

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola
Botswana

Comoros
Lesotho

Madagascar
Malawi
Mauritius

Mozambique
Namibia
Seychelles

South Africa
Swaziland

Zambia
Zimbabwe



MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

It has been common wisdom for a number of years to view countries in the Southern African region as relatively stable and, hence, less likely to experience major refugee-related problems. Experience in 1999 seriously challenged this assumption on several fronts: the conflict in Angola intensified and drove significant numbers of refugees into Zambia and Namibia; Namibian refugees were again forced to flee into Botswana; and political turmoil in Lesotho had necessitated the deployment of Southern African Development Community (SADC) forces to restore order, creating momentary displacement into South Africa of thousands of Basotho and other third country nationals. Several countries in the region were also affected by the southward drift of refugees from the Great Lakes region, particularly from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

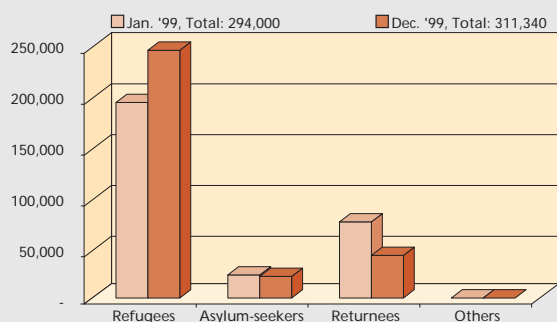
The security situation in Angola deteriorated sharply as the Government launched a military offensive against UNITA in September, worsening the plight of

hundreds of thousands of displaced civilians. It was hoped that the establishment of administrative centres in Government-controlled areas would provide increased stability for the displaced population. Within this framework, the Government invited UN agencies to participate in a country-wide effort to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return to their homes in safety and dignity. On 15 October, Security Council resolution 1268 authorised the creation of the United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA), initially for six months. UNOA's 30 international staff were charged with exploring ways to restore peace, provide humanitarian assistance, promote human rights and formulate projects intended to help improve the situation of the Angolan people.

In Namibia, an attack by armed rebels of the Caprivi Liberation Army on Namibian defence forces, police, the broadcasting corporation and the international airport in August led to the proclamation of a state of emergency and the imposition of a general curfew. Reports of harassment of suspected Caprivi secessionists by the Namibian Defence Forces and the

Special Field Forces were later published in the media and by human rights organisations. These developments prompted UNHCR to bolster its preparations for the care of refugees in the region, particularly in Botswana and Namibia. In Malawi and Mozambique (where the conclusion of repatriation of Mozambican refugees in 1995 led to a downsizing of the agency's operational capacity) the number of persons seeking protection was also on the rise.

Persons of Concern to UNHCR



CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

Against this background, a number of protection concerns arose. The dramatic rise in the number of asylum-seekers, both urban and rural, from countries as diverse as Angola, DRC, Namibia, Somalia and Liberia has put an additional strain on already stretched economies and affected the willingness and ability of host governments to protect and assist refugees. Genuine refugees have suffered the consequences of public hostility against foreigners, perceived to be the cause of competition for scarce job opportunities, services and education. Protection and operational problems affecting the new Angolan refugees included, in Namibia, abductions, forcible military conscription and deportation, and, in Zambia, the necessity to relocate the new arrivals to camps further inland from logistically difficult and potentially unsafe border locations.

The countries in the region have numerous preoccupations: economic growth (trade and investment), social justice and development (including respect for human rights), and practical strategies to avert forced displacement of civilian populations while managing intra-regional migration. Refugee issues often pale into relative insignificance beside these challenges, especially for states at risk of being engulfed by civil war. Despite substantial investments by UNHCR during the past decade in capacity-building activities, many governments still lack the institutional capac-

ity, national legislation and procedures to effectively assume their international obligations towards refugees, let alone provide adequate material assistance.

Logistical constraints were experienced throughout the region. UNHCR and its partners were limited in their ability to monitor the arrival of refugees at a multitude of border crossings spread over huge distances.

PROGRESS TOWARDS SOLUTIONS

The continuing conflict in Angola meant that the repatriation of Angolan refugees remained suspended throughout 1999. Newly arrived Angolan refugees were admitted, registered, protected and assisted according to applicable international standards in all countries of asylum. Especially in Namibia, a range of protection problems had to be addressed (abductions, forcible recruitment, deportation, family separation, etc.). The needs of the refugees were rapidly integrated into existing assistance programmes, such as the one in Zambia. Although the immediate and basic humanitarian needs of the refugees were satisfactorily met, their future remained uncertain. As the restoration of peace and security in Angola continued to appear unlikely in the short term, organised voluntary repatriation could not resume. Many of the long-staying Angolans, however, have managed to integrate locally in their host countries, pending their return home.

A three-pronged strategy to promote local integration of refugees in several countries was pursued with mixed results. As part of the local integration strategy, a creative multi-faceted campaign to curb xenophobia was launched in South Africa. For refugees for whom local integration was not feasible, resettlement was explored with relative success.

Throughout the region, efforts for the implementation of national refugee legislation and/or their revision so as to better reflect international refugee standards continued. The implementation of the 1998 Refugee Act was a special priority in South Africa, while in Malawi and Zimbabwe, discussions with the authorities to amend the respective legislation also continued. At the same time, the accession of the Government of Swaziland to the 1951 Convention on Refugees, the 1961 Convention on Statelessness and the 1964 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness was a positive development. In Namibia, the Refugee Recognition and Control Act was enacted by Parliament and signed by the President.

OPERATIONS

The Regional Directorate in Pretoria, which oversees operations in 14 countries in Southern Africa, operated with 11 internationals (including two Field Service staff), one JPO, and 13 national staff (including two National Officers). Its main objectives were: to promote durable solutions for refugees and monitor respect for internationally recognised protection standards; to develop and consolidate relations between UNHCR, Governments and NGOs; to provide policy guidance on protection, programme management, administration and finance; and to support contingency planning and ensure emergency preparedness in the region.

Operations in the region were mainly conducted under General Programmes. One Special Programme was implemented for Angolan refugees.

Despite difficult conditions in **Angola** due to the ongoing civil war, UNHCR protected and assisted 13,100 refugees (the majority from DRC) in camps in the country's northern and eastern provinces, as well as in urban areas. Many of these refugees had previously been relatively well integrated in rural areas, but were forced to move to Luanda and surrounding areas in the latter part of the year due to insecurity. Their situation remained precarious, but plans to relocate them to more secure areas proved unsuccessful. Registration confirmed that more than 1,800 of these refugees wished to return home; the Government of DRC was informed accordingly. UNHCR extended small loans to 64 refugees after providing training in the financial skills they would need to manage and repay them. Nine refugees attended vocational training courses. Health services in Viana and Boa Esperança (Bengo province) were also extended to IDPs, which had a positive impact on overall health in the area. Nineteen traditional birth attendants (both Congolese refugees and IDPs) were trained in the tented health clinics. One school with six classrooms and nine refugee teachers was established for primary education. Kitchen sets, blankets, lamps, buckets and soap were distributed to refugees and asylum-seekers in Luanda. Health services were provided at the Hoji-Ya-Henda Medical Centre for an average of 65 refugees and asylum-seekers per month. Two workshops on various aspects of protection and international refugee law were organised for government officials. Repatriation of Angolan refugees did not resume (the operation was suspended in 1998). Please see the chapter entitled "Angolan Refugee Operation" for further details.

While UNHCR successfully repatriated over 1,380 Namibian refugees from **Botswana**, the violent events in the Caprivi region in August 1999 led to a halt in the repatriation and a reverse movement of Namibian refugees back in to Botswana. Repatriating refugees were given logistical support in the form of air transport (via South Africa) or road transport (by bus from the refugee camp in Dukwe to a border town inside the Caprivi region of Namibia). Those transiting through South Africa were provided with blankets. All returnees were also given food and water for the duration of their journey. A repatriation grant of USD 20 was given to each returnee. More than 1,200 refugees, most of them Namibians, Angolans and Somalis living in Dukwe refugee camp, received material assistance including food and essential household items. Services funded in the camp included sanitation (the construction of communal latrines) medical assistance and referrals, and the rehabilitation of an old school. In addition, food allowances were provided for unaccompanied minors and mentally ill refugees. School fees, books, uniforms and allowances were provided for primary and secondary school children and those attending language classes. Local integration of 250 long-staying Angolan refugees was delayed due to their lack of citizenship certificates and identity cards.

Individual asylum-seekers in the Indian Ocean Islands of **Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles** were assisted through the local UNDP office. As these countries have no refugee legislation and do not, for practical purposes, have the policy and practice of asylum, the Office was obliged to find resettlement for persons considered to be refugees under UNHCR's mandate. A limited number of refugees were given material assistance pending the identification of durable solutions.

In **Lesotho**, the local integration of 27 recognised refugees was monitored through the UNDP office as was one student under the DAFI programme.

Malawi hosted 1,700 refugees of various origins, one hundred of whom had recently arrived from the DRC. The Government continued to maintain its traditionally generous policy of receiving refugees and asylum-seekers from countries not bordering Malawi. However, in 1999, some 25 Eritrean asylum-seekers were rejected by the Government on grounds UNHCR did not agree with. They were forcibly deported, in the course of which one asylum-seeker was shot and killed. UNHCR vigorously protested these actions. Pending voluntary repatriation of the refugees from DRC, UNHCR sought to integrate them locally. A project

was therefore set up, with the support of the Government, for the construction of a school that could accommodate both refugee and local children. A contribution from previous years funded a long-term environmental project.

Until August, refugees and asylum-seekers entering **Mozambique** were required to report to the authorities in Maputo where they were interviewed and referred to Bobole Transit Centre for basic assistance, pending a decision on their status. This policy changed at the end of the year, when newly arrived refugees and asylum-seekers were no longer allowed to travel from their point of entry to Maputo. Delays in interviews and decision-making on behalf of the Government left many refugees waiting for a final decision on their status. Of more than 1,400 refugees and asylum-seekers in the country, about 380 persons were assisted in Massaca II Centre and Bobole Transit Centre by year-end. UNHCR also provided funds to the local authorities in Niassa to assist 260 persons there. Camp residents had access to weekly food distribution, transport assistance, domestic items, free medical care (including medicines), primary education for refugee children, Portuguese language classes for adults, and educational materials (uniforms, books and other supplies). Seventy-two refugees were helped to raise poultry. About 100 refugees received seeds and agricultural tools. Training was given in production techniques (the use of fertiliser and irrigation) for small gardens as well as the marketing of produce. Micro-credits were extended to 62 refugees; 245 refugees participated in employment seminars and 51 refugees were given more direct assistance in their search for jobs.

Namibia was affected by instability on two fronts: the armed conflict in southern Angola created a volatile situation at the Namibia-Botswana-Angola border (leading to the arrival of many thousands of Angolan refugees in Namibia) and attacks by separatists from the Caprivi region on government facilities in August triggered the outflow of refugees into Botswana (including some who had only recently repatriated). By year-end, Namibia hosted 7,360 refugees, more than 4,000 of whom arrived in 1999, mostly Angolans. In addition, the Government estimated that more than 10,000 Angolans had sought shelter with relatives and friends in the northern provinces of Namibia. (For information on assistance to Angolan refugees, please see separate chapter). Training on international refugee law and protection was organised in November for government officials dealing with refugee issues. For the more than 1,380 returnees from Botswana, UNHCR

maintained and repaired a reception facility in the Caprivi region. The first group arrived in March by air from South Africa and was transported overland from Windhoek to final destinations. The remainder arrived between May and June, after the signature of a tripartite agreement between the Governments of Namibia and Botswana and UNHCR, providing security guarantees and assurances of a safe return and reintegration. Monitoring reports suggested that most returnees did not settle in their villages for fear of reprisals. Some reportedly fled to Botswana again after violence between government forces and armed rebels escalated in August, prompting UNHCR to suspend the repatriation operation.

South Africa continued to host the largest number of urban refugees in the region. In 1999, some 31,000 were officially registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the majority of whom were assisted through a nation-wide network of NGO-sponsored refugee forums and legal counsellors. UNHCR's basic humanitarian assistance, legal advice, support towards self-reliance and public awareness campaigns reached an estimated 25,000 of these refugees. UNHCR also worked to improve their prospects for local integration and launched a comprehensive public awareness campaign called Roll Back Xenophobia in support of these efforts (please see "Promoting Local Integration of Refugees"). Refugees were helped to pay for transportation costs linked to interviews and permit renewals. The most needy and vulnerable refugees received limited food assistance and allowances for medical bills (emergency referrals and psychological care), rental and maintenance of temporary housing (particularly for vulnerable refugee women and traumatised individuals), school fees, books, uniforms and transport for schoolchildren. A workshop on conflict resolution and trauma was organised for refugee children. Refugee women in Cape Town participated in workshops on self-esteem, skills training, literacy and English. The children of women who were studying had access to day-care centres. Forty-five repatriating refugees were provided with tickets, accommodation while in transit, food allowances and voluntary repatriation grants. Support was also given to 14 students under the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative. The Government - citing abuse by asylum applicants and lack of resources - proposed to create reception centres for refugees which would limit their freedom of movement, and hence work and study opportunities. It argued that this would be an effective way to discourage what it viewed as economic migrants from lodging asylum applications. The initiative met with fierce resistance from the NGO

community and has not yet been implemented.

Despite political, social and economic pre-occupations, **Swaziland** continued to protect refugees and asylum-seekers in line with international standards. UNHCR's vigorous efforts to promote and disseminate refugee law and protection principles, which, among others, had seen the translation of the 1969 OAU Convention into the local language, were instrumental in bringing about Swaziland's accession to the Refugee and Statelessness Conventions. Of 620 refugees and asylum-seekers present in the country, those living in urban centres received allowances to cover food, shelter, health care and education costs, while refugees based at Malindza camp received basic household items (blankets, mattresses and soap), basic sanitary and health services, and safe water (the water supply was overhauled). They also had access to primary education, school supplies for refugee children, and secondary and foreign language training for adolescents. Training courses in food processing, candle-making, soap and polish-making, baking, health and environmental issues were organised for adults and unoccupied young refugees. Workshops were organised for refugees, PARinAC members, implementing partners, UNHCR staff and media representatives on a variety of subjects including peace and justice, conflict resolution, sustainable development in Africa, fund-raising and media issues.

Zimbabwe hosted 2,044 refugees of various origins, the majority living in the Tongogara refugee settlement in the eastern part of the country. Some refugees were relocated to Tongogara from urban areas in early 1999 as a result of the Government's new rural refugee encampment policy. Exemptions were made for disabled refugees and parents with children attending city schools. Newly arrived refugees and asylum-seekers were living in the Waterfalls Transit Centre until their status had been determined. Some 1,400 needy refugees were assisted to integrate locally. Training was provided in small business management and languages, together with funds and technical advice from experts to enhance their prospects of achieving self-sufficiency. Pre-school and primary education was funded for all refugee children. Secondary education was available for 42 refugees and vocational skills training for 142 young adults. Twenty-five refugees embarked on income-generating projects but progress was slow due to their inexperience as well as that of UNHCR's operational partner. Plans to review the scheme were in place by late 1999.

UNHCR's operational presence in **Zambia**, which

hosted over 200,000 refugees, covered the entire spectrum of refugee work: emergency operations and basic humanitarian assistance (for newly arrived Congolese and Angolan refugees) and local settlement (for long-staying, second-generation rural and urban Angolan refugees). The March 1999 influx of refugees from DRC gave rise to the spontaneous settlement of many within host communities in Kaputa and Chiengi Districts. Emergency assistance to this group included the establishment of transit centres and a new camp. At the beginning of the emergency, UNHCR provided limited quantities of food and grain-milling services to supplement WFP's efforts. Soap, kitchen sets and buckets were purchased to complement relief items released from UNHCR's emergency stockpile in the Great Lakes region. A pumping system was installed, supported by boreholes. Refugees received 20 litres of water per day and water was also trucked to the transit centres. Communal latrines were built and soon complemented by family latrines. Garbage pits were constructed and the promotion of hygiene and vector control resulted in a very low incidence of hygiene-related diseases. A health clinic in the camp provided preventive and curative health services, in-patient services and laboratory facilities. A team of community health workers was employed for active follow-up of patients and to dispense health education in the community. Road repairs were undertaken on the Kawambwa-Mporokoso road, as well as on roads within Mporokoso. Four schools, one learning centre, one community centre and one office building were constructed. Vulnerable refugees were identified and community support organised. Primary education, with refugee teachers, was organised for refugee children. Refugees were also helped to establish small vegetable garden plots to complement food rations and provide a source of income. Environmentally-friendly fuel saving stoves were introduced, a tree nursery was established and seedlings distributed to the refugees for planting in areas identified as sensitive and in need of preservation. Pending the release of emergency funds, the needs (particularly in shelter and community development) of newly arrived Angolan refugees in the Western Province were integrated into the existing assistance programme. (For further details on assistance to Angolan refugees, please see separate chapter).

FUNDING

UNHCR's programmes in Southern Africa were generally well funded, with ten per cent of General Programmes funded through earmarked contributions. Although not seriously detrimental to flexibility in

managing its resources in the region, a generalised funding shortfall in General Programmes led to some reductions, particularly for activities such as income generation and community services that were not life-sustaining, but nevertheless important for the refugees' well-

being. An allocation of USD 1.4 million was made from the Emergency Fund to respond to the immediate needs of Congolese (DRC) refugees in Zambia. For information on funding of the Special Programme, please refer to the chapter on Angolan refugees.

Voluntary Contributions - Earmarked (USD)

Donor	Earmarking*	General Programmes		Special Programmes/OTF	
		Income	Contribution	Income	Contribution
FINLAND	Namibia	33,875	33,875	0	0
ITALY	Angolan Rep. Op.	0	0	600,601	0
	Zambia	270,114	270,114	0	0
JAPAN	Angola	160,000	160,000	0	0
	Angolan Rep. Op.	0	0	500,000	500,000
	Botswana	20,000	20,000	0	0
	Malawi	60,000	60,000	0	0
	Mozambique	400,000	400,000	0	0
	Namibia	110,000	110,000	0	0
	South Africa	410,000	410,000	400,000	400,000
	Swaziland	40,000	40,000	0	0
	Zambia	270,000	270,000	0	0
	Zimbabwe	90,000	90,000	0	0
THE NETHERLANDS	Namibia	4,870	4,870	0	0
SOUTH AFRICA	Southern Africa	151,775	151,775	0	0
SWEDEN	Angolan Rep. Op.	0	0	379,394	379,394
	Zambia	0	0	352,526	352,526
UNITED KINGDOM	Namibia	10,587	10,587	0	0
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	Zambia	0	0	1,510,492	1,510,574
MAINICHI SHIMBUN (JPN)	Zambia	4,167	4,167	0	0
	Angolan Rep. Op.	0	0	16,667	16,667
PRIVATE DONORS JAPAN	Angolan Rep. Op.	0	0	17	17
TOTAL**		2,035,388	2,035,388	3,759,697	3,159,178

* For more information on the various earmarkings, please refer to the Donor Profiles.

** Total funds available for obligation in the region also included unearmarked voluntary contributions, lightly earmarked contributions, opening balances and adjustments.

Budget and Expenditure (USD)

Country	Working Budget*		Expenditure*	
	General Programmes	Special Programmes	General Programmes	Special Programmes
Angola	1,664,728	3,690,317	1,609,689	2,028,971
Botswana	1,129,779	0	1,004,654	0
Malawi	824,820	128,121	820,370	100,000
Mozambique	574,529	0	530,597	0
Namibia	2,185,321	0	2,179,629	0
South Africa	4,258,171	897,528	3,868,519	910,562
Swaziland	383,891	0	371,940	0
Zambia	5,858,053	900,000	4,745,851	1,830,000
Zimbabwe	778,949	0	740,597	0
Regional Projects	0	264,264	0	250,000
TOTAL	17,658,241	5,880,230	15,871,846	5,119,533

* Figures do not include costs at Headquarters.