

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Main Objectives

- Support the relevant administrative bodies in the implementation of the recently adopted refugee law, providing institutional support to the National Eligibility Commission, to ensure conformity with the principles of international refugee law.
- Prepare for and organise the repatriation of Angolan, Rwandan and other refugees who wish to return to their countries of origin – at the same time, ensuring that all refugees who wish to remain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) enjoy continued international protection.
- Contribute to the process of Demobilisation, Disarmament, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) through close co-operation with the UN Observer Mission to the DRC (MONUC) and UNDP.
- Provide international protection and humanitarian assistance for newly evolving refugee situations as well as for refugees who have been in a protracted refugee situation for many years (even decades).
- Decrease the assistance-dependency of the residual refugee population through adapted self-reliance measures.
- In collaboration with the relevant Congolese authorities, distribute appropriate identification documents to all refugees registered during the 2002 census.



Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2003	Dec. 2003
Angolan Refugees ¹	111,530	21,530
Burundian Refugees	670	650
Congolese (RoC) Refugees	1,875	500
Refugees from CAR	3,447	3,000
Rwandan Refugees ²	600	600
Sudanese Refugees	43,049	44,000
Ugandan Refugees	3,200	12,800
Returnees	0	100,000
Total	164,371	183,080

¹ Some 20,000 Angolan refugees (i.e. including non-assisted refugees) are likely to remain in DRC after 2003, in spite of the planned repatriation operation, either because they have: a) integrated locally; b) do not consider their area of origin safe enough for return; or c) UNHCR is expecting that some will be repatriated in 2004.
² The figure for UNHCR-assisted Rwandans (600) represents the vulnerable asylum-seekers in Lubumbashi. Some 12,000 Rwandan refugees are expected to be assisted with voluntary repatriation to their country of origin.

Total Requirements: USD 30,064,761

- Elaborate a legal framework for the repatriation of Congolese refugees, including the conclusion of tripartite agreements (signed by the relevant Governments and UNHCR).

Working Environment

Recent Developments

During the past few months, several political and military developments in DRC raised hopes of progress towards a resolution of the conflict and, ultimately, lasting peace. Should these hopes prove well-founded, the return of almost 400,000 Congolese refugees from neighbouring countries may become possible.

The signing of the peace agreement between the Presidents of DRC and Rwanda on 30 July and 6 September 2002, and the agreement between the Presidents of DRC and Uganda are significant developments. Shortly after, the September agreement, the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) began its withdrawal from eastern DRC, and Ugandan troops have started withdrawing from north-eastern DRC. Similarly, Zimbabwean troops have commenced their withdrawal.

President Kabila has announced that an all-inclusive inter-Congolese dialogue with armed and non-armed opposition groups will be held, which has given rise to renewed optimism about national reconciliation. Meanwhile, brutal territorial clashes continue to erupt in the northeast of the country between mainly pastoral Hema, allegedly supported by Ugandan troops, and Lendu, who tend to be small-scale cultivators. Inter-locking but shifting rivalries and loyalties mean that only an all-inclusive peace agreement can guarantee a lasting settlement of the conflict.

The southern provinces of DRC were affected by the Angolan cease-fire agreement of April 2002, in that it led to spontaneous return movements, especially from the Bas-Congo Province and the Kisenge region. By the end of August, more than 13,000 refugees had spontaneously returned to Angola.

A multi-donor trust fund was established to support the DDRRR process and the World Bank is pursuing a five-year programme (with initial funding of USD 330 million) to facilitate the demobilisation of former combatants. The package will address rehabilitation needs to enable the national economy to get back on its feet. Whilst the

austerity measures applied by the Government have led to a stable inflation rate, they are tending to worsen already difficult living conditions for the local population. Over two million internally displaced people, a third of the population, are in need of food aid, child malnutrition is commonplace, and less than 50 per cent of children attend school. The vast majority of Congolese citizens endure deplorable hardship.

Constraints

The patterns of conflict over military and economic power in the east, the northeast and the north of the country are complex and unpredictable. Legitimate state structures are absent in many parts of the country, though the security situation in government-controlled areas appears to have been stabilising during the past 12 months. The implementation of the Lusaka cease-fire agreement, the recent Pretoria and Luanda accords and related developments have naturally raised hopes of improved security conditions, but the withdrawal of Rwandan military forces in the east could lead to a power vacuum that would actually increase instability, triggering new humanitarian crises. The recent forced return of Congolese refugees from Rwanda to the Province of North Kivu is an example of a negative development that has caused increased tension in the area.

The economy is depressed, ethnic clashes continue to flare up and living conditions for much of the local population are deplorable. This is not an environment conducive to the identification or implementation of viable durable solutions, such as local settlement for refugees. It is hardly surprising that stable refugee camp populations surviving on barely adequate levels of support are correctly perceived to enjoy better living conditions (food aid, schooling, vaccinations, health care) than neighbouring nationals. As a result, UNHCR is often criticised for its restrictive mandate, when limited resources do not allow for assistance to be extended to the nationals. Women refugees are at special risk of abuse by soldiers and police personnel.

The humanitarian and development agencies are striving to put together a coherent and efficient integrated approach to the many issues at stake.



After the eruption of Mount Nyiragongo, the town of Goma was devastated. Tens of thousands of Congolese became homeless.
UNHCR / P. Stromberg

This is not easy, considering the problems they routinely contend with, such as: insufficient or late delivery of funding, partial regional coverage (geographical restrictions), restricted access to refugees (security and/or logistical conundrums) and their own restrictive mandates.

Strategy

Following the recent adoption of the refugee law by the Congolese Parliament, the Office will maintain its institution-building endeavours for the newly established National Eligibility Commission. Legal and protection advice and training on RSD procedures and documentation will be pursued in order to enhance the new body's ability to perform in compliance with international protection standards.

Angolan Refugees: In 2003, Angolan refugees residing in DRC are likely to be able to choose between voluntary repatriation and local settlement. UNHCR's regional repatriation plan for Angolan refugees is divided into three phases. The organised repatriation is expected to commence in summer 2003, in light of the priority needs of former members of UNITA and their families and internally displaced persons in Angola. However, it is likely that less than half of the Angolan refugees will return in 2003, and organised repatriation movements are expected to continue well into 2004. UNHCR's offices in Kinshasa and the three affected provinces will monitor and co-ordinate all

activities related to the safe and voluntary return of the Angolan refugees. The cost of the repatriation operation will be covered by a special appeal.

A significant residual number of Angolan refugees is expected to remain in DRC in the immediate future. The Office will make every effort to ensure continued international protection for this group, either through RSD or through acquisition of legal immigrant status or citizenship, while at the same time working towards a further reduction in their dependency on humanitarian aid. UNHCR's activities will focus on food self-sufficiency and income-generating activities. Appropriate assistance measures (such as the provision of school furniture) are planned to enable the Office to accommodate all eligible refugee children in primary and, if possible, secondary schools. Peace education, reproductive health and STD awareness campaigns will complement efforts to prepare Angolan children for a life in DRC or in their home country.

Due consideration will be paid to environmental concerns in relation to the departure of larger numbers of Angolan refugees. The development of tree nurseries and other measures are expected to alleviate the impact the refugee camps have had on their host areas.

Refugees from CAR and RoC: A protracted caseload of some 1,800 refugees from RoC will be given either the possibility of voluntary repatriation

or that of local integration provided the Office manages to arrange for the allocation of land for cultivation to these families. A new group of some 1,000 refugees has arrived due to the recent conflict in the Pool region. UNHCR is currently assessing the needs of this group.

UNHCR will provide humanitarian assistance to a relatively small group of some 3,400 CAR refugees who have been residing since spring 2002 at a site established at Mole. Many appear to have family and professional links with RoC, and some may possess sufficient means to resettle in Brazzaville. A few are expected to repatriate voluntarily to CAR while others may require UNHCR's assistance for resettlement on account of particular protection considerations. However, for some others, UNHCR's assistance will be needed to provide food security and some form of income through small-scale projects pending the identification of durable solutions.

Sudanese and Ugandan Refugees: A two-sided scenario is unfolding for the Sudanese refugee population. Peace initiatives and clashes could emerge simultaneously in Sudan and northeast DRC, leading to the opening of repatriation possibilities for some, and renewed displacement and flight for others. For the residual refugee groups, efforts will continue to increase crop production and thereby enhance local integration. It is hoped that increased revenues from these activities will enable some 30 per cent of Sudanese refugee families to cover the costs of schooling for their children. It is anticipated that refugee committees will be capable of running refugee schools efficiently.

The precarious security situation and the inherent risks for female refugees will be addressed through complementary protection and gender awareness training activities for humanitarian staff, partners and refugee communities alike.

In addition to the steps towards durable solutions, some contingency plans for new arrivals and continued care and maintenance activities will have to be retained.

Rwandan and Burundian Refugees: Depending on the development of security conditions in the east of DRC, UNHCR's efforts to repatriate Rwandan refugees scattered in the forests of north

and south Kivu will continue in 2003. Through continued protection efforts, the Office hopes to discourage and decrease "parallel" repatriation activities pursued by the Rwandan army.

These efforts, coupled with full participation in all relevant co-ordination bodies are expected to dovetail with DDRRR-related activities being implemented simultaneously by other humanitarian and development actors. The Office will seek to ensure respect for protection principles within the scope of the DDRRR framework.

Returns: Depending on political developments in DRC and neighbouring countries, UNHCR will draw up plans for large-scale return of DRC refugees (for which the costs would be covered by a special appeal).

Organisation and Implementation

Management Structure

In 2003, UNHCR's programme will be implemented by 121 staff (33 international and 79 national staff, one JPO, eight UNVs). UNHCR plans to maintain offices in eleven locations, although repatriation and related UNHCR activities may lead to changes in the office structure during the year.

UNHCR plans to undertake a review of the organisational structure and staffing composition in DRC at the end of 2002. The recommendations of the review will have an impact on the management structure for 2003.

Co-ordination

UNHCR will capitalise on its strengthened field presence and technical support from respective services and specialised agencies. Furthermore, the Office will continue to work within the well-established Framework Agreement with the DRC Government and its key-officials. Likewise, it will maintain working contacts with local authorities in various parts of the country.

Working contacts on all levels have been established with MONUC in Kinshasa and in the

various provinces. Depending on the circumstances, OCHA plays either a co-ordinating or lead role for joint humanitarian interventions in various parts of the country. OCHA also heads the consolidated appeals process (CAP) for DRC in conjunction with UNDP, WFP, UNICEF and WHO: all of whom are long-standing operational partners in the delivery of humanitarian assistance with a multitude of contacts at all levels. FAO and other agencies complement UNHCR's efforts to decrease aid-dependency amongst refugees.

UNHCR will continue to organise quarterly co-ordination meetings with the participation of government authorities, donors and implementing partners working in DRC and RoC. UNHCR seeks to strengthen the PARinAC process through improved dialogue with local and international NGOs.

Offices
Kinshasa
Aru
Bukavu
Goma
Kahemba
Kimpese
Kimvula
Kisenge
Lubumbashi
Ngjidinga
Zongo

Partners
Government Agency
<i>Gouvernorat du Nord Kivu</i>
NGOs
Atlas Logistique
<i>Actions et interventions pour le développement et l'encadrement social</i>
<i>Association pour le développement social et la sauvegarde de l'environnement</i>
Caritas / Katanga (DRC)
International Rescue Committee
OXFAM (Quebec)
World Vision (Canada)
Others
<i>Coordination catholique de Boma</i>
<i>Diocèse de Boga</i>
<i>Diocèse de Mahagi</i>

Budget (USD)			
Country	Annual Programme	Supplementary Programme	Total
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	7,419,957	708,932	8,128,889
Community Services	880,000	55,000	935,000
Crop Production	1,120,000	0	1,120,000
Domestic Needs	575,000	132,100	707,100
Education	1,685,000	0	1,685,000
Food	100,000	0	100,000
Forestry	130,000	0	130,000
Health	1,380,000	90,000	1,470,000
Income Generation	240,000	0	240,000
Legal Assistance	255,000	289,587	544,587
Operational Support (to Agencies)	1,670,000	432,500	2,102,500
Sanitation	110,000	20,000	130,000
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	335,000	0	335,000
Transport / Logistics	3,230,000	3,320,400	6,550,400
Water	410,000	35,000	445,000
Total Operations	19,539,957	5,083,519	24,623,476
Programme Support	5,423,610	17,675	5,441,285
Total	24,963,567	5,101,194	30,064,761