

Update on UNHCR's Regional Operations and Global Programmes Executive Committee 2006

Part A: Introduction

- This note gives an overview of developments in the course of 2006 in relation to Global Programmes and Partnerships. It focuses, in particular, on the work undertaken by the Division of Operational Services. Other Global Programmes relating more specifically to international protection will be discussed by the Assistant High Commissioner (Protection) in her presentation to the Executive Committee.

Part B: Progress on Global Objectives

Emergency preparedness and response

- Building upon progress achieved during 2005, and drawing from recent operational experience in inter-agency humanitarian emergency response efforts (such as in Timor-Leste and Lebanon), UNHCR has progressed in strengthening its global emergency preparedness and response capacity which remains one of the High Commissioner's Global Strategic Objectives. At the 35th meeting of the Standing Committee in March 2006, there was a detailed presentation (EC/57/SC/CRP.8 and Corr.1) on UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response, with emphasis on work being done to implement the Plan of Action based on the recommendations of an internal 2005 policy paper entitled *Strengthening UNHCR's Emergency Response Capacity*.
- The objective to achieve and maintain a global stockpile of non-food items (NFIs) for up to 500,000 beneficiaries has not yet been reached, but remains a key element of the overall Plan of Action. Presently, UNHCR has sufficient supplies to respond to emergencies around the world for some 350,000 people.
- An improvement in terms of quality against cost has been achieved for items such as the emergency light weight tents (LWT), with costs savings of USD 40 per tent being made. Steps have also been taken to reduce the transport costs of NFIs from the Central Emergency Stockpile and regional centres to areas of operation. Alongside the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR is in the process of utilizing the Dubai Humanitarian Centre, and this will become the Office's NFI stock centre for operations in Africa and the Middle East. UNHCR will place a Senior Logistics Officer at this joint facility.

Safety of staff and of those of concern to the Office

- A Conference Room Paper (EC/57/SC/CRP.24) on *Staff safety and security management* was presented to the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee in September 2006, highlighting the key challenges that UNHCR is seeking to address in this important area. UNHCR is working to promote in all of its activities a culture of security which will allow the Office to serve refugees and internally displaced persons, even in difficult circumstances, through appropriate risk management.

Standards and indicators

- The second edition of the *Practical Guide to the Systematic Use of Standards and Indicators in UNHCR Operations* was published at the end of February 2006; the French version will be distributed at the end of September 2006. In the next edition of the Guide, there will be a component on IDPs. UNHCR has started developing Standards and Indicators (S&I) for IDPs. A two-day design workshop on S&Is for IDPs was held in April 2006 in Entebbe, Uganda, bringing together 23 participants, including 17 UNHCR and 6 NGO staff members from 13 countries. This workshop has been followed up with a series of meetings with sector specialists and other experts in Headquarters. S&Is related to UNHCR cluster responsibilities, i.e. Camp Management & Camp Coordination (CCCM), Emergency Shelter and Protection will be developed during workshops that will be organized in Kampala, Uganda and Nairobi, Kenya in the course of October 2006.
- UNHCR has continued mainstreaming the S&I modules into its regular training programmes, including its Programme Management Training and Operations Management Learning Programme. However, because of financial constraints in 2006, the annual training plan for this purpose was reduced from 14 training/workshops to 8.
- The expected comparative analysis of the results of the UNHCR-funded Millennium Development Goals (MDG) surveys on refugees in Armenia, internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sri Lanka, asylum-seekers in Ecuador, as well as a review of related studies on Afghan refugees in Pakistan was completed at the end of August 2006.

Education

- UNHCR is finalizing its strategy for education for 2007–2009 which will focus on addressing the main issues affecting school attendance and completion of schooling, including strengthening partnerships with other agencies and organizations. To address the protection risks faced in school environments, and to respond to major challenges related to the access to education of girls and boys, UNHCR is in the process of developing guidelines on *Safety in School* and a *Standard Refugee Teacher Training Manual*. One particular area of focus is avoiding the risk of sexual or labour exploitation of students and other abuses by teachers. UNHCR is also promoting a community-based approach to education through the development of the *Education Assessment and Programming Tool*.
- In 2006, particular emphasis has been put on strengthening partnerships and capacity building. A Memorandum of Understanding is under preparation with the Save the Children Alliance to operationalize Education in Emergencies. UNHCR participated in and co-hosted two INEE (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies) Training of Trainers Workshops on Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies for the Europe and West Africa regions. Education Technical Field support missions have also been deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of the Congo (ROC), the Central African Republic, Benin and Togo.
- Some 1,000 refugee students will continue to receive university scholarships under the Albert Einstein German Refugee Initiative (DAFI) in about 40 countries, mainly in Africa. This programme strengthens the human capacity available within refugee communities and areas of return.

Registration and Project Profile

- In 2006, Project Profile was rolled out to over two dozen country operations. In total, 47 country operations have received the new registration systems. Over 1200 staff have now been trained on best practices in registration and on the use of the new registration database application. Field roll-out and support will continue through the end of 2006 and into 2007. In 2006, further development of the new application included the addition of a biometric fingerprint feature which is now in use in three operations. Also, field offices have prioritized the issuance of identity cards for refugees, and are being provided with appropriate technology and support for these activities.

Partnerships

- UNHCR has engaged in a range of partnerships in support of new United Nations initiatives, such as the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and in support of efforts to link humanitarian assistance and development. UNHCR seconded a staff member to the Peace Building Support Office (PBSO) to assist in the establishment of that office. UNHCR also participated in the Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory carried out by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General earlier this year, where it was clearly shown the value added that UNHCR can bring to the work of the PBC in specific areas such as human rights, rule of law, return and reintegration, etc. Besides its support to the PBC, UNHCR has been working closely with the African Union in the area of post-conflict rehabilitation, development and peacebuilding. This work will be of critical importance to the work of the PBC in African countries.
- By way of specific partnership building, the following are of note. The partnership with the International Labour Organization (ILO) has led to the deployment of an ILO Local Economic Recovery Expert to Angola and Liberia. UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have initiated the piloting of enhanced cooperation in six countries, namely: Burundi, DRC, Liberia, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. With UNDP's Centre for Innovative Partnerships, discussions have continued on potential collaboration between UNDP's regional/local economic development projects and UNHCR's durable solutions efforts. Discussions are under way on the possible establishment of a partnership with the Spanish Development Cooperation Agency (AECI) in transition situations. In Southern Sudan (Juba), UNHCR and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) along with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), have agreed to collaborate in the area of basic skills development. In addition, UNHCR has explored with JICA various initiatives in countries such as Myanmar, South Africa and Uganda. JICA has also increased its activities in Chad through a second phase project; and in Afghanistan, a new skills development project has been planned for returnee-hosting areas in Bamyan, Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif. JICA has also started including IDPs in some projects in Colombia, though on a small scale.

Environmental issues

- In the context of pursuing durable solutions, including the current major repatriation operations in West Africa, East and Horn of Africa, and central Asia, UNHCR has focused on the need to address environmental rehabilitation in the refugee-affected areas. Working in partnership with host governments, NGOs, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNDP and other United

Nations agencies, UNHCR has helped operations in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Liberia and Uganda to draw up and implement community-based action plans for site rehabilitation and camp clean-ups. The same approach is being replicated in Guinea, Pakistan and Sierra Leone. For large-scale environmental restoration, UNHCR is ensuring that capable partners, sister agencies and donors are available to take up environmental rehabilitation projects launched by UNHCR.

- In addition, support has been provided to a number of countries in Africa and Asia through tools and resources to implement environmental projects. Among such activities are national training on environmental management in Ethiopia and Uganda; promotion of energy conservation techniques and technologies in Chad and Nepal; dissemination of environmental-friendly shelter in Burundi, Rwanda, Zambia, and Kenya; and reforestation in many countries.

Nutrition

- UNHCR continued its close collaboration with WFP and other relevant partners in the pursuit of UNHCR's Global Strategic Objective (GSO 1.2) related to nutrition. In this respect, UNHCR, jointly with WFP, developed a global nutrition strategy, as well as a plan of action to prevent and address malnutrition. UNHCR has kept stakeholders informed on the critical nutritional situations in some refugee operations through briefings and presentations of field data.
- UNHCR presented to the June 2006 Standing Committee a detailed paper (EC/57/SC/CRP.17) on nutrition which highlighted elements of its strategy towards ensuring adequate nutrition for persons of concern, notably refugee children and refugee women. UNHCR is fortunate in having secured additional technical support through its collaboration with the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN). The Office has also been actively collaborating with others in the finalization of the Draft Plan of Action on the Ending Child Hunger and Under-Nutrition Initiative led by UNICEF and WFP, which will be launched in early 2007.

HIV and AIDS

- In 2006, UNHCR and its partners have concentrated on HIV prevention activities, such as development of information-education and communication programmes and materials for life skills training, training of peer educators, pamphlets, school curricula and mass communication messages. With the increasing severity of AIDS and given that many refugee situations are of a protracted nature, UNHCR continues to advocate for equal access for refugees and persons of concern to national care and treatment programmes. UNHCR continues to expand its programmes to increase access to voluntary counselling and testing, prevention of mother-to-child transmission and provision of post-exposure prophylaxis for rape survivors.
- In accordance with the UNAIDS division of labour, UNHCR has officially agreed to assume the role of lead agency for HIV and Displaced Persons (Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons).

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