



Southern Africa

Working environment

In light of improved political stability in Southern Africa, UNHCR is redefining its operational priorities and reorganizing its management structure in the region. Apart from Angola and Zambia, all offices in the region have been under the purview of the regional office in Pretoria since January 2007. Angola and Zambia will integrate into the regional framework in 2008 and 2009, respectively.

Following the successful repatriation of Angolan refugees in north-western Zambia, UNHCR has closed some of the refugee settlements in the area. The remaining refugees have been relocated to permanent settlements where prospects for self-reliance and local integration are more promising.

In a recent workshop organized by UNHCR and the Ministry of Home Affairs for parliamentarians in Zambia within the framework of the Strengthening Protection Capacity Project, local integration of the remaining Angolan refugees was discussed in detail. In a welcome development, the Government has expressed interest in granting permanent residence permits to some of the remaining refugees as a step towards local integration.

The repatriation of Congolese refugees from settlements in Zambia to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) started in May 2007. By August 2007, some 4,500 had been assisted to return home. However, a number of obstacles, including security concerns in the main areas of return, have made it unlikely that the

Angola

Botswana

Comoros

Lesotho

Madagascar

Malawi

Mauritius

Mozambique

Namibia

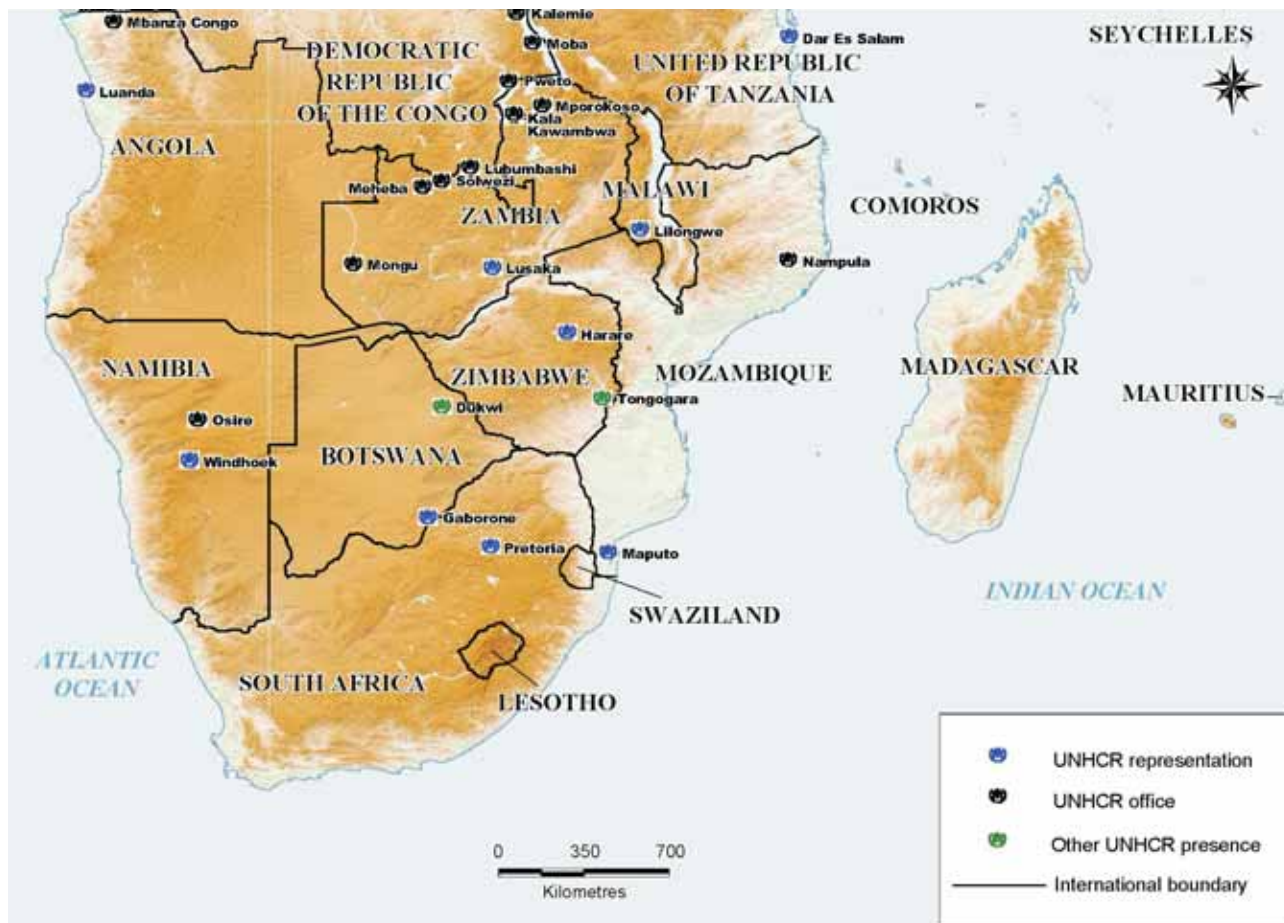
Seychelles

South Africa

Swaziland

Zambia

Zimbabwe



operation will reach its target of repatriating 20,000 Congolese by the end of 2007. It is therefore likely that the operation will continue and possibly conclude by the end of 2009. The original plan was to complete the repatriation of some 40,000 Congolese refugees by the end of 2008.

In Zimbabwe, economic decline and the political impasse between the ruling party and the opposition worsened dramatically in the second half of 2007. This has led to a large-scale exodus of Zimbabweans to neighbouring countries. Though most are seeking livelihood opportunities, a significant number have requested asylum in South Africa.

Strategy

UNHCR will continue to assist national governments in dealing with mixed migratory flows in order to ensure that people in need of international protection have access to asylum procedures. To establish fair refugee status determination (RSD) systems in the region, the Office will strengthen national asylum systems and gradually handover registration responsibilities to the authorities. In 2008-2009, UNHCR will also continue helping governments to clear backlogs of pending RSD cases. Similar activities will be implemented in Zambia under the Strengthening Protection Capacity Project, which will continue in 2008 and 2009. This project will

also help set up a legal framework for the local integration of Angolan refugees who have developed strong links to Zambia.

The Office will help its partners in Southern Africa to devise policies and procedures to respond more effectively to the special needs of refugee women and children. It will also lead efforts to mainstream age, gender and diversity considerations into programme planning and implementation. A comprehensive review of programmes on sexual and gender-based violence in the region will be completed, and best practices that emerge from assessments and field missions will be documented. Finally, UNHCR will strengthen its ties with strategic partners at the national and regional levels.

Constraints

Mixed migratory flows are placing the institution of asylum in Southern Africa under some strain, with some governments tightening border controls and imposing restrictions on asylum-seekers. The confusion of refugees with migrants in public perceptions has also given rise to growing xenophobia among host communities and government officials. In South Africa, for example, refugees have been physically assaulted by local people.



UNHCR/J. Redden

Maratane Refugee Camp in Mozambique: French instruction is provided to refugees to help prepare for the repatriation and reintegration process.

Southern Africa is among the areas of the world hardest hit by the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Though the region receives substantial international support in this regard, refugees are frequently overlooked in national and local strategies against HIV and AIDS. Very often, well functioning community-based programmes operate around refugee camps without reaching the refugee community. This marginalization increases refugees' vulnerability to HIV and AIDS. In 2008, additional resources will be required to support advocacy and programmes for the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS.

Operations

UNHCR's programmes in South Africa and Zambia are presented in separate country chapters. The Office in South Africa also covers the operations in Swaziland, Lesotho, Comoros, Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles.

Angola hosts some 17,500 refugees and asylum-seekers. The majority of the refugees (some 11,300) are Congolese who fled from the conflict in the Katanga province during the 1970s. They were granted refugee status on a *prima facie* basis and have stayed in the country for almost 30 years. More recently, Angola has witnessed a significant inflow of people attracted by its political stability and economic growth. This migratory movement has also seen the arrival of a considerable number of refugees, most notably from Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The Government of Angola is planning to give residence permits to Congolese refugees. The possibility of acquiring residence permits and support for local integration indicate real possibilities for a durable solution for these refugees.

There are some 3,100 refugees in **Botswana**. Thirty-six per cent are from the Namibian Caprivi region. The Angolans, who constitute the second largest refugee group in Botswana, are gradually being granted citizenship. This is despite Botswana's reservations to the 1951 Refugee Convention's articles on employment and freedom of movement. In 2008-2009, UNHCR will continue downsizing its presence in Botswana and focus on assisting the Government with RSD. It will also continue to advocate for the updating of the country's Refugee Act.

Malawi hosts some 4,200 refugees and 4,700 asylum-seekers, mostly from the Great Lakes Region. Almost half of them lived in Luwani camp until the Government decided to close the site in May 2007 and relocate its residents to Dzaleka camp. The Government closed the camp, which was located near the border with Mozambique, to discourage misuse of the asylum system by migrants transiting through Malawi. In 2008, UNHCR plans to hand over RSD responsibilities to the Government after clearing a backlog of pending applications.

In **Mozambique**, there are approximately 7,000 refugees and asylum-seekers from 18 countries. Some 5,150 are settled in Marratane camp, while the rest live in urban areas throughout the country. Sixty per cent of

the refugees are from the DRC. The residents of the camp receive direct assistance from UNHCR and its partners, while the urban population is self-reliant. Out of the total population of concern to UNHCR, some 2,500 have been recognized as refugees. Another 4,000 have had RSD interviews, but are awaiting decisions by the Government's Eligibility Committee.

During the first half of 2007, some 230 Congolese refugees were repatriated to South Kivu. Repatriation to the DRC is expected to increase in 2008 and 2009, provided the security situation in South Kivu does not deteriorate. UNHCR is working closely with the Government to develop a self-reliance strategy that would be mainstreamed at the provincial and district level.

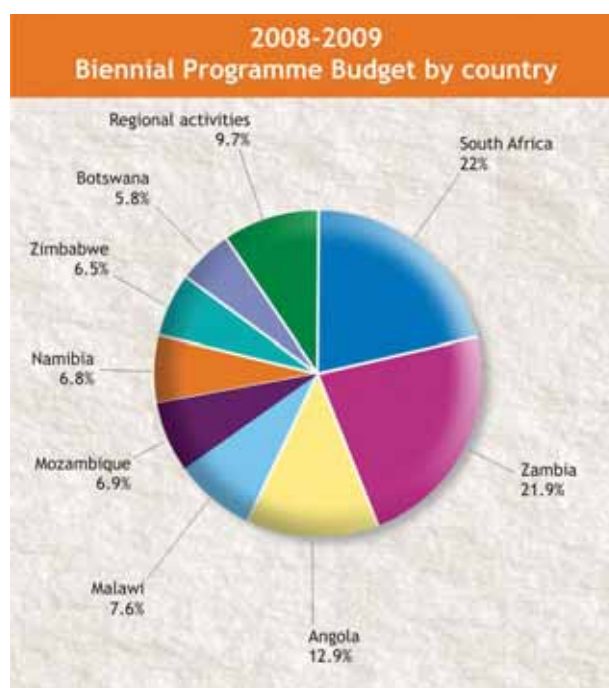
UNHCR and the Government of **Namibia** completed a registration exercise in the first quarter of 2007. Some 6,700 refugees and 900 asylum-seekers were registered. In addition to care and maintenance activities in Osire camp, the Office is working to facilitate the local integration of some 2,500 Angolan refugees, including about 500 currently benefiting from a local-integration pilot project. The project includes self-reliance activities and advocacy with the Government for the issuance of permanent residence permits, which are a precursor to citizenship.

In the Indian Ocean island States of **Comoros, Mauritius** and **Madagascar**, UNHCR will seek durable solutions for all remaining refugees and provide assistance through UNDP offices in Comoros and Madagascar. UNHCR will also advocate for the States' accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its Protocol.

In **Swaziland**, UNHCR will explore the possibility of phasing out assistance by 2009 to some 1,000 refugees who are becoming increasingly self-reliant and

because the Government is increasing its assistance to refugees.

In **Zimbabwe**, there are some 4,100 refugees in Tongogara camp. About 62 per cent of them come from the DRC. The deteriorating economic situation in Zimbabwe is having an adverse impact on the possibilities for refugees to achieve self-reliance and presents operational challenges for UNHCR and its partners. Contingency plans are in place for large-scale refugee flows to neighbouring countries, should UNHCR and other humanitarian actors be called upon to respond to such a situation. Mixed migratory flows, including asylum-seekers, continue to transit Zimbabwe on their way to South Africa. Despite the challenge that mixed flows represent, the Government has respected the right of asylum.



Budget (USD)					
Country	2007			2008	2009
	Annual Programme Budget	Supp. Programme Budget	Total	Annual Programme Budget	Annual Programme Budget
Angola	14,836,616	0	14,836,616	4,632,000	3,778,583
Botswana	2,396,276	0	2,396,276	2,469,909	1,309,967
Malawi	2,557,089	0	2,557,089	2,693,492	2,233,659
Mozambique	2,589,488	0	2,589,488	2,521,686	1,991,318
Namibia	2,364,818	0	2,364,818	2,556,195	1,896,783
South Africa	6,725,028	0	6,725,028	7,127,158	7,256,462
Zambia	9,794,885	1,100,000	10,894,885	8,835,503	5,434,198
Zimbabwe	2,120,621	0	2,120,621	2,109,371	2,109,371
Regional activities ¹	2,000,000	0	2,000,000	2,000,000	4,300,000
Total	45,384,821	1,100,000	46,484,821	34,945,314	30,310,341

¹ Includes strengthening of registration, documentation and refugee status determination systems in Southern Africa, repatriation of individual refugees, resettlement of refugees, and external relation activities.

Note: The Supplementary Programme Budget excludes a 7 per cent support cost that is recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR.