

ETHIOPIA

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

Somali Refugees

- Promote lasting solutions through voluntary repatriation for some 60,000 Somali refugees out of a total of 172,000 who are living in eight camps in eastern Ethiopia. Provide protection and assistance to the remaining refugees.
- Continue to disperse some 50,000 returnees of Ethiopian nationality who had returned from Somalia and settled in the eastern refugee camps following events in Somalia in 1993.
- Mitigate environmental degradation and rehabilitate degraded areas around the refugee settlements.

Sudanese Refugees

- Provide protection and assistance to some 70,000 southern Sudanese refugees located in four refugee camps in western Ethiopia and help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Kenyan Refugees

- Provide protection and assistance to some 5,000 Kenyan refugees located in the Moyale district of southern Ethiopia and facilitate voluntary repatriation.

Other Refugees

- Provide protection, material assistance and related community services to urban refugees in Addis Ababa and ensure that assistance responds to the needs of women and children.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, PROGRESS ACHIEVED AND CONSTRAINTS

Somali Refugees

During a tripartite meeting in February between UNHCR and the Government of Ethiopia and the authorities of north-west Somalia, the parties agreed to expedite repatriation movements by providing an additional travel

grant to the refugees in the Aware camps, due to the long distance to be travelled from transit centres to final destinations. Earlier assessments conducted jointly by UNHCR and the Government of Ethiopia had indicated that some 50,000 refugees in the eastern camps were in fact Ethiopian returnees from Somalia (of ethnic Somali origin) who had not properly reintegrated in their local communities and, as a result, had migrated to the camps. This group registered to be repatriated to north-west Somalia, despite being Ethiopian nationals. In 1999, the Government accepted that the Ethiopian Somalis were mixed with the refugees and requested UNHCR to help disperse them back to their local communities in Ethiopia by providing them with a repatriation package. Repatriation of Somali refugees, ongoing since 1997, and dispersal of Ethiopian Somalis started in March and progressed smoothly. A total of 18,000 Somali refugees were assisted to repatriate and some 3,000 Ethiopian Somalis were dispersed from the camps through the end of April. In early May, however, these activities came to a standstill because refugee elders in Hartisheik demanded that the same travel grant be given to Somali refugees and Ethiopian Somalis in all the camps. The matter is being reviewed and repatriation and dispersal are expected to resume once agreement is reached on the amount of the grant. Meanwhile, some 85,000 Somali refugees in the Jijiga camps registered for voluntary repatriation. Another 29 Somali refugees were resettled in third countries.

Rehabilitation and reintegration activities to benefit Ethiopian returnees and local populations continued. Special attention is being paid to water availability, the environment and health facilities, given that the areas are semi-arid, degraded and remote. UNHCR initiated an emergency water trucking operation early in the year to assist populations affected by the drought in the Somali Regional State. Water was drawn from the Haffir dam in Rabasso (the only remaining dam with water). This emergency operation lasted two months. More-

over, UNHCR provided high-protein biscuits and non-food items to the drought-affected population. The Jerrer Valley water pipeline project, on hold for the past year due to contractual difficulties, was re-tendered and a new contractor was selected. A firm of consultants that will monitor the implementation of the project has been selected. Implementation is expected to start in late July.

UNHCR and its implementing partners carried out environmental training and ensured integration of environmental education into the existing school curriculum. In this regard, refugee school teachers were given on-the-job training and textbooks. Teacher's guides for grades one to six were translated into the Somali language. Nurseries were established in all the camps, as well as in the Gursum returnee area. Seedlings from the nursery sites were planted in the camps and around the homesteads. Soil conservation through terracing was also undertaken. Fuel-saving stoves were produced using locally available materials and distributed to refugees.

Health services were provided as planned. Out-patient services were regularly provided, the medical referral system functioned appropriately and the expanded programme for immunisation reached some 88 per cent of the refugee population. A feeding programme for children under five was implemented, as well as selective feeding for some vulnerable groups. Prosthetic devices were provided for the disabled. Furthermore, a campaign was conducted to raise awareness of landmines among the refugees and the local population.

Sudanese Refugees

A new influx of Sudanese asylum-seekers, numbering about 5,000 persons, crossed into Ethiopia mainly from the Blue Nile region, fleeing occupation of their villages by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). They were scattered along the banks of the Nile and assisted in a temporary location called Bamboudei, where access was extremely difficult. Arrangements have been made to move them to a new site or to the existing camps. In February, a re-

validation exercise was undertaken for the Sudanese refugees in Fugnido camp, showing a total population of 18,305 refugees. Adequate amounts of basic and supplementary food items were distributed in all the camps, as well as potable water. Preparations are underway to introduce a new food distribution system that will ensure better and more equitable access to food. The health condition of the refugees was satisfactory and mortality and morbidity rates in all the camps were within acceptable standards. There was a regular supply of essential drugs and the medical referral system worked smoothly. Sanitation activities, such as the construction of latrines, were carried out with the participation of the community. The primary and secondary education programme also progressed smoothly. Environmental awareness campaigns continued and yielded good results as refugees participated in the rehabilitation of degraded areas around hills and streams. Some 1.63 million seedlings of different varieties were raised, which will be planted during the rainy season.

A total of 6,691 heads of family in the western camps were registered for agricultural activities. In addition, agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, farm tools and insecticides were distributed in modest quantities. Chickens and beehives were also provided. Training in crop production, animal husbandry, agro-forestry and the use of oxen-driven ploughs was also conducted. Skills training workshops in small-scale income-generation activities for refugee women were held in all the western camps. Some women were provided with small loans from revolving funds. Overall, it is difficult for the Sudanese to attain self-sufficiency, because the land allocated to refugees, who are keen farmers, is inadequate. Employment opportunities for refugees are also very limited. Some 500 Sudanese refugees were resettled in third countries.

Kenyan Refugees

Following the Tripartite Agreement signed in February between UNHCR and the Governments of Kenya and Ethiopia, some 5,000 Kenyan refugees were screened and registered in

Moyale district. On 19 June, a memorandum of understanding governing the modalities of their return to north-east and northern Kenya was signed. Repatriation movements are expected to start by mid-August, although they may be delayed due to the prolonged water shortage and insecurity in the areas to which the refugees are returning.

Other Refugees

Some 1,500 Djiboutian refugees in the Afar National Regional State are integrated in the local community that hosts them and are not assisted by UNHCR. There was no major increase in the number of urban refugees. Twelve urban refugees were resettled, while 469 refugees were assisted with subsistence allowances, medical care and education. Women-at-risk were provided with emergency assistance and priority was given to skills-training and income-generation activities. The absence of national refugee legislation and restrictions on refugee

employment constitute the major obstacles to the achievement of self-sufficiency for urban refugees.

REVISED OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR JULY - DECEMBER

UNHCR's overall objectives remain unchanged, although two additional objectives have been set owing to developments:

- Facilitate voluntary repatriation and reintegration of some 8,000 pre-1991 Ethiopian refugees from neighbouring countries following application of the Cessation Clause.
- Following the end of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea in June, assist some 70,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) and former refugees in the west whose reintegration was disrupted by the conflict.

FINANCIAL DATA (USD)

	Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available*	Total Funds Obligated
AB and TF	22'598'062	24'352'810	11'481'712	11'207'796

* Includes income from unrestricted contributions, income from contributions restricted to the region/country, opening balance and adjustments.

