

# SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe

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## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

On 4 April 2002, the Government of **Angola** and armed rebel forces signed a cease-fire, thus ending a 27 year-long civil war. The main priorities of the Government are now the orderly settlement of former UNITA fighters and their families, the reintegration of IDPs and the return of refugees. In June, UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner visited the sub-region to discuss the Office's role in the future repatriation of Angolan refugees residing in neighbouring countries, mainly in **Zambia**, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and **Namibia**. UNHCR is still preparing the regional repatriation plan. The organised repatriation is planned to begin in early 2003. Meanwhile, UNHCR provided support to spontaneous returnees. It is estimated that by the end of June 2002, some 22,000 refugees returned spontaneously.

## PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES, AND CONSTRAINTS ENCOUNTERED

In **Zimbabwe**, in view of the difficult socio-economic situation before and after the recent elections, UNHCR prepared a regional emergency and preparedness plan. So far, no significant population displacements have taken place. Nevertheless, UNHCR continued to monitor the situation and will update the plan according to further developments.

In May, the Governments of **Botswana** and **Namibia** signed a revised draft agreement with UNHCR for the return of some 2,400 Namibian refugees from the Dukwi settlement. Following the signature, UNHCR organised a "go and see" visit by Namibian refugee representatives, as well as scheduled a follow-up technical meeting to take place in Windhoek in July 2002.

## ACTIVITIES UNTIL 30 JUNE 2002

Operations in Namibia and Zambia are described in separate country chapters.

In **Angola**, during the reporting period, UNHCR provided protection and basic humanitarian assistance to refugees and asylum-seekers from DRC. Refugees benefited from adequate support in the essential sectors of food, water, health and education. In addition, UNHCR continued to develop activities to enhance the self-reliance of refugees. These include a wide-range of skills-training (including languages, computer courses, and tailoring) as well as income-generating projects. At the end of June 2002, the number of beneficiaries of the micro-credit scheme initiated in mid-2001 reached 132, the majority of whom were women. The active participation of refugees in the management of the camps was encouraged and regular consultative meetings were held between refugee representatives, implementing partners and UNHCR.

With the progressive restoration of peace in the country, the Government of Angola has shown increased interest in the local integration of the Congolese refugees. Discussions between UNHCR and the Government for ensuring permanent sites with access to farming land were conducted for this purpose.

The UNHCR programme initiated in June 2000 for IDPs, including community-based infrastructure rehabilitation projects, capacity-building, and provision of health and social services, as well as micro-credit schemes, continued to be implemented during the first half of the year. While providing support to IDPs, the programme also improved the conditions for the future reintegration of returnees. It is estimated that close to half a million refugees covered by the programme

in the region originate from Mexico, Uige, Negage and Zaire. Under a UN co-ordinated intervention, UNHCR and OCHA implemented a nationwide protection capacity-building programme. Protection workshops were organised throughout the country and working groups at the provincial level developed an action plan.

In **Botswana**, UNHCR reviewed the distribution of activities by each operational partner in order to improve the quality of assistance provided to the refugees. Agreements were signed with new implementing partners. Substantive progress was made under the sectors of shelter and income generation. At the end of June 2002, double shelter units with pit latrines were completed and occupied by 42 families (unaccompanied women were given priority under this scheme). Several business ventures were established, including a brick moulding association that during the first six months of the year produced 80,000 bricks with a market value of USD 15,000. A tie and dye project was implemented, which focused on embroidery and tailoring. This project was awarded a contract by the Botswana Christian Council to produce 1,000 uniforms for pupils. UNHCR provided the initial capital and equipment to all the above ventures operated as independent commercial businesses. Overall, the results have been positive, but progress remains to be made, in particular, in financial bookkeeping. Under the health sector, results of medical tests showed that approximately 25 per cent of pregnant refugee women who volunteered for HIV/AIDS tests were positive. The figures could be even higher if the tests were mandatory. The Office in co-ordination with the Government increased awareness on HIV/AIDS, through the refugee peer educators' project on HIV/AIDS, as well as the government programme on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

In **Malawi**, there was an increase in new arrivals to the country, from some 6,200 to 9, 240, an average of 500 individuals per month from January to June 2002. Most of them came from Burundi, the Democratic

Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Somalia.

UNHCR faced difficulties in the first half of the year in providing food to all the refugees, due to the severe food shortage which took place in the country after crops were destroyed by the floods in the northern, southern and central regions, and the dry spell which took place from February to March 2002. In June 2002, UNHCR signed an agreement with WFP and the Malawi Red Cross Society which will allow WFP to carry out food assistance under an emergency operation for a period of one year.

The Office further encouraged refugees to become self-sufficient by providing 350 families with seeds and fertilisers, as well as by granting loans to vulnerable refugees in need.

**Mozambique** continued to experience an increase in the number of asylum-seekers entering the country. From January to June 2002, there was an increase in the number of new arrivals from 5,320 to 6,380.

In the first half of the year, UNHCR negotiated the construction of houses and temporary sheds in the Marratane camp in Nampula, the move of the new arrivals in Maputo to Nampula, and the closure of the Bobole camp with the Government of Mozambique. In May 2002, the Office reached an agreement with the Government to build 100 houses for the refugees. The houses will be built by the refugees under the technical guidance of UNHCR or NGOs. In order to better control the assistance provided to new arrivals in Maputo, the new arrivals in Maputo will be moved to Nampula during the first weeks of arrival to the country. Due to the increased number of beneficiaries, UNHCR will maintain the Bobole refugee camp until the end of the year and further develop the Marratane camp in Nampula.

UNHCR supported the Government in its refugee status determination (RSD) procedures. The Office provided them with

training on refugee protection, shared interview techniques, and improved their access to information on country of origin.

The Office is facilitating the voluntary return of some 41 refugees from Mozambique to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Four refugees were resettled to Canada.

The UNHCR office in **South Africa** organised a number of events in commemoration of World Refugee Day in June 2002, in an effort to facilitate an environment conducive to the local integration of refugees, and as part of an awareness raising effort. Events included a national creative writing competition among South African school children; a photo, arts and crafts exhibit, the launching of a skills training programmes for refugee women; and a high profile fashion show held at the National Gallery.

With regard to the ongoing integration-related programmes, UNHCR sponsored skills and language training programmes for refugees. Some 300 refugees (48 per cent women) were enrolled in these programmes during the first half of the year. Primary and secondary education was sponsored for 673 needy refugee children (45 per cent female). After a review of the small business programme loan in 2001, a limited, revised small business initiative was piloted in the first half of 2002. In addition to the provision of small loans, the revised programme includes business skills-training for eligible applicants and support for a full time "business mentor" to monitor the initial period of new businesses. A second pilot programme on small businesses for refugee women is being implemented by a local entrepreneurial organisation, which works with underprivileged South African communities. The goal of this pilot programme is to equip a small group of refugee women with the skills to develop viable business plans and apply for small business loans from local micro-finance institutions. The project has currently trained 28 refugee women who have completed independent market research studies and are

in the process of developing business plans. The network of four legal counsellors in the main urban centres continued to provide advice and support to asylum-seekers and refugees. The counsellors interviewed and assisted over 850 refugees and asylum-seekers in the areas of: housing/labour disputes; appeals against negative decisions on asylum claims; legal representation of unaccompanied minors; screening of voluntary repatriation and resettlement cases; and the filing of complaints related to harassment and xenophobia-related attacks.

In May 2001, the DHA announced it would be issuing identity documents to recognised refugees, as provided for in the 1998 Refugee Act. The issuance of the identity cards, initially delayed, started in June when 485 cards were processed. All these cards are to be distributed by end of July. The DHA expects to be able to clear the backlog of some 1,500 pending IDs during the month of July.

UNHCR, through its implementing partners, provided short-term basic material assistance to some 1,800 needy refugees and asylum-seekers. The assistance included accommodation, food vouchers, clothing and other needs. To ensure adequate screening and selection of recipients of UNHCR assistance, UNHCR protection staff began reviewing records of those assisted and conducted interviews with those whose cases could need further scrutiny. As an increasing number of unaccompanied minors entered the country, a new set of procedures for screening were established. Interviews conducted jointly by UNHCR, legal counsellors and implementing partners, were structured to confirm that those concerned, were indeed unaccompanied minors, and that they fulfilled the refugee criteria.

To enhance local capacity to respond to refugee needs, UNHCR organised three training sessions in Pretoria, Durban and Cape Town. The participants were government officials dealing with RSD. Protection and management training

workshops for implementing partner staff were also organised.

From January to June 2002, 22 cases comprising 36 individuals were processed for voluntary repatriation and returned to their countries of origin (Angola, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania).

In **Zimbabwe**, the prevailing economic situation, with an extremely high rate of inflation and shortages of foreign currency had an impact on the refugee operations, in particular, in terms of cost of equipment and services. UNHCR's implementing partners had to raise the salary levels of their staff, and refugee allowances were also increased. Forty housing units were constructed and works on an additional 13 are under way. A new water borehole was drilled and fitted with an electric pump in Tongogara camp. In addition, two water reservoirs, with a capacity of 9,000 and 23,000 litres, were installed in the camp. Language and vocational skills-training was organised through implementing partners.

To better monitor the protection situation in Tongogara, UNHCR established a temporary field office in the refugee camp. UNHCR also continued to ensure that asylum-seekers arriving in Zimbabwe are not subjected to prolonged periods of detention. Transfer of refugees to Tongogara is voluntary and in accordance with the applicable international protection standards.

In the **Indian Ocean Island States (Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros and**

**Seychelles)**, UNHCR continued to promote the resettlement of mandate refugees. During the first half of the year, some 60 mandate-refugees in Madagascar, Comoros and Mauritius were provided with basic assistance through the UNDP country office, pending the identification of durable solution for their plight.

## **OUTLOOK FOR JULY - DECEMBER 2002**

Care and maintenance activities will continue to be delivered to the refugees in all the countries of the region without major changes. UNHCR will continue monitoring the situation in Zimbabwe and update its regional preparedness plan according to developments. The regional voluntary repatriation plan for the return of Angolan refugees is expected to be finalised shortly and an appeal for funds will be issued. Community-based support (water delivery systems, schools, clinics and seeds plus agricultural tools) will continue to be provided to those refugees who choose to return spontaneously to their country. An estimated 80,000 refugees are expected to do so by the end of 2002.

The second half of the year should also witness the beginning of the implementation of activities under the Zambia Initiative programme to benefit refugee-hosting areas. A specific UNHCR programme will be established for this purpose, particularly for areas where a number of refugees are not currently considering voluntary repatriation.

## Financial Data (USD)

Country / Activity	Annual Programme Budget and Trust Funds				Supplementary Programme Budget			
	Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available	Obligation Level	Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available	Obligation Level
Regional Office (Pretoria, South Africa)	2,207,423	2,694,522	2,334,000	2,334,000	0	0	0	0
Angola	4,172,514	5,199,868	3,835,270	1,974,400	0	1,870,085	0	0
Botswana	1,742,672	1,743,672	884,140	866,100	0	0	0	0
Malawi	1,131,038	1,385,038	809,700	809,700	0	0	0	0
Mozambique	1,422,287	1,423,287	675,400	675,400	0	0	0	0
Namibia	6,276,926	6,045,137	3,429,202	2,739,500	0	0	0	0
South Africa	4,855,348	3,874,195	1,407,006	1,442,500	0	0	0	0
Swaziland	155,800	155,800	62,000	62,000	0	0	0	0
Zambia	15,500,469	17,972,239	10,992,665	9,083,740	0	0	0	0
Zimbabwe	2,041,039	2,141,411	1,271,800	1,271,800	0	0	0	0
Regional Projects <sup>1</sup>	200,000	213,092	100,083	100,000	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39,705,516</b>	<b>42,848,261</b>	<b>25,801,266</b>	<b>21,359,140</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,870,085</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes scholarships for refugees students, emergency response capacity and external relations activities in the Southern Africa region.

