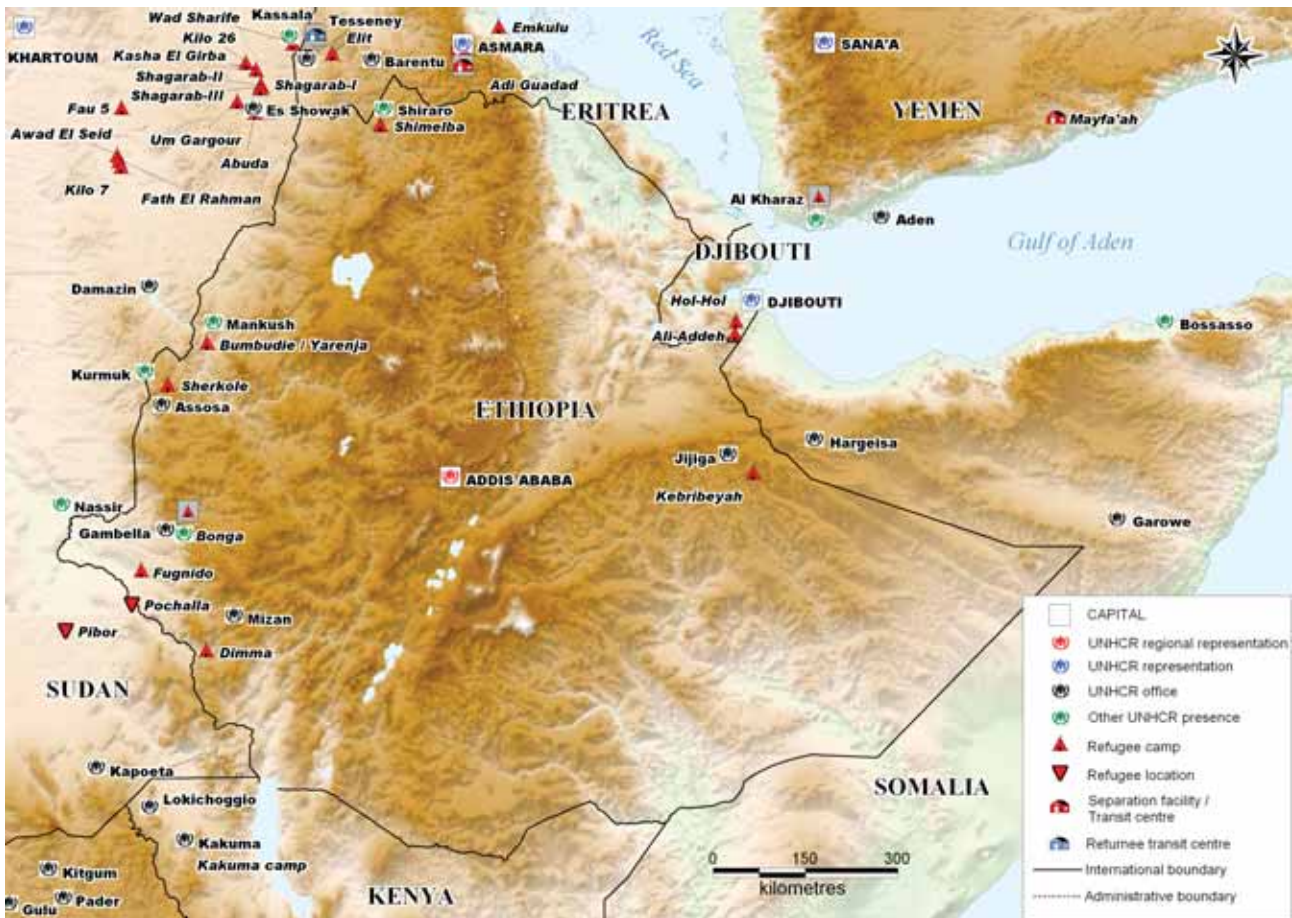


Ethiopia



Operational highlights

- In 2006, UNHCR provided international protection and assistance to more than 96,000 refugees in Ethiopia. Most were from Sudan, with the rest from Eritrea and Somalia.
- Ethiopia, Sudan and UNHCR signed a tripartite agreement in February 2006 that paved the way for the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees in Ethiopia. As a result, UNHCR helped more than 4,600 Sudanese refugees to return home and assisted another 950 who had returned home on their own.
- Some 770 refugees were resettled in third countries.
- To aid soil and water conservation, UNHCR replanted trees on some 280 hectares of deforested land. It also constructed some 62 km of terraces and check-dams to help prevent soil erosion.

Working environment

An improvement in political stability in Southern Sudan allowed UNHCR to help Sudanese refugees in western Ethiopia to return home. However, the number of returnees was lower than envisaged because of continuing logistical and security concerns. These included a lack of roads to, and facilities in, many areas of return and the presence of landmines on some return routes.

In Somalia, the emergence of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), which took control of Mogadishu in June and made a rapid military advance into central and southern Somalia, displaced thousands of Somalis. Some of the displaced arrived in eastern Ethiopia. Their number increased in December, following a new outbreak of armed conflict between forces of the UIC and the Transitional Federal Government.

An average of 300 Eritrean refugees, mainly ethnic Tigrinya, arrived in northern Ethiopia every month. They were accommodated by UNHCR in Shimelba camp, which had reached maximum capacity by the end of 2006. UNHCR also assisted 4,500 ethnic Afari refugees from Eritrea in the Afari Regional State in north-eastern Ethiopia.

Achievements and impact

Main objectives

UNHCR's objectives for 2006 were to provide international protection and material assistance to (mainly) Sudanese, Eritrean and Somali refugees; promote the voluntary repatriation of 14,000 Sudanese refugees; assist the Government of Ethiopia in the rehabilitation of infrastructure and the environment in and around refugee camps; promote the well-being of the most vulnerable refugees, such as women, children and older refugees; and pursue resettlement as a durable solution for eligible refugees.

Protection and solutions

No cases of *refoulement* or unwarranted detention were reported in 2006. UNHCR helped its main government partner, the Administration of Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), to build institutional capacity through training on refugee/human rights, law enforcement and sexual and gender-based violence.

UNHCR focused its protection activities in 2006 on the establishment of systems, guidelines and standard operating procedures in key operational areas. These covered verification and registration, management of self-repatriation, issuance of Convention travel documents, the reporting of and response to sexual and gender-based violence, camp transfers, formal reporting on traditional justice decisions and assistance to urban refugees.

One of UNHCR's key achievements was the signing and implementation of the Tripartite Agreement for the voluntary repatriation of Sudanese refugees. Under the agreement, UNHCR assisted the return home of more than 4,600 refugees. UNHCR staff attended to refugees with special needs, ensured family unity whenever possible and provided information on the areas of return — such as whether they had been cleared of landmines and whether essential services and infrastructure were available. In view of the returns, it is envisaged that

Bumbudie/Yarenja camp will be closed in 2007, and the Bonga and Dimma camps in 2008.

In addition to helping Sudanese refugees return home, UNHCR pursued resettlement as a durable solution. This was especially so in the case of vulnerable refugees, such as the Eritrean Kunama and Somali Bantu minorities, women at risk, survivors of violence and torture and with serious medical needs. A total of 770 individuals were resettled.

Activities and assistance

Domestic needs and household support: Budgetary constraints throughout the year curtailed the regular supply of basic domestic items to camp-based refugees. For their part, urban refugees found the subsistence allowance given to them inadequate. In the face of the austerity measures, UNHCR gave priority to supplying a minimum quantity of sanitary kits to women and girls between the ages of 13 and 49. It also provided basic relief items to more than 700 of the most vulnerable refugees in Shimelba camp.

Education: UNHCR helped train 99 primary school teachers and construct 16 classrooms in Kebribeyah camp. It also covered the school fees of urban refugee children. The Office trained 34 teachers in alternative and non-formal educational methods. As a result, the annual enrollment rate in Shimelba camp jumped from 45 per cent to 60 per cent, while the student-teacher ratio was maintained at 40:1. At the Kebribeyah camp the student-teacher ratio was reduced from 78:1 to 70:1.

Forestry: In order to reduce the impact of refugee encampments on the surrounding environment, UNHCR replanted 277 hectares of deforested land and constructed about 62 km of terraces and check-dams to contain soil erosion and gully formation. To reduce firewood consumption, the Office distributed some 3,200 fuel-efficient stoves and 500 clean-burning ethanol stoves. As a result, the level of carbon monoxide in kitchens was reduced by nearly 90 per cent. Furthermore, the physical safety of women and girls was greatly improved as they did not have to rove far from

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Sudan	67,000	67,000	50	58
	Somalia	16,600	16,600	51	56
	Eritrea	13,100	13,100	26	23
Asylum-seekers	DRC	200	-	33	32
	Various	200	-	21	28
Total		97,100	96,700		

the camps to collect firewood, thereby reducing their vulnerability to assaults.

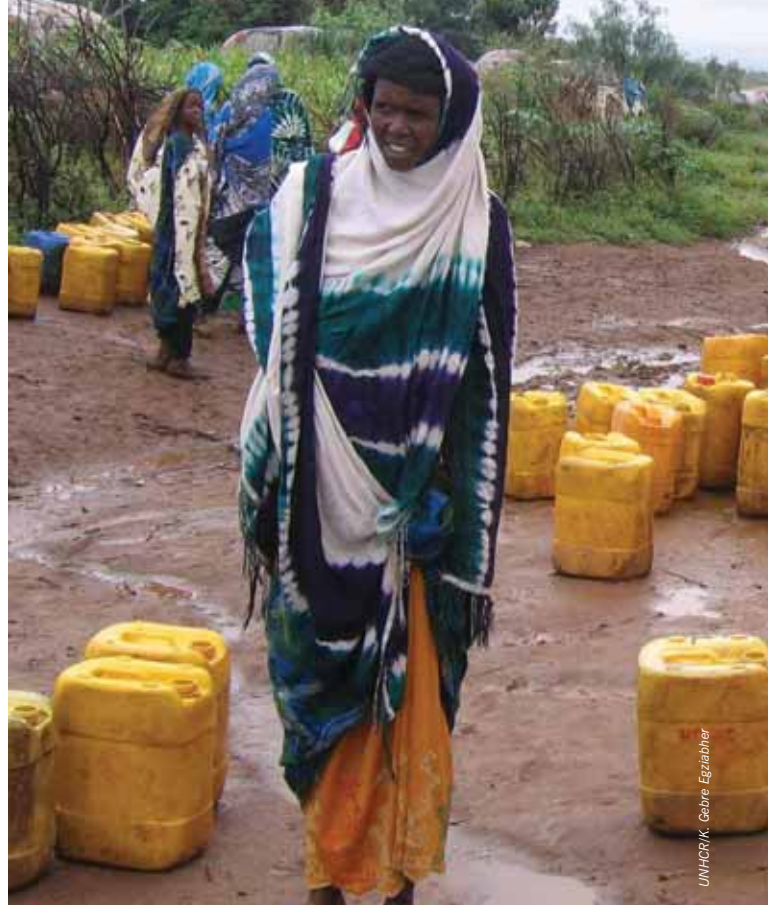
The construction of more than 970 mud-brick houses (75 per cent of the target) reduced tree-felling for timber to build shelters. More than 25,100 refugees were educated on environmental issues and taught ways to minimize environmental degradation. Refugees participated in tree planting and camp cleaning. Even older refugees and those with disabilities engaged in constructive projects such as brick making, particularly in Shimelba camp.

Health and nutrition: One of the refugees' biggest complaints was about the quality of medical care both in camps and in urban government-run hospitals. Most of the health centres in the camps were understaffed, and even government clinics and hospitals lacked qualified health personnel. The health centres in the camps also had to cope with treating host communities. Meanwhile, the target of more than 90 per cent vaccination coverage was not reached due to lack of financial resources, inadequate cold chains and a general shortage of vaccines at the Ministry of Health.

In spite of the difficulties, the health services provided to refugees were on a par with those accorded to Ethiopian nationals in government hospitals. The mortality rate remained within standards and no serious outbreak of disease was reported in 2006. A new artemisinin-based malaria therapy and a new health information system were introduced. HIV and AIDS prevention activities were conducted in all camps and urban settings. UNHCR and WFP managed to reduce the acute malnutrition rate in most camps through a targeted supplementary feeding programme and a child-feeding practice survey. Two camps achieved a malnutrition rate of less than 10 per cent.

Transport and logistics: Though assembly points and way-stations were constructed for the Southern Sudan repatriation operation, financial constraints prevented the opening of the southern corridor connecting Dimma and Fugnido camps to Pagak border-crossing point. This prevented the repatriation of some 5,000 registered refugees in 2006.

Water: UNHCR rehabilitated water pumps and boreholes to increase the water supply to the camps along the Sudanese border. A new water reservoir was constructed in Bonga camp, and water trucks were used to provide enough water to refugees repatriating to Sudan while they were in transit. Refugees in Shimelba camp received 18 litres daily per person. In Kebribeyah camp, UNHCR improved the efficiency of water networks by replacing 4.5 km of damaged water pipes, and each refugee received 11 litres daily, an improvement from 6 litres in 2005.



A water project originally planned to help Somali refugees will have lasting benefits for their Ethiopian hosts, in Kebribeya camp.

Legal assistance: Financial constraints and the poor quality of previously collected data delayed the issuance of identity documents in refugee camps. However, in 2006 UNHCR and ARRA began issuing identity documents for Eritrean and urban refugees. The increase in ARRA's capacity is expected to help it conduct a credible refugee registration exercise in 2007.

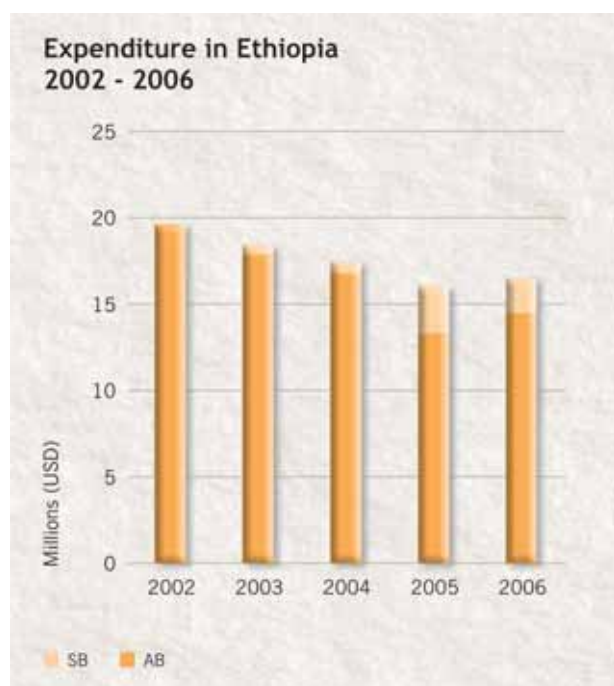
Constraints

Throughout 2006, the Office in Ethiopia strove to meet its objectives by prioritizing, in spite of budget constraints, building partnerships and making greater efforts to mobilize resources. Inadequate funding hurt the well-being of all refugees, but especially the most vulnerable among them. Levels of sexual and gender-based violence, youth delinquency and mental health problems remained alarmingly high. Minimum standards of assistance could not be met in several sectors such as water, health and education. It was also difficult to provide enough operational support to UNHCR's government counterpart and implementing partners. For example, the high turnover rate of health staff, which seriously affected the quality of health services, was due mainly to low salary levels in remote refugee-hosting areas.

Financial Information

The level of earmarked contributions for Ethiopia was one of the lowest in the region, at 34 per cent against the already reduced budget, and a substantial amount of unearmarked funds had to be allocated to this programme. Still, it was feared that even with a 20 per cent budget cut at the beginning of the year, additional austerity measures could be imposed if UNHCR did not receive enough funds. This had a negative effect on services to refugees, ranging from a paucity of basic supplies for camp residents to delays in the construction of repatriation infrastructure and the issuance of identity cards. With purchases of expensive items such as vehicles on hold, it was sometimes difficult to visit field locations and guarantee staff security. However, contributions from donor countries and allocations from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund and the Trust Fund for Human Security helped UNHCR cover the most critical priorities. Nonetheless, expenditure under the annual programme in 2006 reflected the budgetary ceiling of USD 8 million rather than the needs of refugees and others of concern in Ethiopia.

Overall, expenditure in Ethiopia has been decreasing since 2002, after the repatriation of 30,000 Somali refugees to northern Somalia, and it decreased further after the programme to assist Eritrean refugees at the border was completed.



Organization and implementation

Management

UNHCR maintained a Regional Liaison Office in Addis Ababa; two sub-offices in Gambella and Jijiga; a field office in Assosa; and four field units in Shiraro, Mankush, Bonga and Dimma. It was supported by 148 staff (19 international, five JPOs, 106 national staff, 17 national UNVs and one secondee).

Working with others

UNHCR participated in UN Country Team consultations and the development of joint strategies, notably those related to the exit plan from western Ethiopia following completion of repatriation to Sudan. With a new influx of Somali refugees, a comprehensive UN humanitarian response plan was jointly prepared and kept up to date.

Overall assessment

UNHCR met its overall objectives under two durable solutions – voluntary repatriation and resettlement – although it had to make unavoidable adjustments in its repatriation targets. The Office learned the critical importance of jointly setting objectives and harmonizing plans with other UNHCR country offices, particularly in the context of voluntary repatriation operations. But the major budgetary constraints affected the operational capacity of the Office and thereby the well-being of the beneficiaries.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government agencies: Administration of Refugee and Returnee Affairs, Bureau of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Bureau of Education, Bureau of Health, Ethiopian Road Authority, Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection.

NGOs: African Humanitarian Aid and Development Agency, Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Hope for the Horn, Hugh Pilkington Charitable Trust, International Rescue Committee, Jesuit Refugee Service, Mother and Child development Organization, Opportunities Industrial Centre Ethiopia, Refugee Care Netherlands, Rehabilitation and Development Organization, Save the Children Sweden, Society of International Missionaries.

Operational partners

Others: IOM, WFP.

Budget, income and expenditure (USD)					
	Final budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
AB	15,548,783	4,961,767	9,689,020	14,650,787	14,478,466
SB ³	2,682,729	0	2,029,779	2,029,779	2,029,779
Total	18,231,512	4,961,767	11,718,799	16,680,566	16,508,245

¹ Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

³ The SB figures apply to the Return and Reintegration of Sudanese Refugees to Southern Sudan. The budget does not include a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.

Financial Report (USD)				
Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Previous years' projects
	AB	SB	Total	AB and SB
Protection, monitoring and coordination	3,018,995	210,463	3,229,458	0
Community services	322,569	70,019	392,588	89,292
Crop production	1,039	0	1,039	0
Domestic needs and household support	638,297	0	638,297	74,298
Education	844,450	5,661	850,111	517,968
Food	28,223	31,435	59,658	0
Forestry	266,563	0	266,563	58,857
Health and nutrition	1,162,892	59,583	1,222,475	341,068
Legal assistance	293,072	309,143	602,215	28,987
Operational support (to agencies)	1,244,407	154,365	1,398,773	297,077
Sanitation	112,283	0	112,283	19,808
Shelter and infrastructure	29,581	236,378	265,960	1,325
Transport and logistics	521,885	551,782	1,073,666	255,702
Water	573,572	7,277	580,849	89,100
Instalments with implementing partners	2,742,573	393,673	3,136,246	(1,773,481)
Sub-total operational activities	11,800,402	2,029,779	13,830,181	0
Programme support	2,678,064	0	2,678,064	0
Total expenditure	14,478,466	2,029,779	16,508,245	0
Cancellation on previous years' expenditure				(23,331)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	6,979,362	924,589	7,903,952	
Reporting received	(4,236,789)	(530,917)	(4,767,706)	
Balance	2,742,573	393,673	3,136,246	
Previous years' report				
Instalments with implementing partners				
Outstanding 1st January				1,857,810
Reporting received				(1,773,481)
Refunded to UNHCR				(6,899)
Adjustments				13,836
Balance				91,266