

# East Asia and the Pacific

Australia  
China  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea  
Japan  
Mongolia  
New Zealand  
Papua New Guinea  
Republic of Korea  
South Pacific

An Iraqi refugee who fled persecution, en route to his new home in Australia.



## | Working environment |

In China, UNHCR is raising awareness and helping to build national protection capacity as the authorities prepare to promulgate new asylum legislation and assume more responsibility for refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR is working along similar lines in Mongolia, which will accede to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and Japan, which plans to implement a pilot resettlement programme.

In the Hong Kong SAR (China), an agreement between UNHCR and the authorities has helped to build the territory's capacity for refugee status determination (RSD). In the Republic of Korea, the first half of 2009 saw positive developments, including the assignment of more immigration officers to RSD work and an agreement to allow legal representatives to accompany applicants throughout the process.

Recent positive developments in Australia included (i) an end to the "Pacific Solution", whereby asylum-seekers were transported to detention camps on small island nations in the Pacific Ocean; (ii) the subsequent closure of the offshore processing centres on Nauru and Manus Island, Papua New Guinea; (iii) the replacement of temporary protection visas with permanent visas; the introduction of a new detention policy, prompting resolution of cases rather than punishment. In this way, alternatives to detention started to be implemented in a more regular manner; and (iv) the development of a model of complementary protection for persons in need of international protection yet who do not fulfil the refugee definition of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

## | Strategy |

UNHCR will continue to advocate for increased protection for all people of concern, unhindered access to asylum, and fair and efficient refugee status determination. The Office will also advocate for better livelihoods for urban refugees, alternatives to detention for asylum-seekers and refugees, and the prevention of statelessness.

UNHCR offices in Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Hong Kong SAR (China) will promote public understanding of refugee issues and asylum-migration issues. UNHCR will also raise funds from public and private sources in these countries.

## | Constraints |

The deportation of asylum-seekers at entry points throughout the region (mainly airports) continues to occur and Australia is still conducting the offshore processing of irregular boat arrivals on Christmas Island. The detention of asylum-seekers and refugees continues to be used and to have serious effects on their physical and mental health.

## | Operations |

**In Australia (also covering New Zealand and the Pacific islands),** UNHCR will continue to promote international standards in decision-making and in reception conditions, as well as contribute to policy developments that ensure all people of concern are granted access to effective and fair asylum procedures, and, for those in need of international protection, durable solutions. Australia's offshore processing and reception arrangements on Christmas Island will be monitored closely.

UNHCR will work with countries in the region and through regional forums, such as the Bali Process, the Asia-Pacific Community (APC) and the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference, to develop regional approaches that address displacement issues and strengthen protection space for refugees.

The Office will seek to encourage **Australia** and **New Zealand** to maintain generous resettlement programmes that contribute to UNHCR's global strategic resettlement objectives. It will also seek to maximize political and financial support from public and private donors in these countries, and work closely with its national associations, interest groups and corporations on public awareness campaigns.

UNHCR will continue to strengthen relations with national and regional partners in the Pacific islands by providing advice and technical support to their governments and regional bodies. It will seek to improve legal frameworks and national capacity for dealing with refugees within migration movements and encourage adherence to the humanitarian principles enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention. UNHCR will also seek to integrate protection considerations into the management of climate change issues.

**In China,** UNHCR provides international protection and identifies durable solutions for people of concern. It stands ready to assist the Government in developing national refugee legislation and procedures that comply with international refugee law. RSD will continue to be conducted by UNHCR until



the national refugee regulation is enacted and the Government's RSD processing is fully operational. The Office will also continue to advocate for non-*refoulement* and will try to ensure that refugees are offered accommodation, education, health care and social counselling. Finally, it will also work with partners willing to offer internships and vocational training for refugees.

**In the Hong Kong SAR (China),** UNHCR will advocate for the territory's accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The Office will focus on enhancing the capacity of the Hong Kong Immigration Department. Refugees and asylum-seekers in Hong Kong do not have the right to work, and asylum-seekers are still subject to arrest and detention. UNHCR, while undertaking RSD and helping refugees in need, will work closely with the Government and civil society to find durable solutions and better livelihood opportunities for people of concern.

**In Mongolia,** the Office will continue its capacity-building activities in aid of relevant government institutions. Following an assessment of potentially stateless populations, UNHCR stands ready to support the Government in eliminating statelessness and introducing preventive measures.

**In Japan,** UNHCR will continue to help the Government to improve the national asylum system and support the Government's efforts to respond to the needs of asylum-seekers. While monitoring RSD and advocating for fair asylum procedures in terms of reception arrangements, alternatives to detention and complementary forms of protection, UNHCR will continue to provide legal and material assistance to asylum-seekers and

refugees with specific needs. It will also help the Government to implement the new resettlement programme.

UNHCR will work with the Japanese Government to address and prevent statelessness. It will also continue to seek financial support for programmes, while creating awareness of its mandate among the public, civil society and decision makers. Close ties with UNHCR's national association and the e-Centre in Tokyo will be maintained.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the Government has yet to adopt domestic legislation to fulfil its obligations under the 1951 Convention to develop a refugee policy and set up procedures for status determination. UNHCR will assist the Government to prepare a policy covering all asylum-seekers and refugees. In cooperation with the Government, it will also assess the protection needs of those West Papuans in urban and border areas whose status need to be regularized.

UNHCR will also continue to support income-generation projects for refugees in the East Awin settlement in **Papua New Guinea**. The projects will revolve around agriculture and cottage-style industry, with a particular focus on households with specific needs. Other projects will sensitize the East Awin refugee population on countering sexual and gender-based violence; providing assistance to victims; and working to counter HIV and AIDS.

In the **Republic of Korea**, UNHCR will continue to assist the Government to implement the Refugee Convention and strengthen its national asylum system through a joint capacity-building project started in 2008. The Office will

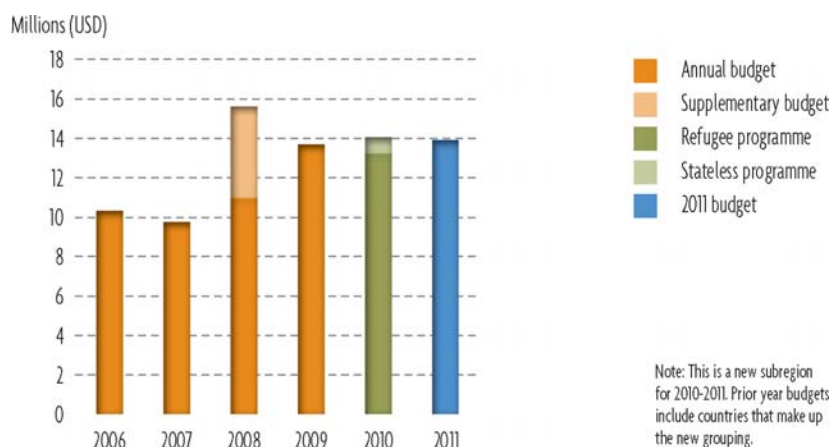
support local partners providing a social safety network for vulnerable persons of concern, and will assist the Government in putting in place planned reception facilities.

Following the publication in late 2009 of a study on Korean nationality legislation, UNHCR plans to engage with the Government on accession to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. By the end of 2010, the Office expects more safeguards for respecting individual rights in existing asylum procedures and the establishment of a mechanism for asylum-seekers to access RSD procedures at ports of entry. UNHCR will also seek to increase significantly the number of private donors in the country and will endeavour to boost in the Government's financial support for its programmes.

### Financial information

Budget levels in the East Asia and Pacific subregion have remained constant in recent years, apart from the 2008 emergency response to the **China** earthquake. Budgets in 2010 to 2011 will remain focused on addressing the needs of refugee and stateless populations. Programmes in the region mainly focus on capacity building and resource mobilization. Direct assistance to persons of concern is implemented only in **China** (including the Hong Kong SAR), **Mongolia** and **Papua New Guinea**, where beneficiary numbers have been quite stable and are expected to slightly decrease in the coming years. The reduced investment in direct assistance programmes will allow offices to strengthen capacity building activities as well as those related to stateless persons.

## UNHCR's budget in East Asia and the Pacific 2006 – 2011



## UNHCR budget for East Asia and the Pacific (USD)

COUNTRY	2009 REVISED BUDGET	2010			2011
		REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	TOTAL	
Australia and New Zealand	1,635,944	1,334,301	0	1,334,301	1,360,000
China	4,991,115	4,809,687	173,047	4,982,733	4,620,000
Japan	4,522,703	4,473,938	516,736	4,990,673	5,100,000
Mongolia	363,534	184,349	36,173	220,522	262,000
Papua New Guinea	965,915	1,274,675	0	1,274,675	1,320,000
Republic of Korea	1,195,329	1,131,867	91,521	1,223,389	1,230,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,674,540</b>	<b>13,208,817</b>	<b>817,477</b>	<b>14,026,294</b>	<b>13,892,000</b>