

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

- Provide protection and basic care and maintenance assistance to refugees from Angola, Burundi, the Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda in the provinces of Bas-Congo, Bandundu, Katanga, Kasai-Oriental and Province Orientale, and to urban refugees in Kinshasa.
- Assist and facilitate the safe return of refugees to and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by establishing or reactivating Tripartite Agreements between the refugees' countries of origin, the countries of asylum and UNHCR.
- Develop and reinforce local settlement initiatives for refugees from Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda, paying special attention to the needs of women, children and adolescents, and preserving the environment.
- Reinforce the capacity of UNHCR and its partners to respond effectively to complex humanitarian crises of a regional nature.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

By the end of June, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was hosting some 356,800 persons of concern to UNHCR. The refugees originate mainly from the neighbouring countries of Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan and Uganda. Of these, an estimated 202,840 refugees have not received regular assistance from UNHCR as they are either self-sufficient or inaccessible due to insecurity or lack of infrastructure. The refugees in DRC are often stigmatised and perceived by the public as contributing to the conflict. UNHCR has had to operate with the greatest possible flexibility and

adaptability, responding to rapidly changing planning parameters, in a difficult political and logistics context and under budgetary constraints.

The assistance programme is being carried out in collaboration with implementing partners, placing an emphasis on meeting the specific needs of unaccompanied minors (UAMs), women and other vulnerable individuals. As the programme aims to foster self-sufficiency and local settlement it includes the distribution of seeds and agricultural tools as well as the rehabilitation of communal infrastructure, such as health centres, roads, spring water sources and schools, which will also benefit the local population.

In its efforts to achieve progressive change from relief to development, and to ensure a broad humanitarian response, which is particularly relevant in view of the current developments in the peace process in DRC, UNHCR has been facing difficulties caused by the limited presence of other humanitarian and development agencies in refugee-affected areas. Furthermore, the humanitarian staff continues to carry out its work in the face of high risks and insecurity. In March, a UNHCR driver was shot dead, and in May, six ICRC staff members were murdered. Finally, the bad state of the road network has been contributing to a swift deterioration of the transportation fleet.

UNHCR has been assisting the DRC authorities in the drafting of refugee legislation and in June officially submitted to the Government the revised version of the draft refugee legislation.

The coup attempt in the Central African Republic (CAR) on 28 May resulted in considerable internal as well as external displacement of the population. According

to available information, some 25,000 to 30,000 fled to Zongo and surrounding areas in north-western DRC and there is a continued, albeit limited, inflow of refugees. UNHCR fielded an emergency team mission in the area to provide initial assistance and assess the needs.

The imbalance between the assistance provided to the refugees and more than two million IDPs has had a negative impact on the perception of refugees. Some 500 IDPs, mainly vulnerable persons, are accommodated in the site of Sicoira in Kinshasa. They are former refugees who were repatriated from CAR and Sudan last year. UNHCR has rehabilitated the shelter that was donated by the Government for the IDPs, and has financed some quick impact projects (QIPs). The assistance provided to IDPs remains, however, far from adequate.

In the first part of 2001, UNHCR registered 15 returnees who arrived spontaneously in DRC from Angola, Chad, Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania.

The conflict in Angola has been creating a continuous population movement into DRC. Between January and June, 8,269 newly arrived **Angolan refugees** were registered in the provinces of Bandundu, Bas-Congo and Katanga. UNHCR has been providing assistance to 113,645 Angolan refugees out of an estimated total of 183,750. The focus for this refugee group has been on the promotion of self-sufficiency and, where feasible, local settlement. In addition to the distribution of agricultural inputs by UNHCR, WFP has been providing food to some 109,607 refugees living in sites in these provinces, while awaiting the harvesting season. Vulnerable individuals have been benefiting from the distribution of second-hand clothes, and from various training activities in shoe-making, embroidery and joinery. More than 24,000 Angolan refugee children have been attending primary and secondary school. By June, UNHCR had facilitated the resettlement of 16 Angolans to a third country. The reduction of the initial budget

early this year has had a negative impact on UNHCR's ability to assist the newly arrived refugees as planned. UNHCR has, thus, been assisting only a selected and limited number of refugees using the degree of vulnerability as the principal criterion. In the Kahemba area of the province of Bandundu, where the bulk of new arrivals has been registered, appropriate assistance has been hampered by lack of access due to the bad conditions of roads and bridges. The intention to upgrade the transportation network, in order to facilitate access and avoid the deterioration of equipment, has been postponed.

UNHCR has been assisting some 2,000 **refugees from the Republic of Congo (RoC)** living in the Kimaza camp. The assistance programme is being carried out with an emphasis on health care and community services as well as skills training activities such as soap-making, bakery and stockbreeding. A water truck has been procured to facilitate the water supply to the camp. Sanitation structures and the road from the town of Mbanza-Ngungu to Kimaza camp have been rehabilitated. Some 720 children have been benefiting from primary and secondary education programmes. Assistance to the refugees in Kimaza camp will continue until the camp's closure at the end of 2001. UNHCR has facilitated the repatriation of 159 refugees who had expressed their wish to return to Brazzaville, and the resettlement of a Congolese refugee to a third country.

While UNHCR has been assisting some 34,685 **Sudanese refugees** in the Aba, Biringi and Dungu camps, more than 39,900 refugees have remained unassisted in the areas that were inaccessible due to security problems. The renewed hostilities in southern Sudan have resulted in an additional displacement of more than 6,000 Sudanese to the Doruma area in DRC. In March, UNHCR finally gained access to **Ugandan refugees** in Boga. Of the 2,709 registered there, 1,080 are now benefiting from UNHCR's assistance. With the aim of rendering the camps more accessible, some 42 kilometres of road and four bridges have

been repaired. Fourteen spring water sources have been rehabilitated to improve the supply of potable water. The seven existing medical centres are being complemented by the construction of three additional health structures. UNHCR has distributed non-food items (NFIs) to newly arrived refugees in Doruma. Women and vulnerable persons were organised in associations or in co-operatives, through which they undertook community development activities. In June, UNHCR identified and registered 117 UAMs who will be provided with special assistance during the second part of 2001. Of the 3,538 refugee children attending primary school in Province Orientale, 41 per cent are girls. Of the 299 children attending secondary education, 19 per cent are girls. The Office has assisted the repatriation of 69 Sudanese refugees. Nine Sudanese and one Ugandan refugee have been resettled in a third country. In the area hosting Sudanese and Ugandan refugees, there is only a limited presence of other agencies. In addition, the overall security situation has been exacerbated by the absence of established authorities and civil administration coupled with the presence of armed groups operating independently from each other.

Due to the high level of insecurity in the provinces of Kivu and Maniema, only a small fraction of some 20,000 **Burundian** refugees and 35,000 **Rwandan** refugees dispersed in the forests and villages, are accessible to UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies. Some 300 Burundians are living in the towns of Goma and Bukavu, and 257 live in Lubumbashi as urban refugees. UNHCR has not facilitated any voluntary repatriation to Burundi due to lack of access to the refugees and the prevailing insecurity in the country of origin. Ten Burundians have been resettled to third countries. Some 9,600 Rwandan refugees, who reappeared from the forests, have been

repatriated since January. In addition, the voluntary repatriation from Goma and Bukavu to Rwanda has continued. Some posts and transit centres, from which the refugees are collected, have been rehabilitated. During the month of June, UNHCR temporarily suspended its facilitation of the repatriation due to increased insecurity in the areas of return in Rwanda, mainly in the prefectures of Cyangungu, Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. The returning refugees received food assistance from WFP and a standard package of NFIs from UNHCR. In addition, UNHCR succeeded in reunifying 453 Rwandan UAMs with their parents in Rwanda. Twelve Rwandan UAMs living in the transit centre of Kimbondo in Kinshasa have been repatriated to Rwanda. Since the closure of the Mbuji-Mayi camp last year, UNHCR has been supporting the local settlement of some 400 Burundian refugees as well as 1,400 Rwandan refugees in the province of Kasai-Oriental. Although complete phase-out has been delayed, UNHCR is currently exploring ways to finalise the projects by the end of the year. UNHCR's assistance in this area includes distribution of seeds and agricultural tools and rehabilitation of communal infrastructure such as four health centres, 50 kilometres of roads and four schools, which are yet to be completed.

An estimated 3,500 **urban refugees** of various origins have been assisted by UNHCR in Bukavu Goma, Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. Basic domestic items and subsistence allowance have been given to newly arrived refugees and vulnerable individuals. Medical care and support including medical consultations, laboratory exams and pharmaceutical products have been provided. UNHCR also covered costs related to primary and secondary education for the refugee children. Forty-two income generation projects are being implemented in 2001.

Progress as measured against selected indicators

| INDICATORS | PROGRESS |
|--|---|
| Number of repatriated refugees. | UNHCR has facilitated the repatriation of 9,584 Rwandans, 159 Congolese (RoC) and 69 Sudanese refugees. |
| Number of cases monitored or determined. | Individual status determination has taken place for 127 cases. |
| Number of assisted refugees. | 153,960 refugees in DRC were assisted during the first part of 2001. |
| Number of returned refugees to DRC. | 15 Congolese refugees returned spontaneously to DRC from neighbouring countries. |

REVISED OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR JULY - DECEMBER

The initial objectives set for the Angolan, Burundian, Rwandan, Sudanese, Ugandan, and urban refugees will remain unchanged. In view of the new situation with the arrival of refugees from CAR, UNHCR will include in its objectives for the remaining months of the year the emergency assistance to refugees newly arrived in Zongo, based on a planning figure of some 25,000 refugees. UNHCR will also assist new arrivals from southern Sudan. In addition, the Office will update the existing contingency plan and ensure rapid emergency intervention and provision of assistance to Angolan refugees when necessary, through adequate in-country NFI stocks and appropriate monitoring of regional stockpiles.

UNHCR will prioritise the following activities for the second half of the year:

- Maintain primary education assistance for refugees in DRC as a whole; undertake activities to maximise the participation of refugee women in all activities in the camps and urban areas; develop the implementation of the Machel Plan of Action for children in areas of conflict as well as the dissemination of the ARC methods.
- Work in the context of the Framework Agreement with the DRC Government for the protection and assistance of Burundian, Rwandan, Sudanese and Ugandan refugees; maintain the dialogue with key government officials in DRC, ensuring capacity-building of government and other officials dealing with refugee affairs. Develop working relations with the dominant groups in other areas of the DRC.
- Work closely and co-ordinate with international NGOs in providing refugee assistance programme; provide support for local NGOs.

FINANCIAL DATA (USD)

| | Initial Budget | Revised Budget | Total Funds Available ¹ | Total Funds Obligated |
|------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| APB | 25,303,286 | 22,217,418 | 10,804,048 | 10,373,100 |

¹Includes income from unrestricted contributions, income restricted to the regional, sub-regional and/or country level, opening balance and adjustments.