

# Working in partnership with others

To meet today's humanitarian challenges, committed partnership is essential among humanitarian agencies, civil society, the private sector and other entities. Partnership is of pivotal importance in all aspects of UNHCR's work: to raise awareness of refugee problems, preserve the institution of asylum and improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Improving the safety and security of humanitarian personnel is a priority for the United Nations and as such, UNHCR has supported all UN system-wide efforts to maintain a culture of protection, both for civilians caught up in armed conflict and for humanitarian workers who are often in the forefront of international efforts to deliver assistance. In this context, Minimum Operational Safety Standards (MOSS) have been put in place for UNHCR staff and its operational partners to reduce security incidents.

As in past years, UNHCR continued to promote staff security and safety within the UN agencies' Chief Executives' Board (CEB) and its subsidiary machinery. Training and other measures to reinforce safety and security were undertaken in close consultation with the UN Security Coordinator's Office (UNSECOORD).

Governments were encouraged to provide the humanitarian space in which to operate. UNHCR collaborated with military forces to strengthen humanitarian coordination, while taking care to avoid the risk of politicizing humanitarian aid efforts. The Office also liaised with military organizations, particularly in the field of training.

## Activities and partnerships

**Community services:** Using an operational approach that stresses team responses and proactive partnerships with all relevant parties (including refugees themselves) a number of initiatives were undertaken during 2003. The work related to Community Services was carried out by

regular UNHCR staff in conjunction with deployments and secondments from Save the Children (Sweden, Norway), other partners, JPOs and UNVs. A recent initiative by the United States to fund new, entry-level protection and community services posts in geographically remote locations will help significantly to address some of the main gaps in service provision.

In the second half of 2003, broad consultations on developing consistent approaches to situation analyses were undertaken to incorporate the People-Oriented Planning framework (POP) and Action for the Rights of the Child (ARC) into field operations. Consultations were also held with Help Age International to plan activities relating to the role of older refugees in returnee situations. The potential contribution of older refugees in Liberia and Sudan – to conflict resolution and taking care of orphans – is of particular relevance to the implementation of this initiative.

**Concern for the environment:** Efforts to limit environmental degradation caused by the presence of refugees continued to be directed towards implementing cost-effective, community-based environmental projects and strengthening collaboration with partners in addressing post-repatriation environmental rehabilitation in asylum countries.

**Combating HIV/AIDS:** In the fight against the global HIV/AIDS epidemic – one of the most formidable challenges to development and social progress – UNHCR continues to work on the inclusion of HIV/AIDS programmes in country operations, working in partnership with UNAIDS and other UN agencies, NGOs and governments of refugee-hosting countries. The focus is on improved advocacy for refugees and better coordination of interventions, so that programmes are aligned with activities benefiting refugees as well as the surrounding host communities. In 2003 an HIV/AIDS project was created whereby eleven countries in Africa and Central Asia received additional funding to improve on existing HIV/AIDS programmes. In 2004,

these projects will be expanded to cover countries in West Africa, Asia and elsewhere.

Since refugees move from one country to another and the majority eventually repatriate to their country of origin, UNHCR and its partners are working to develop subregional and national approaches to address the ravages of HIV/AIDS. One such initiative is the Great Lakes Initiative for HIV/AIDS (GRIA) – to be supported by a grant from the World Bank. In addition, a joint proposal was formulated with Save the Children for activities to benefit Somali and Sudanese refugees in the East and Horn of Africa.

**New registration techniques:** In order to complement UNHCR's verification procedures for the voluntary repatriation, in 2003, of more than 300,000 Afghans from Pakistan, the Dutch Government supported the introduction of iris recognition technology

(biometrics). This proved to be a successful deterrent against double registration. Similarly, the use of fingerprinting was successfully introduced as a pilot project to enhance the registration of refugees in the United Republic of Tanzania.

**Education:** The provision of education is one of the mainstays of humanitarian operations. In this connection, UNHCR strengthened its partnerships with NGOs and multinational companies to provide education for refugees of all ages. In 2003, sports projects and community technology learning centres were launched in partnership with Nike and Microsoft to redress low enrolment rates, in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, especially for girls at the primary school level. Similarly, the Houphouët-Boigny Peace Prize Trust Fund supports secondary education, giving priority to female refugees. Tertiary scholarships continue to be offered to refugees through the

Sri Lanka: Returnee IDP areas are being demined. Here, the Humanitarian Demining Unit was assisted by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) working near Elephant Pass, Jaffna – to make the area mine-free for returnees to be able to restart their lives. *UNHCR/R. Chalasani*



Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) in more than 50 countries.

The Peace Education Programme (PEP) was endorsed by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies, UNICEF and UNESCO. This programme, which accords with the 4Rs approach, will be jointly implemented in countries to which refugees return, with the aim of ensuring successful reintegration.

**Building self-reliance:** In its continuing efforts to forge linkages between relief and development, the Office works principally with UNDP, UNICEF and WFP and has strengthened bilateral cooperation with ILO, FAO and others in the field of development. The ILO-UNHCR partnership was intensified to focus on developing the capacities and potential of refugees and returnees, through skills training and women's economic empowerment, with a view to the attainment of self-reliance.

Since UNHCR joined the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) in April 2003, guidelines for UN transitional policies in post-conflict situations were reviewed to address durable solutions for refugees and the sustainable reintegration of returnees and IDPs. Membership of UNDG will enable UNHCR to coordinate its work more closely with development agencies to ensure that refugees and returnees are given due consideration in the formulation of policies pursuing durable solutions. UNHCR will also participate, through the UNDG and UN Country Teams, in efforts to achieve the aims of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals focusing on HIV/AIDS, universal primary education, gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Collaboration between UNHCR and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) resulted in a national baseline survey on refugees in South Africa. It studied the needs and resources of refugees and asylum-seekers. Cooperative work by UNHCR and JICA led to the provision of reproductive health programmes in Maheba refugee camps and surrounding hosting communities in Zambia; community development projects for reintegration and assistance for returnees and IDPs in Kandahar in Afghanistan; and community development projects for the integration of IDPs in Sri Lanka.

In the area of economic growth, joint efforts are ongoing to address governance, peace and security, HIV/AIDS and the eradication of polio. Similar joint

endeavours address clean water supplies, environmental management, agriculture, and information and communications technologies.

A Letter of Cooperation was drawn up between UNHCR and FAO to ensure that integration and reintegration programmes promote refugee and returnee self-reliance, coexistence and peace building. Refugees in protracted displacement situations and their host communities will receive special assistance in the areas of food security, crop production, animal husbandry and fisheries.

## Bilateral cooperation

Over the years, UNHCR and IFRC have joined forces to provide humanitarian assistance to persons in need. In March 2003, in the context of the Iraq crisis, UNHCR and IFRC signed a joint internal note on interaction and collaboration to clarify each organization's role and responsibilities. About the same time, the Heads of both agencies signed a framework agreement committing the organizations and individual Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to provide humanitarian assistance in countries neighbouring Iraq.

## Technical cooperation

UNHCR often relies on the technical services of other agencies to supplement its own staff in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. On occasion, the services of experts may also be needed for specific tasks. UNHCR maintains standby agreements with Swiss Humanitarian Aid and RedR-Australia for the provision of technical expertise. In 2003, 40 experts were deployed to field locations through such arrangements.

Policy guidelines were issued to cover the administration of UN Volunteers. These officers represent a pool of human resources available to UNHCR. In 2003, the number of UN Volunteers working with UNHCR exceeded 600.

## Humanitarian financing

In June, UNHCR participated in the Stockholm International Meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship. Since then the Office has been an active participant in the resulting informal Implementation Group

based in Geneva, chaired by Canada. The group has addressed a number of concrete issues of mutual interest to donors and humanitarian agencies and made recommendations for better coordination of ongoing processes.

During 2003, UNHCR reviewed efforts to strengthen partnerships in order to increase the level and quality of resources reaching refugees and other persons of concern to the Office. To this end, the High Commissioner, in July, proposed measures to improve the potential for resourcing unmet needs. The process should be fully functional in the 2005 planning cycle, but where feasible, it will also be applied in 2004. Savings could be used to cover unmet needs where parties can undertake activities in a more cost-effective manner than UNHCR – the Office would rely more on their services. Similarly, if a partner, usually paid by UNHCR, can fully or partially provide its services without that payment and without affecting UNHCR's funding sources, savings could be spent on unmet needs; and, if a partner is available to undertake activities addressing unmet needs which are not included in the UNHCR budget, UNHCR would applaud this and be available for partnerships.

UNHCR will seek the support of NGOs, whose involvement often play a crucial role in saving lives and delivering humanitarian assistance to needy refugees. Closer association with implementing agencies will help in the identification of needs and the formulation of programmes as well as in addressing funding gaps. Besides "traditional" cooperation in technical areas, such as water, health and sanitation or shelter, UNHCR and NGOs will continue to pool their resources to provide protection, uphold the rights of refugees and provide basic social services.

The **Consolidated Inter-Agency Process (CAP)**: At the country level, UNHCR participated both in planning and day-to-day operational management with UN country teams and other partners involved in delivering humanitarian assistance to displaced populations in complex emergencies. At headquarters, continuous consultations with OCHA led to greater consistency in presenting needs, and an effective launch in November 2003 of the 2004 Consolidated Appeals. In

addition, fund raising efforts involved joint visits to field locations. Information on budget requirements for the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Humanitarian Assistance process was also included in UNHCR's 2004 Global Appeal. As a result, efforts to raise awareness and secure funding for complex emergencies were more successful in 2003 than in previous years.

## Asylum and migration

Throughout 2003, UNHCR placed renewed emphasis on the importance of strengthening partnerships in asylum and migration initiatives. Working through the Geneva Migration Group, UNHCR and its partners worked on recommendations to the Global Commission on the question of institutional structures.

**IDPs:** The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) mechanisms were reinforced in 2003 by means of more frequent informal consultations. In addition, UNHCR maintained close co-ordination with OCHA particularly in discussions about the protection of IDPs. All these strengthened the collaborative approach to addressing the needs of displaced persons including IDP protection. A special focus was also placed on clarifying the allocation of responsibilities among agencies and enhancing the accountability of the Resident/Humanitarian Co-ordinators.

UNHCR has always worked closely with a number of partners: NGOs, UN agencies, international organizations and intergovernmental bodies, as well as donors. These have been as diverse as their fields of expertise: sector-specific humanitarian assistance, technical support, resource mobilization and policy advice. With growing demands on UNHCR and increased competition for the financial support of a limited number of traditional donors, co-operation and partnerships among humanitarian actors have become of prime importance.

More information on UNHCR's co-operation with partners can be found throughout this report and especially in the chapters on Headquarters, Global Programmes and in the country chapters at the end of which all partners are listed.