

POLICY PRIORITIES

UNHCR offers protection and assistance to refugees and other persons of concern on the basis of their needs, irrespective of their race, religion, political opinion, gender or age. In designing and implementing its programmes and activities, however, UNHCR pays special attention to the rights and needs of women, children and older refugees, as well as to the environment in which refugees and their host communities live.

Overall, the majority of people of concern to UNHCR are women and children. UNHCR accords them special priority not simply in view of their numbers, but because the work of protecting and assisting women, children and other groups at risk - and advancing their human rights - is the core of its mandate. Although often overlooked, older refugees play central roles in their communities, and they also have special needs that have to be addressed. Environmental considerations are also crucial, as the lives of refugees and their host communities depend on the quality of their immediate environment.

REFUGEE WOMEN

During 2000, UNHCR, through the Senior Co-ordinator for the Refugee Women/Gender Equality Unit, designed and implemented a range of activities related to the advancement of refugee women. In partnership with field offices, NGOs and other agencies, the Senior Co-ordinator also facilitated the integration of gender equality into protection, programming and public information activities to ensure its fundamental inclusion in UNHCR's programmes. These activities are described in more detail within the respective country chapters. In 2000, UNHCR's key goal was to incorporate a gender equality perspective into all its operational activities, in line with the following objectives:

- Integration of gender analysis into policy, guidelines and key documents, and the evaluation of activities from a gender perspective;
- Implementation of protection and assistance activities to promote gender equality and advance the rights of women;
- Improved prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence;
- Empowerment of refugee and returnee women to participate in conflict resolution and peace-building;

- Encouragement of direct dialogue with displaced women;
- Support to innovative projects to promote the rights and equality of women through the General Initiative Fund for Refugee Women; and
- Continued development of trained, multi-sectoral regional and country level gender networks.

Achievements and Impact

The Department of International Protection finalised and disseminated UNHCR's Policy on Gender-Based Persecution. This policy is already being implemented by offices around the world, in particular in the Americas, where UNHCR has vigorously advocated adherence by countries of asylum. The Regional Bureau for Europe developed and introduced gender-sensitive asylum checklists and a Gender Training Kit on Protection. The Gender Unit published the first in a series of good practice publications derived from model field examples. In addition, UNHCR continued to incorporate a gender equality perspective into various initiatives, such as the Knowledge and Information Management System (KIMS) database, the Operations Learning Programme and Induction Training and the UNHCR Manual.

Over the past decade, People Oriented Planning (POP) has been the primary training vehicle for implementation of UNHCR's policy on refugee women. POP has provided UNHCR staff and implementing partners with a framework for analysing the different experiences of female and male refugees, returnees and displaced persons. POP was upgraded in 2000 to incorporate training on gender awareness and the empowerment of refugee women for country-specific activities.

Economic and Social Empowerment

In Angola, UNHCR's activities continue to focus on people internally displaced by the unrelenting civil war. In 2000, UNHCR provided income generation activities for internally displaced women in two provinces, providing start-up grants and training to set up small-scale trading activities, thereby enhancing family self-sufficiency and coping mechanisms. In Uganda, refugee women are now key players in the drive towards self-reliance in refugee households, running small enterprises, and tree planting and agricultural projects.

Refugee committees and leaders participate in training on women's human rights. Despite the extreme poverty and cultural obstacles in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), refugee women are being supported to participate in Peace Education training and given priority in micro-enterprise schemes. In Eastern European and Central Asian countries, UNHCR's projects promote the participation of refugee women in refugee committees and family life support centres. Refugee women regularly participate as resource persons, instructors and project managers for awareness-raising activities. A pilot project to establish regional NGO legal clinics is also underway.

UNHCR recognises that talking with refugees themselves is pivotal to effective planning, implementation and evaluation. UNHCR held a consultation with five displaced women from Burundi, Kosovo, Burma, Colombia and Sierra Leone. Donors, NGOs and UNHCR staff encourage this type of dialogue as a regular feature planned around meetings of the Executive Committee. In addition, UNHCR supported the participation of female civil society leaders and refugee women at international forums such as the Special Session of the UN General Assembly "Beijing + 5", in New York.

In sub-Saharan Africa, violent conflicts continue to threaten the lives of civilians and block the advancement of women in particular. In 2000, two key activities took place to promote the voice of refugee women in peace initiatives. Firstly, UNHCR funded the participation of Burundi refugee women in the Arusha peace talks for Burundi. Secondly, UNHCR supported activities throughout the year to create a network of women peace activists in West Africa (bringing together women from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). This network should serve as a platform for women to promote peace, advocate their active participation in discussion to end hostilities and ensure that their voices are heard at peace negotiations in the region. In addition, a regional programme was developed to complement national activities to bring about sustainable peace.

The General Initiative Fund for Refugee Women (GIF), launched in 1996, was designed as a discretionary fund to encourage pilot activities geared towards empowering refugee women. In 2000, UNHCR decided, in consultation with donors, to concentrate on projects already underway under the GIF (for funding reasons). Funds were allocated for a project on Standards and Strategies for Gender-Sensitive Asylum Systems. In targeted regions, workshops were held with participants from programming, protection and community development, and a series of checklists was established for gender-sensitive asylum procedures and the promotion

of gender equality in programming. In addition, regional newsletters were set up by the gender networks to provide a medium for the sharing of ideas. In some regions, this was the first time the issues of gender awareness and mainstreaming gender equality had ever been discussed in such a forum. As governmental and NGO counterparts were also invited, these meetings provided an excellent opportunity to develop a shared understanding of the issues and a vision for future activities.

Targeted Women's Initiatives

In November 2000, UNHCR participated in a joint evaluation mission to Rwanda to review the Rwandan Women's Initiative (RWI). While in Rwanda, the evaluation team facilitated a workshop on how the project could better empower women, drew lessons learned from the RWI and made recommendations for future endeavours. As similar initiatives are being considered, this evaluation has been a useful tool for improving the planning and development of empowerment initiatives.

Throughout the year, UNHCR continued to develop and implement the Kosovo Women's Initiative (KWI). In May, workshops were conducted in Pristina and Prizren to facilitate the strategic re-orientation of the KWI. As the emergency phase of the project is over, the KWI is now promoting empowerment and sustainable results by supporting income generation projects, legal centres, rights awareness activities, self-help for the elderly and safe houses for women who have escaped trafficking.

In September, through a partnership with the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and with a contribution from the UN Foundation (Ted Turner), a Gender Advisor was deployed to Sierra Leone to assist with the development of a strategy for a proposed Sierra Leone Women's Initiative and to support the development of a strong forum of local women. It is anticipated that the broad-based women's forum will provide a foundation for quick and accurate needs assessment and project evaluation should a Sierra Leone Women's Initiative be created. Secretariats of the forum were also established in inaccessible country areas to facilitate outreach activities to meet the needs of refugee women and adolescent girls returning from asylum to situations of displacement in Sierra Leone.

Gender Networks

Gender teams and networks were created in several regions to improve co-ordination and to ensure that all UNHCR offices take account of the needs of refugee women in their activities. UNHCR offices in the



Americas, Central Asia, Europe, the Baltic States and the CIS have already established gender networks and have been developing region-specific tools to promote a gender perspective. In 2000, additional networks were formed in the Great Lakes region and the East and Horn of Africa. The new networks were launched with five-day training and planning workshops for protection and programme staff in each region to share ideas on gender awareness and inclusion. Each country team submitted a plan of action which was included into the Country Operations Plan for 2001. In the Middle East, a series of country workshops and a regional meeting were held; the network then developed a series of projects for refugee women, to be implemented over the course of 2001.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)

In 2000, UNHCR continued to implement programmes to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and to provide culturally sensitive integrated responses to survivors. Funds provided by the UN Foundation (Ted Turner) were used to strengthen response to SGBV in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Kenya. With assistance from NGOs, governments and refugee representatives, UNHCR developed country-specific programmes to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence against women. These programmes were multi-sectoral and comprehensive and included training of the judiciary, female lawyers and law enforcement officers; developing medical protocols; reviving local protection mechanisms; and supporting community-based counselling. In East Timor, Sudan and Yemen, refugee men and women participate actively in programmes to respond to SGBV. Community crisis

teams and community counselling centres provide support for survivors in partnership with UNHCR.

In late 2000, preparations began for a conference on lessons learned on SGBV. In addition, evaluations of the Dadaab firewood distribution project (in Kenya) and the Rwanda Women's Initiative were undertaken. The findings were to be presented in early 2001.

Partnerships

In 2000, UNHCR remained active in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Sub-Working Group on Gender in Humanitarian

Response. UNHCR participated in the development of a CD-Rom training tool on gender issues in humanitarian response. UNHCR also actively participated in the regular meetings of the Geneva-based agencies' gender focal points. In addition, the Gender Unit participated in several other key forums, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in order to influence discussion to include issues relevant to refugee women. A donor review of the implementation of UNHCR's *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* was initiated to evaluate the progress made since their introduction ten years ago. Beyond the partnership to develop the Sierra Leone Women's Initiative strategy, UNHCR and UNIFEM began a study in Kenya (to be completed next year) on sustainable livelihoods for women in situations of displacement.

REFUGEE CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

During the year, UNHCR, through the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Children, focused on the implementation of a two-year strategy relating to refugee children and adolescents covering 2000-2001. This included a global focus on five priority issues: separation; sexual exploitation, violence and abuse; military recruitment; lack or disruption of education; and a particular focus on the special needs of adolescents. To support the implementation of activities, UNHCR continued to mobilise resources from governments and the private sector. In 2000, the Office's main objectives for some ten million children and adolescents under the age of 18 (who constitute approximately 45 per cent of all refugees and other persons of concern to UNHCR) were as follows:

- Policy development and “mainstreaming” within UNHCR;
- Policy promotion and advocacy in collaboration with other UN agencies, governments and NGOs;
- Institutional capacity-building and field support; and
- Special educational initiatives for refugee children and adolescents.

Achievements and Impact

The Senior Co-ordinator’s Unit worked to incorporate, or “mainstream”, children’s issues into UNHCR’s overall protection and assistance activities through a variety of outreach activities. These included participation in programme training in the field; the development, in co-ordination with the Refugee Women/Gender Equality and Environment Units, of a *Check-list on Integrating Policy Priorities into UNHCR’s Overall Programmes and Documentation* (and its dissemination); and the initiation of a study on best practice. Action for the Rights of Children (ARC) resource material was also integrated into the UNHCR’s Protection Learning Programme. (ARC is an inter-agency initiative that includes UNHCR, the Save the Children Alliance, UNICEF and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; please see below).

A number of documents and guidelines were prepared and disseminated within Headquarters, to field offices and to external interlocutors. These included the *Summary Note on UNHCR’s Strategy and Activities for Refugee Children and Adolescents*, the *Summary Update of Machel Study Follow-up Activities in 1998/1999* and the *Action for the Rights of Children* update. Regular briefings were also given to UNHCR’s Headquarters and field staff in order to strengthen the mainstreaming of children’s rights and needs into UNHCR’s overall programmes.



UNHCR collaborated with UNICEF on reports for the UN Secretary-General and the “Machel +5” review; liaising on a number of joint field activities; and providing input for the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children, to be held in September 2001, which included a ten-year review of UNHCR’s work relating to refugee children and comments on the draft report of this Special Session. Contributions relating to refugee children were provided to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, such as material for the Secretary-General’s Report on the Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The latter material made specific reference to UN Security Council resolutions 1261 and 1265 (on children and civilians in armed conflict); to country-specific work; and to the Terms of Reference for Child Protection Advisers in peace-keeping operations. UNHCR helped formulate a joint position along with other agencies and offices culminating in the adoption of an Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

The Office also participated in other joint initiatives, such as the Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children. In 2000, this Working Group prepared a draft text on *Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, to be issued in 2001. UNHCR participated in the Geneva-based NGO Sub-Group on Refugee Children and Children in Armed Conflict. In addition to being an important information-sharing forum, the sub-group facilitated the development of common and complementary positions on a number of issues relating to refugee children. UNHCR furthermore participated in a number of international forums and conferences, such as the International Conference on War-Affected Children in Winnipeg, and the Oxford Conference on Children in Adversity.

Institutional Capacity-Building

In 2000, UNHCR continued to strengthen its own institutional capacity, alongside the institutional capacities of governments and NGOs, to address the protection and assistance needs of refugee children. It achieved this through the ARC training and capacity-building initiative, the Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP), the UNHCR Machel Study Follow-up Strategy and through the Senior Regional Advisors/Policy Officers for Refugee Children.

The ARC constituted a main training and capacity-building vehicle. The Senior Co-ordinator’s office con-

tinued to be a main actor in this project, which was further expanded in 2000, both in terms of geographical coverage and issues addressed. By the end of 2000, five resource packs (Working with Children; Community Mobilisation; Child Soldiers; Education; Sexual and Reproductive Health) had been completed and made available via UNHCR's revised website, on a trial CD-Rom, and on paper.

ARC training workshops took place in West Africa, the Great Lakes region, and in Southern Africa, thus consolidating and further expanding the regional scope of the project. Regional follow-up activities continued throughout the year, including the launch of a series of country studies identifying legal issues affecting children within the Eastern European region. Other follow-up activities included the collaboration with Save the Children in the training of peace-keepers and military personnel in West Africa, and the integration of ARC materials into the OCHA capacity-building initiative in Angola. Also noteworthy were regional workshops on separated children in East and West Africa, and the expansion of the ARC inter-agency training team into Pakistan. In addition, in East Africa, an advanced "training of trainers" workshop took place, bringing together participants of previous workshops, to evaluate progress, share experience and further develop in-country plans. UNICEF funded translations of ARC resource material into French and Spanish, while UNHCR covered costs for the Russian translation. In line with the decision of the ARC Steering Committee, an introductory resource pack on Children Affected by Armed Conflict is also being prepared.

Financial and substantive support was provided to the SCEP, a joint UNHCR and Save the Children Alliance initiative covering Western, Central, South-Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. An updated version of the *Statement of Good Practice*, a key information and advo-

cacy tool developed under the programme, was finalised and issued. Building on the *Statement of Good Practice*, a draft training guide was prepared and used in a pilot "training of trainers" workshop, held in Brussels for government, NGO and UNHCR staff. Following the completion of country assessments undertaken by NGOs in 16 Western European countries, a summary report was commissioned by the SCEP and was officially launched in Brussels in June 2000. NGO country assessments were moreover conducted in Central European and Baltic States, to be summarised in a report in 2001.

The UNHCR Machel Follow-up Strategy, with its country Plans of Action, was used as a monitoring tool to assess progress made in addressing children's rights and needs in country programmes, particularly with respect to the priority areas of concern identified in the strategy. Country reports served as basis for the *Summary Update of Machel Study Follow-up Activities in 1998/1999*.

The Senior Regional Advisors/Policy Officers for Refugee Children played a vital role in UNHCR's efforts to address the specific protection and assistance needs of refugee children in its operations. Three Regional Advisors/Policy Officers continued to monitor and promote child protection and care issues in East and West Africa and the Great Lakes region, as well as in the CIS and Turkey. A fourth post, yet to be filled, was re-deployed from Central Asia to cover the region from Damascus under the Bureau for CASWANAME, while a fifth position continued to cover the SCEP out of Brussels. Events initiated by the Regional Advisors/Policy Officers, in the context of the ARC project, included a regional meeting on issues relating to refugee children, held in Dar es Salaam, and a conference in Ankara, attended by experts from Eastern Europe, on the legal framework affecting refugee and asylum-seeking children in this region. Within the framework of SCEP, UNHCR was instrumental in ensuring the launch of the report on 16 country assessments relating to unaccompanied and separated children in Western Europe.

Special Educational Initiatives

UNHCR's Senior Education Officer helped to coordinate special educational initiatives focused on life skills, peace education and conflict resolution. In 2000, UNHCR integrated aspects of peace education with ARC and various refugee women's initiatives. In Guinea and Liberia, nearly 200 teachers undertook peace education training in 2000, managed within the school system, including awareness workshops for staff and parents. Roughly 100,000 children received some element of peace education. Unfortunately, in Guinea the programme was suspended because of the security situa-



tion. In Kenya, the refugee peace education facilitators showed a strong commitment to the programme, maintaining the service for some time without direct supervision and before materials became available. This was a clear indication of ownership, which should lead to programme sustainability. Peace education activities also continued in Uganda. In Kenya, community workshops and formal education classes benefited some 40,000 children and 400 graduates. Public awareness programmes continued in Kenya and other countries. A combined ARC/peace education sub-regional workshop was held in Addis Ababa, for the purpose of implementing the programme in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Burundi.

In November 2000, UNHCR hosted an Inter-agency Consultation in Geneva on Education in Situations of Emergency and Crisis. The meeting launched the Network on Education in Emergencies, to enhance collaboration among NGOs and UN agencies in emergency education.

UNHCR proposed a two-year strategy to address the protection and assistance needs of refugee children and adolescents, outlined in *Refugee Children and Adolescents: a Progress Report*, which received broad support from governments. Three Policy Officer posts were re-titled to Senior Regional Advisors for Refugee Children. With the support of the Bureau for CASWANAME, the Regional Children's and Women/Gender Equality Advisors' posts were re-deployed to a common location (Damascus).

The Senior Regional Advisors/Policy Officers were instrumental in supporting as well as initiating country and regional activities including inter-agency agreements on cross-border tracing; family reunification in the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region; and a common focus on gender-based violence. In Ukraine, the ARC follow-up studies contributed to several amendments to the law on citizenship, including one to facilitate the issuance of birth certificates to children born in Ukraine to refugee or asylum-seeking parents.

In 2000, the funding shortfall considerably hampered UNHCR's efforts to address children's rights more effectively and mainstream refugee children's rights and needs in its overall activities. Priority activities, such as education, could not be implemented as planned. Contributions earmarked for such activities could not be fully absorbed within reduced financial envelopes of country programmes, and limited staff and resources had to pay increasing attention to financial rather than implementation and monitoring issues.

A UNHCR Steering Committee is to conduct an independent evaluation in 2001 of the impact of UNHCR's

activities on the protection of refugee children and respect for their rights.

OLDER REFUGEES

Although often overlooked, older refugees play a central role in refugee communities and make an important contribution to reintegration and local integration. Older refugees have been central in maintaining a sense of community and cultural awareness in situations of population displacement. They act as the transmitters of oral history and culture, thereby keeping alive a common heritage. Older refugee women often serve an indispensable role as birth attendants and midwives, especially during home births. Like refugee women and children, older refugees also have special needs, which need to be addressed when designing and implementing protection and assistance programmes. UNHCR's policy on older refugees was presented to, and endorsed by, the Standing Committee, which met early in the year. This policy was reproduced in a brochure entitled *Older Refugees - a Resource for the Refugee Community*, which also contained examples of activities on behalf of older refugees in various UNHCR operations.

In 2000, the policy was implemented through a range of activities, disseminated to implementing partners and integrated into UNHCR's Operations Learning Programme. All UNHCR field offices also received the results of a study entitled *The Ageing World and Humanitarian Crises: Guidelines for Best Practice*, which provided a valuable operational corollary to UNHCR's policy. In addition, the video *Hardship and Courage* which describes the situation of older refugees, IDPs and returnees in Croatia, was distributed to field offices for the purposes of training and sharing of ideas.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Building on a set of key principles outlined in UNHCR's *Environmental Policy* (1996) – including prevention, cost-effectiveness and community participation – attention is now being focused on designing, implementing and supporting a broad range of projects and activities that respond to identified needs, and which promote sound environmental management in refugee operations.

Underpinning this work is the broader objective of defending the institution of asylum (part of UNHCR's core protection mandate) which could be jeopardised by the impact of large groups of displaced people on their immediate surroundings in countries of asylum. Their presence often puts an increased burden on local natural resources, which may lead to friction between refugees and local communities, often causing protection-related

problems. Environmental degradation is sometimes one of the most immediate, visible and long-term impacts of refugee operations: to cope with this, UNHCR, through its Engineering and Environmental Services Section (EESS), continues to initiate and support a range of tailored activities and services at the field level, within Headquarters and among its implementing partners. Priority issues addressed in 2000 included the following:

- UNHCR's environmental policy was promoted and implemented through practical field activities;
- An environmental assessment and monitoring programme was designed and implemented;
- A stronger and broader education programme was developed to raise environmental awareness;
- UNHCR and implementing partner staff received continued environmental management training; and
- Communications and outreach were enhanced, both within and outside UNHCR.

Achievements and Impact

Translating its policy and lessons learned into practice, EESS supported a growing number of model projects each of which was carefully designed to respond to the identified needs of refugees and local host communities. These simple, practical and appropriate practices highlighted for refugees and others the benefits that can result from well-designed projects that cater to improving their livelihood while at the same time benefiting the surrounding environment.

Environmental quality improved significantly in three camps in eastern Sudan following the introduction of model projects to benefit refugees and local inhabitants. Using a combination of approaches, activities focused on establishing home gardens, tree planting, income-generating activities based on natural resources, environ-

mental education and the promotion of fuel-efficient stoves. Exceeding initial expectations in many ways, the success of these projects was visible not only at the landscape level but also in improved relations between the refugees and the local population and authorities.

The search for solutions to soil erosion (especially the formation of gullies) was among the main tasks addressed in a model project for Congolese refugees in Rwanda. Simple (but laborious) terracing around the summit of a hill on which the refugee camp is located has helped slow down erosion, while at the same time permitting refugees to become engaged in intensive agriculture on the terrace beds. Improved systems of agroforestry will be introduced to help stabilise the terraces and provide maximum crop yields.

In Zimbabwe, almost 200 refugees were trained in permaculture – permanent agriculture – resulting in a significant increase in small gardens around homesteads, with refugees benefiting not only from fresh garden produce but also a sizeable income through the sale of fruit and vegetables to markets in Harare. In addition to promoting sound practices relating to soil conservation and water harvesting, income-generating projects such as soap-making, bee-keeping and organic cotton growing are quickly finding favour among the refugee community. *Refugee Permaculture*, a book outlining best permaculture practices in a refugee context, is based on this work in Zimbabwe.

The introduction of bio-gas technology to 45 pilot households in Afghanistan was one innovative element of an integrated programme for environmental management, necessitated in part by a chronic shortage of firewood in the region. A preliminary assessment of the technology's impact revealed that even in the early phase of trials the collection of firewood was reduced, thus reducing damage to local vegetation. Every day, the 45 bio-gas units produced 85,500 litres (85 cubic metres) of gas, equal to the energy of 299 kg of firewood (or nearly 107,730 kg of firewood over the course of a year). Additional benefits of this programme are improved agricultural practices (using residue from bio-gas plants as fertilisers), improved environmental hygiene within households, and overall better livelihood security.

In addition to these model projects, environmental activities were also successfully carried out in a number of other countries, including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Mexico, Tanzania, Thailand and Uganda.



Environmental Education

Raising awareness of the importance of environmental management at all phases of refugee operations remained a core part of the Environment Programme in 2000. Different approaches were pursued depending on the local situation and perceived needs. In Sudan, a careful build-up of informal awareness-raising activities culminated in the production of a series of 20 posters advocating wise use of natural resources and overall environmental management. Developed by a committee comprising local teachers, community leaders, government officials and UNHCR's implementing partner, the posters will be used by extension workers in both the refugee and local communities in eastern Sudan. The posters were also designed for classroom use, thus ensuring that all members of the communities, young and old, are exposed to key issues surrounding the management of natural resources.

In Liberia, an educational booklet entitled *Our Environment: Taking Care of Our Future* was developed by the Environmental Foundation for Africa in collaboration with UNHCR. Designed to suit the Liberian situation (and other West African countries), the booklet addresses such issues as soil and water, forests, energy, pollution and environmental health. A separate guide for teachers is also available. Providing UNHCR with a regional support service for environmental education in refugee situations, UNESCO PEER (Programme of Education for Emergencies and Reconstruction) continued to build upon existing environmental education projects in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti. In addition to Sudan, UNESCO PEER also worked with UNHCR to develop a non-formal environmental education project in Zambia and carried out a first assessment of environmental education needs and opportunities in Guinea.

The service provided by UNESCO PEER continues to support environmental education initiatives aimed at building capacity in the field. In 2001, the service is currently developing a handbook for implementers of environmental education projects – giving guidance on the application of environmental education and technical environmental information – in addition to a handbook on monitoring and evaluating environmental education projects. This service is considered essential, since it provides a specific service to UNHCR and those working in refugee situations who wish to augment their environmental management activities through the introduction of environmental education.

Training

Building on the experience gained from previous regional workshops, a workshop on environmental management in

refugee operations was organised for some 70 participants from countries in West Africa in June.

Increasingly, EESS is encouraging “spin-off workshops” which are organised by participants of the regional workshops. In 2000, successful workshops were organised for more than 100 participants in Liberia and Tanzania focusing on a wide range of environmental issues, from basic project planning and management, to assessment and monitoring, to improving co-ordination between UNHCR and implementing partners. EESS will continue to provide seed funds and technical assistance to encourage and facilitate such workshops, all of which are geared towards local country needs.

Monitoring Impact

Work started on developing user friendly guidelines for environmental assessments in refugee operations. Under the Framework for Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (FRAME) Project, and based on a broad consultation process, draft guidelines will be available for field-testing and finalisation in 2001. Meanwhile, various techniques for monitoring environmental activities were developed and tested at the field level, including community-based indicators and remote-sensing applications. Findings from these initiatives will augment information held on an environmental database maintained by UNHCR, and will be analysed and interpreted using geographical information system technology.

As part of UNHCR's ongoing need to evaluate the impact of its projects, the provision of firewood to refugees in Kenya, partly in response to the incidence of sexual assaults experienced by refugee women and girls when collecting firewood, was the subject of an independent evaluation in late 2000. The evaluation found that the decision in 1997 to provide firewood to refugees in the Dadaab camps was made without sufficient analysis of the problems of rape and firewood-related environmental degradation, or sufficient analysis of the provision of firewood as a solution in terms of efficiency or cost-effectiveness. A separate analysis of firewood availability around the Dadaab camps showed simply that the supply of free firewood to refugees on a large scale cannot be justified on environmental grounds. A resource management plan has since been established.

Organisation and Implementation

EESS is an integral part of the Department of Operations, which oversees all aspects of UNHCR's activities, including ensuring full compliance with policy priorities. A small number of field-based Environmental Co-ordinators continued to play an instrumental role in delivering

assistance and services to implementing partners, as well as to the refugees themselves.

In 2000, UNHCR gave renewed attention to building up and maintaining a network of qualified partners. This entailed regular meetings with some of the main traditional partners, such as CARE, *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*, and Lutheran World Federation, as well as with other environmental organisations, including WWF (World Wildlife Fund for Nature) and IUCN (the world conservation union). In September 2000, EESS participated in a UNEP-led mission to assess the environmental impact of refugees in Albania and Macedonia, following the Balkan war. Findings showed that, in both countries, the impact on

the environment was limited thanks, in large part, to precautionary measures.

As the focal point for a stand-by agreement between UNHCR and RedR Australia, EESS also managed the deployment of specialist engineers in response to identified needs in the field (see the chapter on Global Operations).

Formerly viewed as concerns that might be addressed, environmental issues are now increasingly accepted as a priority concern, as witnessed by:

- The growing range of environmental projects in an increasing number of countries;

HIV/AIDS and Refugees: Focus on Southern Africa

UNAIDS estimates that more than 36 million people world-wide live with HIV/AIDS. While no continent has been spared, the situation in Africa is particularly catastrophic. Seventy per cent of adults and 80 per cent of children living with HIV reside in Africa (home to only ten per cent of the world's population). According to UNAIDS, more than one in seven people may be carrying the HIV virus in the Southern African countries of Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In these countries, the large number of AIDS-related deaths amongst both adults and children has reduced average life expectancy at birth to just over 49 years (as compared with 61.5 years before AIDS struck the continent).

It is widely recognised that conflict, instability and food insecurity, as well as poverty and other forms of deprivation, offer fertile ground for the spread of HIV/AIDS. This reality is most acute for the millions of refugees and internally displaced persons whose physical, economic and social insecurity erodes their traditional caring and coping mechanisms.

In 2000, UNHCR intensified its work to fight the AIDS epidemic among persons of concern to the Office. A USD 2.2 million grant from the UN Foundation (Ted Turner) enabled UNHCR to strengthen reproductive health and HIV/AIDS activities. In the Southern Africa region, through one of the grant-supported projects, UNHCR initiated an innovative programme targeting young refugees in urban areas in South Africa and Botswana and in rural areas in Namibia. The project aims to work with local agencies and governments to ensure that the reproductive health and HIV/AIDS needs of young refugees are fully integrated within host-country programmes. For example, UNHCR has worked closely with several institutions:

- The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (South Africa) implemented a survey among the eight largest urban refugee populations in Gauteng Province to provide baseline data against which the effectiveness of future interventions and initiatives can be measured.
- The Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa provided reproductive health training for young urban refugees in Cape Town and established linkages with local service-providers, enabling refugees to enjoy their right to health care services.
- Margaret Sanger Centre International (South Africa) trained networks of refugees to serve as peer educators in refugee camps in Namibia and Botswana. Other activities included the development of a Youth Centre in Osire Camp (Namibia) and special education programmes for young female refugees.
- In association with the Nelson Mandela Children's Foundation, an educational theatre production, *You're not Alone*, was performed at some 50 refugee-hosting schools in South Africa. The play aimed to combat the overwhelming atmosphere of xenophobia in South Africa by providing accurate information on HIV/AIDS and thereby dispelling the myth that refugees are responsible for the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country.

- The mounting interest staff show in attending regional environmental training workshops, coupled with a willingness to take on additional training tasks in their own time;
- Enhanced commitment by field offices to consider environmental concerns at critical stages of operations;
- A steadily increasing number of environment focal points in the field;
- Increased requests for technical assistance and guidance from implementing partners; and

- Increased demand for UNHCR's environmental publications and guidelines.

Although environmental issues are now an integral part of UNHCR's programme and reporting procedures, there remains a need to provide support and guidance to UNHCR staff as well as to partner staff. Over the coming years UNHCR will have to continue to raise awareness through training programmes and special campaigns, to provide hands-on support, and to monitor key activities, including policy compliance, at the field and Headquarters levels.

Refugee Children and Adolescents		Expenditure (USD)
Ethiopia	Assistance for Refugee Children at Risk	100,000
Côte d'Ivoire	Educational Assistance for Liberian Refugee Children	932,328
Liberia	Educational Assistance for Sierra Leonean Refugee Children	57,964
Various	RH Activities, Prevention and Treatment of HIV/AIDS	127,500
Various	Enhancing Nutritional Status of Refugee Women, Children and Adolescents	105,000
Various	Policy Implementation and Monitoring of Refugee Children Activities	122,800
Various	Initiative Fund for Refugee Children	195,000
Various	Education for Life Skills, Peace and Conflict Resolution Programme	295,000
Kenya	Senior Regional Advisor (Refugee Children)	123,900
Uzbekistan	Senior Regional Advisor (Refugee Children)	80,700
Syria	Senior Regional Advisor (Refugee Children)	39,500
HQ	Programme Delivery and Related Costs for Training/Refugee Children Unit	83,000
Total Refugee Children		2,262,692
Refugee Women		
Guinea	Prevention of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence	107,000
Kenya	Prevention of Sexual Violence Against Refugee Women	60,000
Liberia	Refugee Communities Against Sexual and Gender Violence	143,500
Sierra Leone	Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender Violence	61,800
Tanzania	Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Refugee Women	200,000
Turkey	Regional Gender and Refugee Women Support	10,000
Various	Prevention of Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls	98,600
Various	Activities to Support Mainstreaming Gender Equality	275,000
Kenya	Senior Regional Advisor (Refugee Women)	123,900
Turkey	Senior Regional Advisor (Refugee Women)	101,150
Total Refugee Women		1,180,950
Environment		
Afghanistan	Environmental Protection and Management	100,000
Djibouti	Environmental Resources Programme for Somali and Ethiopian Refugees	120,000
Ethiopia	Environmental Planning and Co-ordination, Environmental Education and Rehabilitation	240,000
Guinea	Rehabilitation of Refugee-Affected Areas	99,517
Côte d'Ivoire	Rehabilitation and Re-Afforestation	157,395
Nepal	Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation in Areas Hosting Asylum-Seekers	445,731
Rwanda	Support to Environmental Protection	170,000
Sudan	Demonstration of Environmental Approaches	115,000
Uganda	Forestry Activities and Energy Supply in Refugee-Affected Areas	210,000
Various	Environmental Co-ordination of Refugee Programmes	540,000
Various	Regional Support Service for Environmental Education Curriculum Dev. and Training	200,000
Various	Environmental Assessment and Monitoring Methodologies in Refugee Operations	348,000
HQ	Programme Support Costs and Related Costs for Training on Environment	70,110
Total Environment		2,815,753