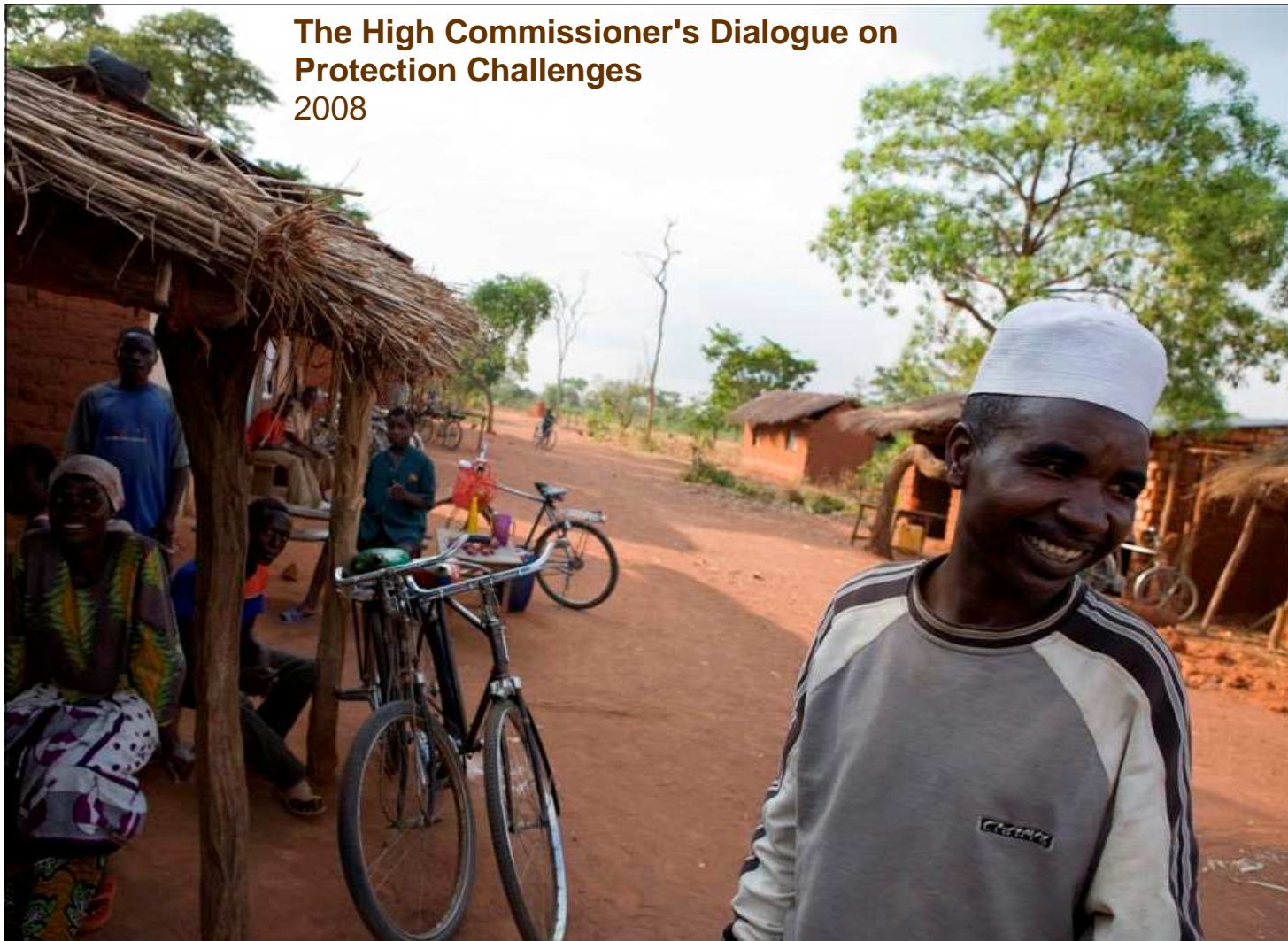


**The High Commissioner's Dialogue on  
Protection Challenges  
2008**



# Protracted Refugee Situations

High Commissioner's Initiative

December 2008



# ENDURING EXILE



Refugees are a symbol of our turbulent times. As each new conflict erupts, the world's newspapers and television screens are filled with pictures of masses on the move, fleeing from their own country with just the clothes on their back and the few possessions they are able to carry. Those who survive the journey depend on the willingness of neighboring states to open their borders and the ability of humanitarian organizations to provide the new arrivals with food, shelter and other basic needs.

But what happens once the exodus is over, the journalists have packed their bags and the world has turned its attention to the next crisis? In the vast majority of cases, the refugees are left behind, obliged to spend the best years of their lives in shabby camps and shanty settlements, exposed to all kind of dangers and with serious restrictions placed upon their rights and freedoms.

The problem of protracted refugee situations has reached enormous proportions. According to UNHCR's latest statistics, some six million people (excluding the special case of more than four million Palestinian refugees) have now been living in exile for five years or longer. More than 30 of these situations are to be found throughout the world, the vast majority of them in African and Asian countries which are struggling to meet the needs of their own citizens.

Many of these refugees are effectively trapped in the camps and communities where they are accommodated. They cannot go home because their countries of origin - Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Somalia and Sudan for example - are at war or are affected by serious human rights violations. Only a tiny proportion has the chance of being resettled in Australia, Canada the United States or another developed country. And in most cases, the authorities in their countries where they have found refuge will not allow them to integrate with the local population or to become citizens of those states.

During their long years in exile, these refugees are confronted with a very harsh and difficult life. In some cases they enjoy no freedom of movement, do not have access to land and are forbidden from finding a job. As time passes, the international community loses interest in such situations. Funding dries up and essential services such as education and health care stagnate and then deteriorate.

Packed into overcrowded settlements, deprived of an income and with little to occupy their time, these refugee populations are afflicted by all kinds of social ills, including prostitution, rape and violence. Unsurprisingly, and despite the restrictions placed upon them, many take the risk of moving to an urban area or trying to move on to another country, putting themselves in the dangerous hands of human smugglers and traffickers.

Refugee girls and boys suffer enormously in such circumstances. A growing proportion of the world's exiles have been born and raised in the artificial environment of a refugee camp, their parents unable to work and in many cases reliant upon the meager rations provided by international aid agencies. And even if peace returns to their country of origin, these youngsters will go back to a 'homeland' which they have never seen and where they may not even speak the local language.

I consider it intolerable that the human potential of so many people is being wasted during their time in exile and imperative that steps are taken to provide them with a solution to their plight.

First, a concerted effort is required to halt the armed conflicts and human rights violations that force people to flee from their country and oblige them to live as refugees. In this respect, the UN has a particularly important role to play, whether by means of mediation, negotiation, the establishment of peacekeeping missions or the punishment of those who are found guilty of war crimes.

Second, while funding may be scarce as a result of the financial crisis, every effort must be made to improve conditions for the world's long-term refugees, whether they are living in camps, rural or urban areas. Particular emphasis should be placed on providing exiled populations with livelihoods education and training. With these resources at their disposal, refugees will be able to live a more productive and rewarding life and prepare for their future, wherever that might be.

Finally, while we will not solve the world's protracted refugee situations by moving all of the people concerned to the more developed regions of the world, the richer nations should demonstrate their solidarity with countries that host large numbers of refugees by resettling a proportion of them, especially those whose security and welfare is at greatest risk.

The refugee problem is a responsibility of the international community as a whole, and can only be effectively tackled by means of collective and cooperative action.

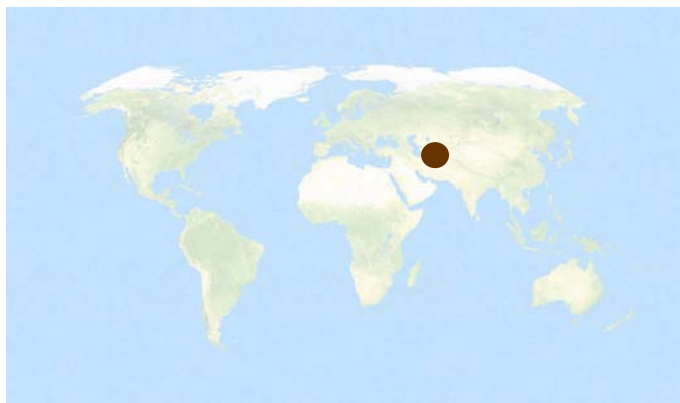
We must ensure that the assistance provided to refugees also brings tangible benefits to local populations.

We must encourage the international community to provide adequate support to those countries that are prepared to provide opportunities for self reliance to refugees, naturalize and give them citizenship.

And we must establish more effective approaches to the return and reintegration of refugees in their countries of origin, thereby enabling them to benefit from and contribute to the peacebuilding process.

***António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees***

# THE AFGHANISTAN SITUATION: AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN



## BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

The first large-scale refugee movements from Afghanistan into Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran took place after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979. This was followed by four distinct waves of displacement as the situation evolved into factional conflict. Refugee flows reached their height in the mid 1980s, when the Afghan refugee population in the two host countries rose to six million – some 40 per cent of the population of Afghanistan. Currently, around 2.7 million registered Afghans remain in Pakistan (1.8 million) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (900,000). In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the vast majority of Afghans reside in urban areas. In Pakistan, some 900,000 live in ‘rural refugee villages’ in the North West Frontier Province and in Baluchistan. The majority are employed in the informal sector as unskilled laborers.

The term ‘protracted refugee situation’ fails to capture the complexity of Afghan population movements, which predated 1979 and continue to evolve today. These movements have been underpinned by a range of factors, including international and regional geopolitics, poverty and conflict, the geographic, economic and social structure of Afghanistan, rapid population growth, and the transformative experience of displacement and exile. Half of the registered Afghan population in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan were born and grew up in exile, and the majority have been living there for 20 years or more. Central to resolving the situation is a need to strengthen the capacity of the Afghan Government to deliver security, political stability and development, and thereby to assume full responsibility for the protection of the rights and well-being of its citizens. Solutions to this protracted refugee situation are linked to the reconstruction process in Afghanistan and to the emergence of a viable Afghan State – a process which will take some time.

The host Governments have managed the presence of Afghans for the last three decades through temporary humanitarian arrangements based on the premise that an end to foreign occupation – and later, the cessation of armed conflict - would lead to a reversal of displacement. Large-scale returns followed the fall of the Najibullah Government in 1992 and the December 2001 Bonn Agreement. More than 5.6 million Afghans have returned to Afghanistan since 2002, the majority (4.4 million) under tripartite arrangements negotiated between UNHCR, Afghanistan and each of the host countries. The rate of voluntary return, whilst remaining substantial by global standards, has nonetheless slowed significantly since 2005. In 2007, 7,300 Afghans returned from the Islamic Republic of Iran and 350,000 from Pakistan (a figure increased by the extension of a ‘grace period’ for the assisted return of some 200,000 unregistered Afghans). At the end of October 2008, some 275,000 more Afghans had returned from Pakistan and some 3,000 from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

### Current challenges

The slow down in the return movement is attributable to three critical factors – the significant deterioration in security inside Afghanistan; the slow pace of political, economic and social development; and the fact that over 80 per cent of the remaining refugee population have been in exile for more than two decades. The insurgency prevents UN access to large parts of the east, south east and south of Afghanistan. Major improvements in the overall security situation appear unlikely in the immediate future. Coupled with significant reconstruction and development challenges, it is clear that the Afghan State’s ability to support a sustainable reintegration of its citizens is likely to remain modest for some years to come.

The situation is further complicated by the regional dynamics along the Pakistan/Afghanistan border and the ongoing conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and the Swat Valley in Pakistan. The conflict has led to internal displacement in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province, which currently hosts more than 1 million of the total Afghan refugee population.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, security concerns, particularly linked to drug trafficking, people smuggling/trafficking and movements of insurgents in border areas, are high on the agenda and have led to the declaration of ‘no-go’ areas for foreigners. Registered Afghan refugees are required to relocate from these areas in order to maintain their status or to opt for voluntary repatriation.

All three countries have been further challenged by the global economic crisis and food insecurity, which have affected the coping capacity of refugees and returnees, as well as of the local communities. As a consequence, returns from Pakistan in 2008 have been higher than anticipated. The recent returnees are generally poorer than the earlier returnees and tend to face greater challenges in re-establishing themselves. This is demonstrated by increasing internal displacement (some 28,000 by November 2008) among the returnees.

Activities to address this situation must be pragmatic and cognizant of realities on the ground and the continued protection needs of Afghan refugees. Therefore, while maintaining gradual repatriation, the humanitarian community must support the host countries in providing protection to Afghan refugees in a manner that enhances their capacities to undertake livelihood activities and to reintegrate sustainably into Afghan society. At the same time, this support should match the needs of an Afghan refugee population that has undergone significant change in exile. Finally, the Afghan Government's absorption capacity and ability to support sustainable reintegration must be increased. Failure to do so may lead to an increased reluctance to return, and the danger that those who have returned are forced to become displaced once more, internally or abroad.



UNHCR / M. Maguire / 2007

## GOAL

---

In light of the regional situation and insecure environment, the goal and objectives remain short to medium-term. The overall goal is to support host Governments to provide protection to Afghan refugees while advocating for sustained and enhanced support for Afghanistan to ensure that voluntary repatriation can continue and that return becomes sustainable with returnees' needs fully incorporated into the Afghan National Development Strategy.

## OBJECTIVES

---

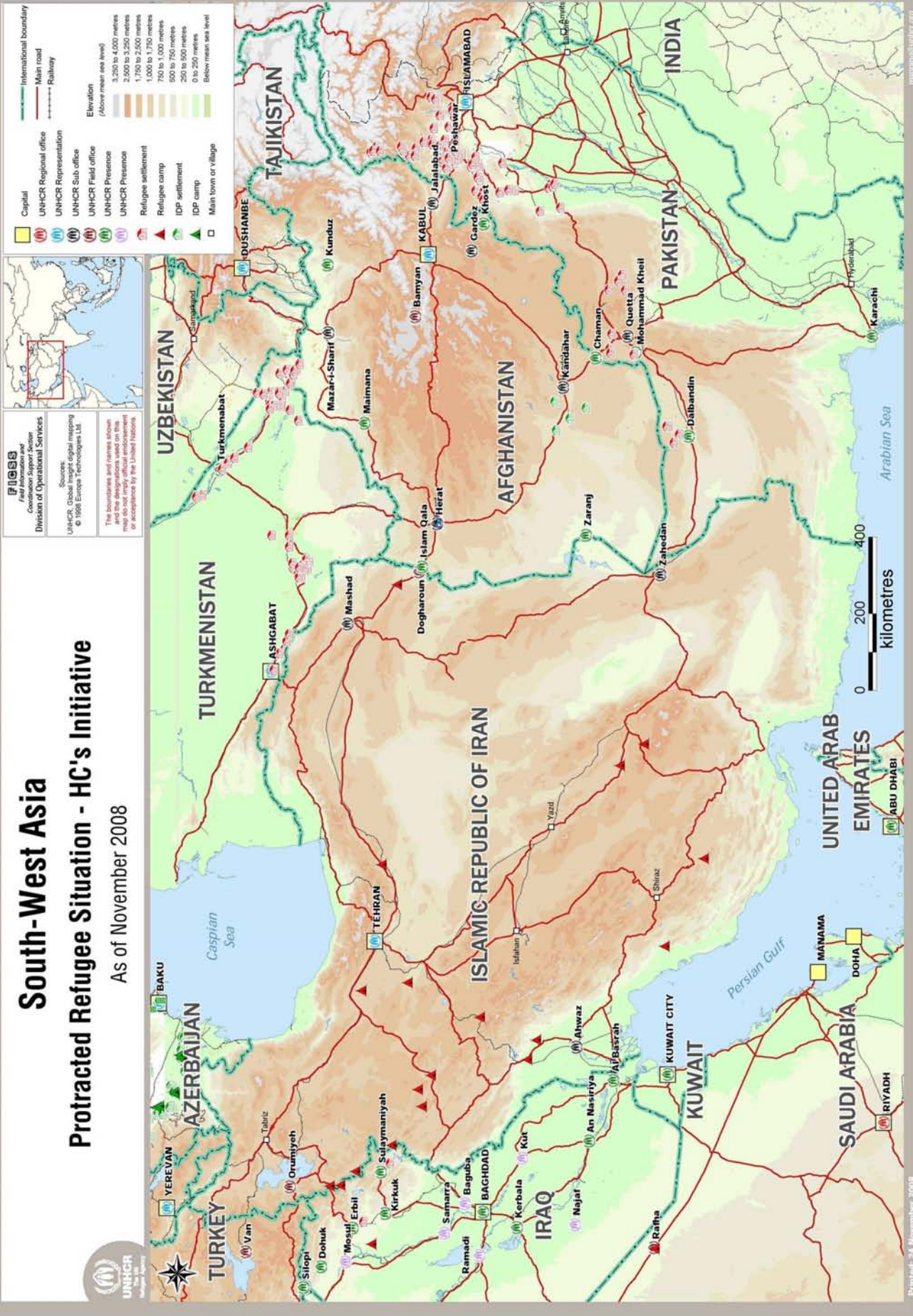
To meet this goal, the following objectives have been developed:

- **Enhance support to facilitate voluntary repatriation**, whilst promoting respect for the principles of voluntariness and gradualism.
- **Maintain the current protected status of all registered Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan** to provide greater predictability of stay and advocate for increased funding and larger numbers of resettlement places for Afghans.
- **Work with the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to protect those most at risk**; enhance refugees' livelihood capacities and prospects of coexistence with communities in refugee-affected and hosting areas; and mobilize additional resources.
- **Secure increased support for returnee reintegration in Afghanistan** and mainstream these activities within the Afghan National Development Strategy engaging a broad range of national institutions.

# South-West Asia

## Protracted Refugee Situation - HC's Initiative

As of November 2008



# ACTION PLAN

## 1. Short-term actions in pursuit of the objectives and overall goal

- Advocacy work with host Governments and donors to raise the profile of the Afghanistan situation and increase resources for refugees and returnees
- Visits by the High Commissioner to the host countries
- Convening of a high-level Kabul Conference on Return and Reintegration
- Fundraising and public information support

## 2. Medium-term actions

### 2.1 Enhance support to facilitate voluntary repatriation, whilst promoting respect for the principles of voluntariness and gradualism.

Actions	Timeframe
Maintain/reactivate tripartite arrangements with host Governments and Government of Afghanistan to support gradual and voluntary return.	Pakistan – completed for 2008 Islamic Republic of Iran – discussion on hold
Ensure funding for cash grant to support voluntary returns.	Ongoing In 2008 funding increased by USD 13 million to USD 27.6 million
Advocate with the host Governments on the importance of ensuring respect for <i>non-refoulement</i> .	Ongoing
Facilitate inter-agency planning in Afghanistan for precipitated return movements.	2008 plan updated
Advocate for funding to support sustainable return.	Late 2008 onwards

#### Expected results:

- The principles of gradual and voluntary return are maintained
- A steady return flow to Afghanistan is maintained

### 2.2 Maintain the current protected status of all registered Afghans in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to provide greater predictability of stay and advocate for increased funding and increased number of resettlement places for Afghans.

Actions	Timeframe
Advocate and fundraise for tangible support and partnerships, including with UN agencies and civil society, for refugee operations in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.	Ongoing
Following registration in 2007, in coordination with the Government of Pakistan maintain all Afghan refugee proof of registration cards updated.	Funding secured Mid-2008 onwards
Work with the Government of Pakistan on the review of its three year repatriation plan for 2007-2009 to provide predictability of stay beyond 2009.	Ongoing
Support the Islamic Republic of Iran's registration process and use database to analyze refugee population skills and develop capacity building activities.	2008 – UNHCR released additional USD 2 million to support registration process
Work with the Iranian authorities to identify options for Afghan refugees located in "no go" areas.	Ongoing
Increase resettlement quotas for Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan.	2009 onwards
Update Afghan Country of Origin Information paper.	December 2008

#### Expected results:

- Refugee rights are upheld
- All Afghan refugees are registered and documented in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan
- Viable relocation options are available to Afghan refugees
- Increased numbers of Afghan refugees are resettled

**2.3 Support interventions in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan to protect those most at risk; enhance refugees' livelihood capacities and prospects of coexistence with communities in refugee-affected and hosting areas; and mobilize additional resources.**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Pakistan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Profile registered Afghans to identify groups at most risk, target interventions, and ascertain options for livelihood capacity building and support.</li> <li>Through a participatory approach and community outreach a menu of interventions focusing on protection and livelihood options will be elaborated and targeted support provided.</li> <li>Adopt an outreach methodology to identify those in need of resettlement.</li> </ul>	Funding support obtained in first semester 2008 Mid-2008 onwards  2009 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present, in coordination with the UN Country Team, Refugee-Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) projects for funding, while incorporating larger development/rehabilitation proposals within the "One UN" Framework.</li> </ul>	RAHA assessments undertaken Funding proposal circulated last quarter 2008
<b>Islamic Republic of Iran</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fund/implement Joint Projects Initiative with Government of Islamic Republic of Iran in education and health, including both settlement and urban areas, in coordination with civil society partnerships.</li> </ul>	UNHCR released an additional USD 1 million released to support these activities in first semester 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reorientation of current programme in coordination with the authorities to promote greater outreach to Afghan registered refugees in urban areas, support to host communities and enhance identification of those in need of resettlement.</li> </ul>	2009 onwards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for increased support to restore access to education and health services to 2004 standards.</li> </ul>	2009 onwards

Expected results:

- Persons at risk are identified and protected including through resettlement
- Afghan refugee livelihood capacities are enhanced and specific groups supported through a community based approach
- Access by Afghan refugees to health and education services is increased
- Local hosting communities are better able to absorb Afghan refugees
- Increased funding for host country programmes is obtained, including through development initiatives

**2.4 Secure increased support for returnee reintegration in Afghanistan and mainstream these activities within the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS) engaging a broad range of national institutions.**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Missions on costing reintegration programmes; consultancy to quantify ANDS strategy.	Completed November 2008
Potential areas in Afghanistan that can sustain return are identified for reconstruction and development interventions. Related programmes undertaken to underpin sustainable return will be prioritized for funding and implementation.	November 2008
Utilize the November international conference in Kabul to ensure that return and reintegration are mainstreamed into the development and reconstruction agenda and receive funding and visibility within the ANDS Strategy.	November 2008
Monitor the implementation of the Refugee, Returnee and IDP strategy post Kabul Conference.	2009 onwards
Continue shelter and reintegration activities (phase one of Return and Reintegration costing exercise).	Ongoing
Advocate for medium term reintegration support for health, education and livelihoods through line ministries (phase two of Return and Reintegration costing exercise).	2009 onwards
Renewed emphasis on land, housing and property issues in terms of access, allocation, rule of law and mediation.	Ongoing
Profiling of internally displaced and identification of solutions on a case by case basis.	Profiling – 2008 Solutions ongoing
Humanitarian assistance will be targeted to prevent and respond as necessary to further displacement, including of returnees.	Ongoing

Expected results:

- Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) costings paper
- Kabul Conference leads to targeted support for multisectoral responses to high potential returnee areas
- Enhanced sustainable return prospects
- Land allocation sites underway
- Reduction in numbers of internally displaced

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

---

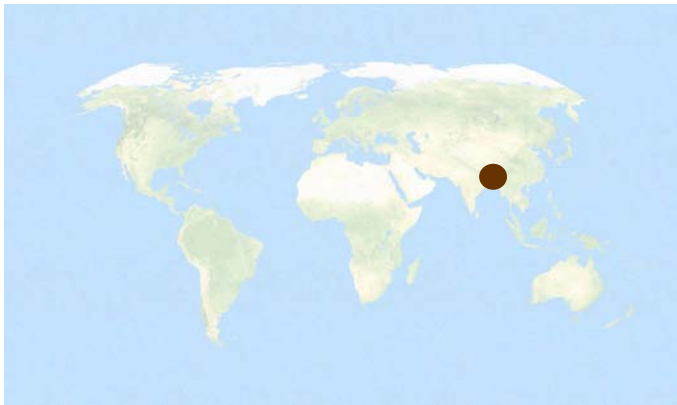
The above objectives can only be achieved through joint efforts by all stakeholders. Therefore, partnership and dialogue with the host and Afghan Governments, UN sister agencies, non-governmental organizations, international

development organizations, and donors are key cross-cutting aspects of UNHCR's approach to the Afghanistan situation.





# THE BANGLADESH SITUATION: ROHINGYA REFUGEES IN BANGLADESH



## BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

---

Bangladesh has generously hosted refugees for over three decades. Currently, around 28,000 Rohingya<sup>1</sup> refugees reside in two camps in the south-east district of Cox's Bazar, while an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 Rohingya, with no legal status, live in villages outside the camps. Most of the Rohingya have been in Bangladesh since 1991.

Respect for the basic principles of international refugee law, more favourable government policies, and efforts of the international community have improved the lives of Rohingya refugees both inside and outside the camps over the past two years. While they are still officially restricted from moving freely and prohibited from working, the Government tolerates refugees leaving the camps to work outside and allows them to work inside the camp. Other improvements include the construction of refugee shelters in the camps, an improved health and nutrition situation, genuine refugee representation, and improved law and order, including the disbandment of the '*maji*' system that resulted in exploitation of refugees by community 'leaders'. The refugees have also increased opportunities for skills training, access to a programme that seeks to address the needs of disabled refugees, and improved primary education. Efforts by the UN and other members of the international community have also begun to support the Bangladeshi population and the Rohingya living outside the camps in the district of Cox's Bazar, as they often face similar socio-economic hardships. More recently, the Government permitted on a humanitarian

basis the relocation to a safer location of around 10,000 Rohingya living in squalid conditions outside the camp on the banks of a tidal river.

Nevertheless, the overall situation remains below international standards and the camps display many of the characteristics found in other protracted refugee situations.

The majority of the refugees remain entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance. There is a relatively high incidence of physical and mental health problems, exploitation, and of sexual and other forms of violence. The physical and emotional well-being of refugees is significantly affected by the lack of progress toward solutions to their situation.

## GOAL

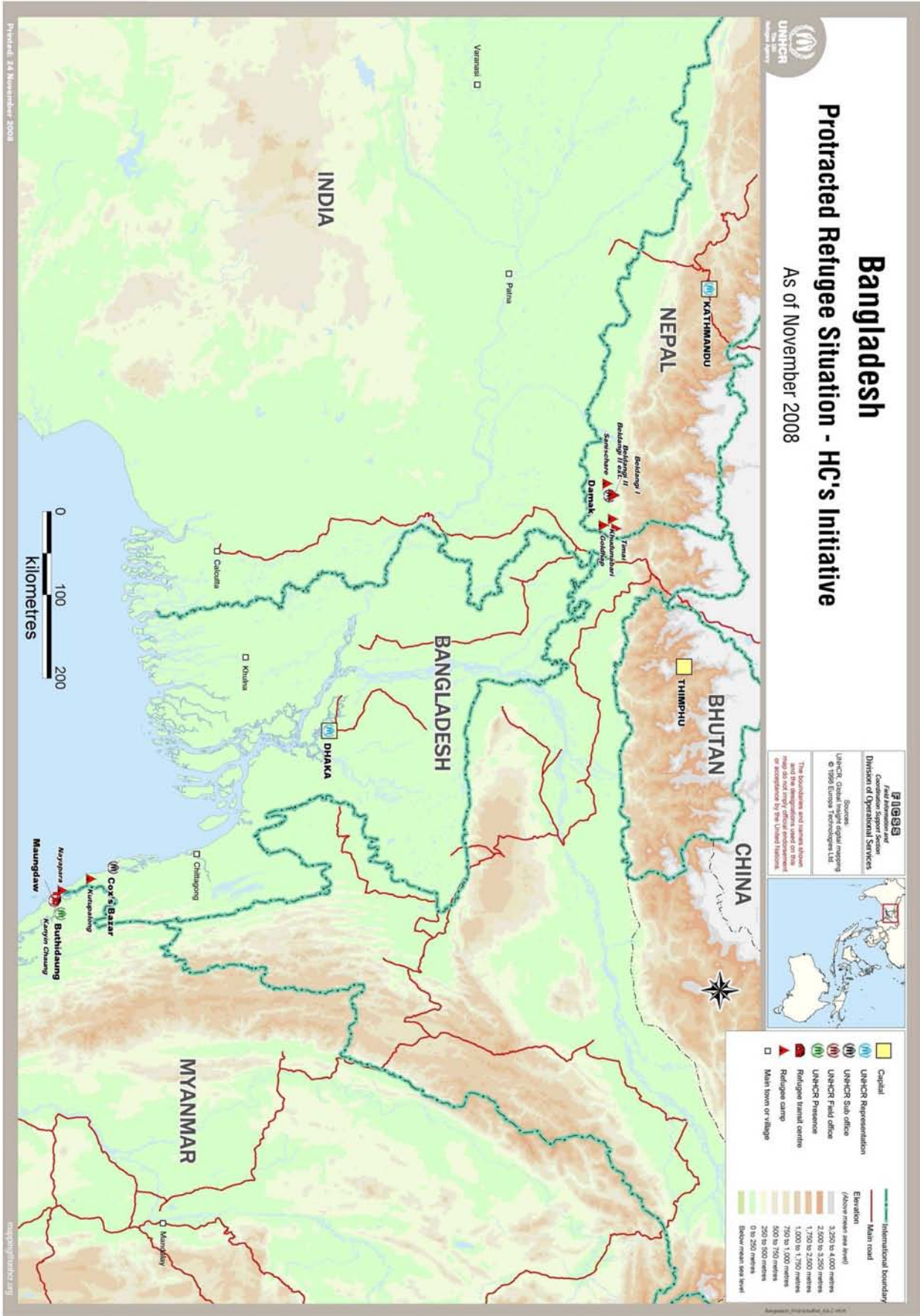
---

During his visit to Bangladesh in May 2008, the High Commissioner agreed with the Government, NGOs, the UN Country Team and donor governments that the overarching goal of the refugee programme is to achieve comprehensive solutions for the Rohingya in accordance with international standards and obligations. At the same time, it was recognized that the genuine concerns that Bangladesh faces as one of the least-developed, most densely populated, refugee-hosting countries in the world, need to be taken into account. There was also agreement that the approach taken needs to address on an equitable basis the situation of refugees living in the camps, the unregistered Rohingya living outside the camp and the local Bangladeshi population.

With this in mind, the High Commissioner proposed an approach that included efforts to address the root causes of displacement and to increase prospects for return, both by strengthening UNHCR's programme in North Rakhine State and through an enhanced political dialogue with the relevant actors. In parallel, the High Commissioner offered to host a stakeholders conference with the aim of agreeing on a roadmap to open the camps in Bangladesh, provide the refugees with freedom of movement and the right to work with a view to self-reliance and eventual voluntary repatriation, and to solicit support for its implementation. Thirdly he offered to address the asylum-migration concerns that affect the broader region.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this paper, the term 'Rohingya' is used to describe Muslim residents of North Rakhine State of Myanmar. There are other Muslim communities in Myanmar who do not identify themselves with the Rohingya for linguistic, ethnic or historical reasons.



## OBJECTIVES

To meet this goal and in line with the High Commissioner's proposal, the short, medium and longer-term objectives concerning the refugee operation include the following:

- In the short to medium term, the objective is to **solicit political and financial support for Rohingya in Bangladesh through a stakeholders conference** in either Dhaka or Geneva. In this regard, the Government of Bangladesh, UNHCR and the international community are working closely to ensure improvements in the refugee camps, including through the strategic use of resettlement.
- In the longer term, with a view to widening prospects for voluntary repatriation from Bangladesh, it is essential to **address the root causes of displacement**. There is also a need to address the broader regional dimensions of Rohingya displacement.

## ACTION PLAN

### 1. Short term: Preparatory measures

Actions	Timeframe
<i>Registration:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration of all Rohingya and issuance of ID cards.</li> </ul>	ID cards for camp refugees completed by July 2008; Rohingya outside the camp remain unregistered.
<i>Partnerships:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand number of implementing/operational partners in the camps.</li> </ul>	Completed by June 2008 and ongoing
<i>Refugee participation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation of refugees in the camp management bodies.</li> </ul>	Completed by March 2008 + ongoing
<i>Community mobilization:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize refugee participation to ensure their active contribution to the community, help ensure their own protection, maintain their own accommodation and neighbourhood;</li> <li>• Undertake skills training, especially of vulnerable refugees in the camps.</li> </ul>	International NGO will commence work in 2009; 2008, ongoing
<i>Housing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of the programme of construction of new shelter units to replace decrepit huts in the camps.</li> </ul>	End 2009 Kutupalong: completed as of September 2008; Nayapara: ongoing, expected by end 2009
<i>Resettlement:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance resettlement opportunities from Bangladesh.</li> <li>• Profile camp population to identify people in need of resettlement.</li> </ul>	Completed. Completion by first quarter 2009



UNHCR / G.M.B. Akash / June 2006

## 2. Short/Medium-term: Socio-economic improvements in Cox's Bazar District

Actions	Timeframe
<i>Partnerships:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Garner support from UN agencies and international community to support the development of all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> </ul>	2008/09 (partially started)
<i>Good Governance:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen legal and administrative capacity of the government to help enhance the law and order to benefit all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> <li>Civic education on rights, obligations, and duties.</li> </ul>	2009 onwards  ongoing
<i>Livelihoods and employment opportunities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support livelihoods activities (community mobilization, life skills, skills training, and quick impact projects) for all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> <li>Finalise ILO technical study to advance livelihoods strategy.</li> <li>Skills training strategy formulation to encourage income generating activities for all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> <li>Promotion of business ventures and investment in refugee hosting areas to benefit all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> </ul>	2008/9 (partially started)  early 2009  early 2009  2009 (partially started)
<i>Food security, nutrition and environmental protection:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise FAO proposal on reforestation and agro-forestry to benefit all communities in Cox's Bazar.</li> <li>Enhance livelihood through environmental preservation and rehabilitation (e.g. reforestation and agro forestry).</li> </ul>	2008/9 (partially started)
<i>Education:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance quality of primary education in the refugee camps (UNICEF).</li> <li>Improve educational facilities for all communities in the Cox's Bazar district.</li> </ul>	2008/9 (started)
<i>Health care:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better access to primary and secondary health care and nutrition services for all communities in Cox's Bazar District.</li> <li>Improved psycho-social care for all persons in the district.</li> </ul>	Improvements in camp by October 2008 and ongoing; Activities outside camp: 2009

### Expected results:

- Removal of restrictions on mobility, work and education for refugees in the camps.
- Improved education facilities, livelihood opportunities and medical facilities that benefit Rohingya and local Bangladeshi populations in Cox's Bazar District.
- Environmental rehabilitation in Cox's Bazar.
- Reduction in global acute malnutrition in Cox's Bazar.
- Improved law and order in Cox's Bazar.

## 3. Medium/Long term: Repatriation and Re-integration

Actions	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote tripartite meetings between the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar and UNHCR.</li> </ul>	End 2008 (ongoing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information to the refugees on the situation in Myanmar, allowing an informed decision.</li> </ul>	2008 (ongoing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance activities and programmes in North Rakhine State of Myanmar.</li> </ul>	2009 onwards

### Expected results:

- Refugees make a voluntary and informed decision about repatriation.
- Rohingya in Bangladesh are permitted to voluntarily repatriate to Myanmar.
- Rohingya and other communities in North Rakhine State are able to contribute positively in Myanmar through improved socio-economic opportunities in North Rakhine State.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

While the initiative is led by UNHCR, its objectives can only be achieved through joint efforts of all actors. The financial and political support of the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar, UN agencies, NGOs and donors will be key to its success.

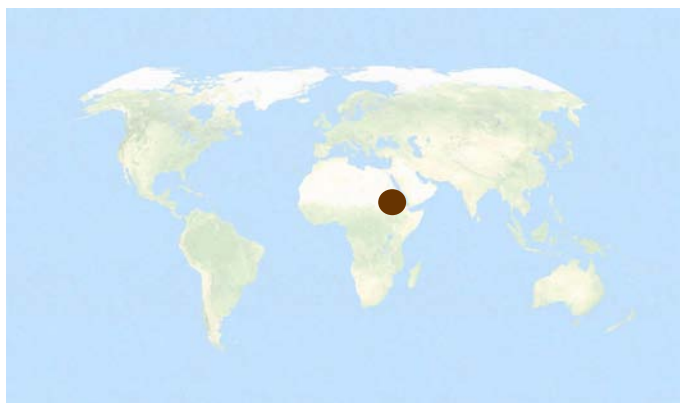
Bilateral agencies and UN agencies have already expressed their support for the situation. It is important to secure the engagement of a broad range of actors to ensure political and financial support, especially outside

the camps. UN development partners need to intensify their efforts through a coordinated programme, which ensures that improvements in the camps are matched by improved living conditions of Bangladeshi communities in the affected area.

Staffing levels in UNHCR will not change in the short/medium term. Enhanced activities of UN agencies and NGOs in the Cox's Bazar District may increase staffing levels in these agencies.



# THE EASTERN SUDAN SITUATION: ERITREAN REFUGEES IN EASTERN SUDAN



## BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

---

For more than forty years, Sudan has hosted approximately 220,000 refugees from neighboring countries. Some 147,000 asylum-seekers and refugees have found refuge in eastern Sudan, among whom almost 96,000<sup>2</sup> live in 12 camps in Central, Gedaref, Sinar and Kassala States. Eritreans constitute the overwhelming majority of this population. The largest groups arrived in the late 1960s and early 1980s during the war of independence and civil war in Eritrea. Many also arrived between 1998 and 2000 during the border conflict with Ethiopia.

Between 2000 and 2004, improvements in conditions in Ethiopia and Eritrea prompted two declarations of cessation, legal provisions that set out the conditions in which refugee status comes to an end because it is no longer needed or justified. However, after some limited returns, the rapid deterioration of human rights in Eritrea rendered the implementation of the cessation clause impossible. A non-return advisory policy was issued and the screening exercise halted. As a result, many Eritreans found themselves with no documentation conferring their legal status in Sudan and they continue to live in camps, settlements and urban areas, unable to return to their country of origin.

The limited prospects for repatriation and lack of opportunities for local integration have produced a situation in which refugees remain highly dependent on humanitarian assistance. There are limited possibilities for employment and agricultural activities. A restriction on movement, scarcity of fertile land and general poverty affect both refugees and hosting communities in the area.

Other challenges include fees for identity documents, arbitrary arrests or deportation, and establishing systems to monitor sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). UNHCR and the Government's office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) are emphasizing the need to strengthen protection activities for newly arrived refugees, unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and separated children.

Without an effective solution in sight, many refugees defy the governmental policy and move to urban centers, particularly Khartoum. Others attempt to move to other countries, with the risk of falling into the smuggling or trafficking networks. This situation is further complicated by increasing numbers of new arrivals from Eritrea, Ethiopia and, more recently, Somalia. In 2007 alone, over 10,000 new arrivals were registered. In 2008, some 13,000 newcomers were already registered by the end of October. The mix of new arrivals and longstayers poses additional challenges.

Over the years, there have been several attempts to find solutions for this protracted situation and critical lessons have been learned. The High Commissioner's visit in early 2007 marked a new effort to raise international attention to this situation. In September 2007, UNHCR and COR presented a comprehensive solutions strategy, which envisages an improvement of the asylum system in Sudan and a shift from the provision of care and maintenance assistance to an approach based on self-reliance as a precursor to local integration, complemented with the strategic use of resettlement. The strategy is built on three main pillars of intervention:

- 1. Registration and profiling of the refugee population and improvement of the asylum system;**
- 2. Improvement of quality and delivery of basic services;**
- 3. Identification of durable solutions, with particular reference to self-reliance/ local integration and resettlement.**

## GOAL

---

The overall goal of the UNHCR - COR joint strategy for the protracted refugee situation in eastern Sudan is to renew interest and support for both short and longer-term activities to improve the protection and living conditions of refugees and to find durable solutions for them.

---

<sup>2</sup> Figures before the current verification exercise

# Eastern Sudan Protracted Refugee Situation - HC's Initiative

As of November 2008



**FIGS**  
Field Information and  
Companion Support Section  
Division of Operational Services

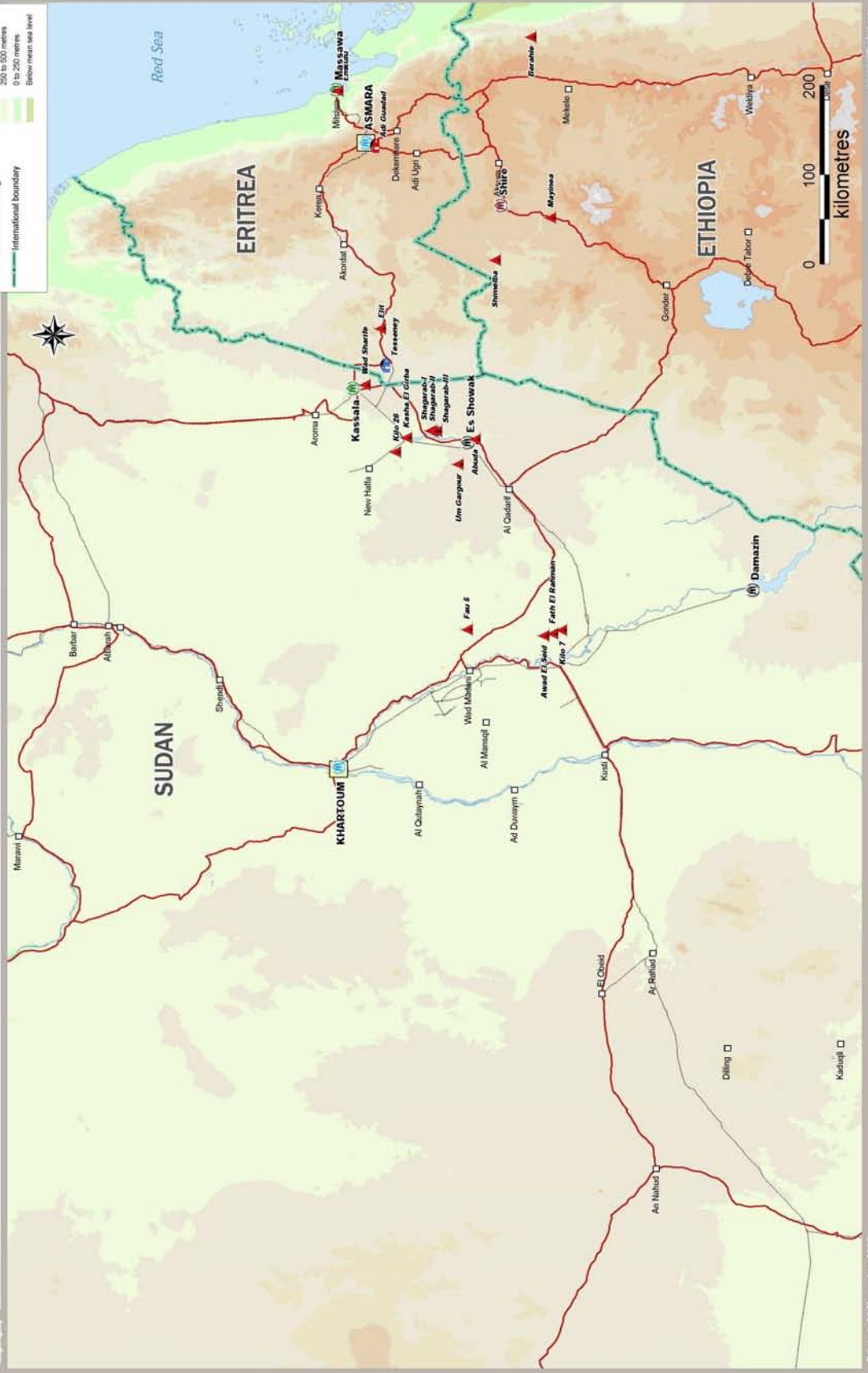
Source:  
UNHCR Global Digital Mapping  
© 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd

The boundaries and names shown  
on this map do not imply official endorsement  
or acceptance by the United Nations.



— Main road  
--- Railway  
□ Capital  
○ UNHCR Representation  
○ UNHCR Sub office  
○ UNHCR Field office  
○ UNHCR Presence  
○ Refugee transit centre  
○ Refugee camp  
□ Main town or village  
— International boundary

**Elevation**  
 (Above mean sea level)  
 3,250 to 4,000 metres  
 2,500 to 3,250 metres  
 1,750 to 2,500 metres  
 1,000 to 1,750 metres  
 750 to 1,000 metres  
 500 to 750 metres  
 250 to 500 metres  
 0 to 250 metres  
 Below mean sea level



# OBJECTIVES

For each of the three main pillars of intervention, the following goals and objectives have been identified.

## 1. Registration and profiling of the refugee population and improvement of the asylum system

### 1.1 Registration and profiling

Overall goal	Improve knowledge about the refugee population for more effective protection interventions and for the design of appropriate durable solutions	
	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Planned activities</i>
Short term (current)	→ Refugee status of Eritreans who currently lack a clearly defined status confirmed.	→ Conduct a physical check of individuals in the camps and carry out an individual registration. → Provide immediate support to individuals with particular protection risks.
Mid term (2008 – 2009)	→ All refugees received adequate individual documentation → Protection and assistance interventions enhanced.	→ Update the existing registration information and collect additional information. → COR to provide identity documents to all adult refugees in the camps. → Replicate the exercise in rural and urban settings in eastern Sudan and in Khartoum.
Long term (2009 onwards)	→ Most appropriate durable solutions identified based on the overall profiling of the population.	→ Finalize and continue to update the existing registration data in all areas.

### 1.2 Improvement of the asylum system

Overall goal	Improve the legal status, access and enjoyment of rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in camps, and rural and urban areas	
	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Planned activities</i>
Short term (current)	→ Quality of asylum and protection in the refugee camps enhanced. → Capacity building of COR to process asylum claims and provide protection in the camps enhanced.	→ Strengthen technical and financial support to COR to improve its activities and efficiency. → Improve asylum-seekers' access to RSD procedures. → Provide training of COR staff. → Cooperate with the Government in the current revision of the asylum legislation.
Mid/ long term (2009 onwards)	→ Capacity building of COR to discharge its responsibilities further enhanced. → Improved asylum procedures that are in line with best practices and standards. → The Government to pass a revised asylum legislation in line with international standards.	→ Conduct protection gaps analysis. → Establish procedures to allow refugee movement. → Establish swift procedure to adjudicate cases and resolve the legal status of some asylum-seekers. → Cooperate with COR on the new asylum legislation.



## 2. Improve quality and delivery of basic services

Overall goal	Improve living standards of refugees, particularly in camps	
	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Planned activities</i>
Short Term (current)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Increased involvement of refugees in the improvement of basic services, particularly women.</li> <li>→ Minimum humanitarian standards achieved.</li> <li>→ Delivery capacity of NGOs in specific sectors of intervention enhanced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Conduct participatory assessments.</li> <li>→ Involve refugee committees in managing and delivering services (e.g. water committees, PTAs).</li> <li>→ Urgent interventions to improve water, health and sanitation structures.</li> <li>→ Distribute sanitary materials for women and girls.</li> <li>→ Distribute education material to schools in camps.</li> <li>→ Increase UNHCR staff and technical support.</li> </ul>
Mid term (2008 / 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Progress made in reaching standards in nutrition, health, water, sanitation and education.</li> <li>→ Malnutrition rates decreased from 22% to 15%.</li> <li>→ Maternal mortality rate reduced below 158/10,000.</li> <li>→ Improved access to education, health, and water and sanitation facilities.</li> <li>→ Increased involvement of government counterparts in providing services in camps.</li> <li>→ Improved environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Review the impact of the current assistance criteria.</li> <li>→ Provide basic services with further renovation of existing structures.</li> <li>→ Hand over education facilities to the Ministry for Education and continue to supply education material.</li> <li>→ Promote women's participation (Women Committees, Women Savings and Credits Associations).</li> <li>→ Raise awareness on HIV and AIDS, SGBV and reproductive health.</li> <li>→ Strengthen protection and referral mechanisms for persons with specific needs, particularly survivors of SGBV.</li> <li>→ Establish agro-forestry, tree nurseries and improve pasture.</li> </ul>
Long term (2009 onwards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Management of camp services integrated in the governmental policies for the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Complete hand over of facilities to government counterparts.</li> </ul>

## 3. Identification of durable solutions

Overall goal	Improve prospects for local integration and resettlement to third countries for refugees for whom repatriation is not a viable durable solution	
	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Planned activities</i>
Short Term (current)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Self-reliance and access to livelihood opportunities promoted.</li> <li>→ Individual refugees with specific needs submitted for resettlement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Profile refugees skills and occupations.</li> <li>→ Advocate with the Government to promote understanding and support for self-reliance (e.g. land allocation and income generation) and local integration.</li> <li>→ Follow up cases with heightened protection risks, identified through the verification, for whom resettlement may be the best way forward.</li> <li>→ Promote the inclusion of refugees in UNDAF.</li> </ul>
Mid term (2008 / 2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Self-reliance increased through area-based strategic livelihood interventions.</li> <li>→ Strategic use of resettlement through a multi-year plan to reduce the number of refugees in protracted situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Promote research initiatives to assess needs and skills of refugees, as well as livelihood opportunities and market analysis.</li> <li>→ Approach the Government for additional agricultural land.</li> <li>→ Provide seeds, tools and fertilizers.</li> <li>→ Introduce animal husbandry techniques.</li> <li>→ Provide entrepreneurial and business management skills.</li> <li>→ Design and implement livelihood projects, including micro-finance and vocational skills training based on the findings of previous research and with particular focus on women.</li> <li>→ Use registration data to identify refugees for a multi-year resettlement programme.</li> </ul>
Long term (2009 onwards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Find durable solutions for the majority of the refugees, which contribute positively to the development of the area.</li> <li>→ Multi-year resettlement programme established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Implement area-based projects that include refugee through the direct participation of the Government and development actors.</li> </ul>

## ACTION PLAN

### 1. Registration and profiling of the refugee population and improvement of the asylum system

#### 1.1 Registration and profiling

The first phase of the verification exercise was launched in March 2008 and will be finalized in December 2008. It covers refugees in camps and collects individual and family data, including photography and biometrics, as well as information on specific needs, education and professional skills. It is projected that some **60,000 refugees** will be verified and re-registered in the 12 camps by the end of December, which compares to the estimated population of **94,000 refugees**. The balance of around 34,000 refugees may have left the camps for the settlements or moved to urban areas.

Phase two of the registration exercise will target settlements and urban centers in eastern Sudan, while phase three will be focused on refugees in Khartoum. UNHCR is negotiating with COR to ensure, as soon as possible, the issuance of free five-year identity cards to all verified refugees as foreseen by the solutions strategy. These IDs should regularize the refugees' legal stay. However, further amendments are needed to the asylum law to improve the freedom of movement and right to work, thus increasing opportunities for self-reliance.

#### 1.2 Improvement of the asylum system

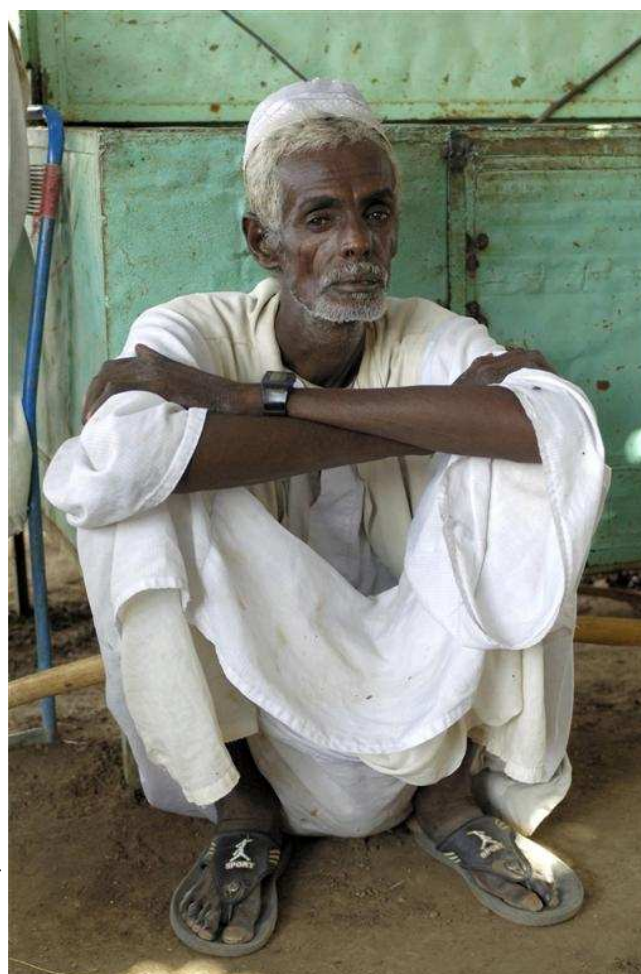
UNHCR has reinforced its support to COR in Khartoum and eastern Sudan to better assist its staff in processing asylum claims. This includes providing technical equipment and improving office premises. The capacity of COR to conduct refugee status determination (RSD) and process individual asylum applications in eastern Sudan will be strengthened by constructing residences and new offices for RSD staff in Shagarab. UNHCR will train Government officials in asylum policies.

UNHCR's and COR's efforts to improve asylum systems in East Sudan are complemented by other actors. In 2008, Save the Children seconded Child Protection and Community Services Officers to East Sudan. They trained UNHCR and its partners on child protection, assisted in establishing a centre for UAMs, and provided recommendations on how to improve the asylum procedures for UAMs. They have also supported the verification exercise.

### 2. Improve quality and delivery of basic services

Progress has been made in improving basic services for refugees, particularly in the health sector. In 2008, several urgent interventions have been initiated, such as the construction and rehabilitation of health centers. Furthermore, the construction of health clinics in Shagarab camps has been completed. Water facilities have improved through the installation of three water pumps with solar panels. More technical staff with experience in health and nutrition has been recruited to support implementing partners and the Government to assess and improve services to refugees.

A project has been initiated to support UAMs upon arrival in Shagarab camp. Accommodation and two daily meals are provided to all UAMs under 14 years old. Unaccompanied minors are also given social support while UNHCR and the Government identify jointly with the community durable solutions for them.



UNHCR / Fred Noy / June 2007

### 3. Identification of durable solutions

UNHCR is identifying refugees with limited local integration prospects by using the Heightened Risk Identification Tool (HRIT). In October, a team visited eastern Sudan to assist the Operation in developing the resettlement component of the solutions strategy using the HRIT. A multi-year proposal for a significant increase in resettlement places will be reviewed. The Office is, however, concerned that the lack of resettlement officers and IOM's limited capacity in Sudan may become constraints to the success of the resettlement programme.

While resettlement opportunities need to be improved, it may not be an appropriate solution for the majority of the refugees. Consequently, the Office will focus on self-reliance opportunities. Pilot livelihood projects are generating interest and support among refugees although the current level of participation is too low to make a

significant difference. UNHCR continues to reorient the care and maintenance programme towards self-reliance and refugees' active participation in the local economy.

Local integration is a socio-economic reality for refugees who were formerly in camps and a real prospect for others. Entire sectors of the economy are depending on Eritrean workers (agriculture, restaurants, housework, etc.). Some camps have become indistinguishable from neighboring Sudanese villages. Local integration is no longer taboo for COR (locally or in Khartoum) or the local authorities. UNHCR seeks to engage the Government more closely in promoting local integration and the refugees' participation in the wider Sudanese community. The prospects for successful local integration require a broader freedom of movement and will depend on amendments to the asylum law and the abolition of restrictions on the refugees' right to work.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

The solutions strategy is jointly implemented by UNHCR and COR. Partnerships with a range of actors are critical due to the complexity of the operation. UNHCR engages with the local government, COR, UN agencies and NGOs. Partnerships with development actors and with organizations that have expertise in rural development are particularly crucial.

With a view on long-term strategic planning, UNHCR has advocated for the inclusion of refugees in the CCA and UNDAF process. Interventions are now integrated in all segments of the recent UNDAF for Sudan.

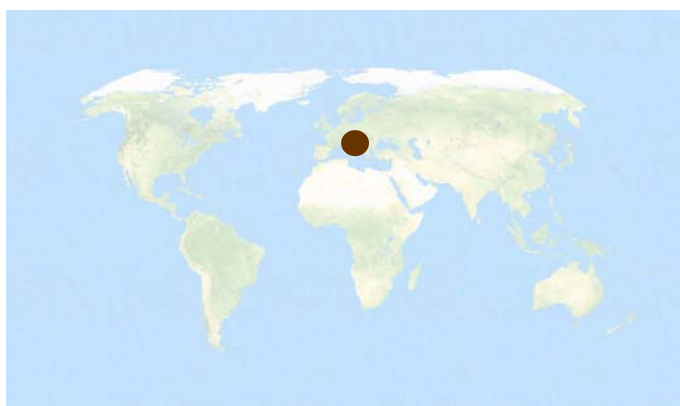
A livelihoods study is currently being undertaken. The study will likely focus on six areas: designing of an online platform for consolidating material on livelihood-related research in the region; availability of vocational training; increasing income of farmers and pastoralists; access to micro-finance; reinforcement of the private sector; and capacity building of local organizations and NGOs to run livelihood projects.

The situation requires a multi-faceted solutions strategy, which has additional funding requirements. These requirements will be established after the results of the ongoing verification exercise are available and the livelihoods strategy formulated and may result in the establishment of a multi-year Supplementary Budget.



UNHCR / Fred Noy / June 2007

# THE SERBIA SITUATION: CROATIAN AND BOSNIAN REFUGEES IN SERBIA AND UNHCR'S EXIT STRATEGY



## BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

The Sarajevo process was launched in January 2005 by the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia with support from UNHCR, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to enhance regional cooperation and promote solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The process has since exceeded its originally planned December 2006 ending date due to lack of agreement on some remaining issues in Croatia.

The registered refugee population in Serbia has decreased from over 500,000 in 1996 to 97,000 in 2008. While the majority of refugees in Serbia have returned to their countries, integrated locally or resettled elsewhere, a substantial number of refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) remain<sup>3</sup>. More than 200,000 people have naturalised in Serbia.

During the last seven years, the Serbian Government, with the help of international agencies and NGOs, has reduced significantly the number of Collective Centers (CCs) in Serbia, thus contributing to durable solutions for the most vulnerable refugees and IDPs.

Period	# of CCs	# of Refugees	# of IDPs
2001	402	20,946	7,412
2008	57	1,309	4,144

Many of the remaining people in CCs are sick, elderly or have other specific needs and finding durable solutions for them can be difficult and costly.

<sup>3</sup> Some 97,000 persons retain refugee status, but the figure is not fully adjusted for naturalization.

As voluntary repatriation to BiH has slowed considerably and resettlement halted, local integration remains the most sustainable solution for the remaining Bosnian refugees. The same applies for most Croatian refugees, although UNHCR believe that some would return home if they had more certainty with regard to their legal rights, such as pensions, tenancies, property or compensation. Pending resolution of these issues, some are reluctant to naturalize, fearing that the loss of refugee status would hinder their entitlements in Croatia.

It is estimated that some 20,000 refugee families lost their apartments in Croatia. The issue of occupancy or tenancy rights (OTR) seriously affects the achievement of durable solutions since a restoration of previous rights would allow many refugees to solve their own problems without state support. UNHCR advocates for a solution to this problem, maintaining that the establishment of a fair settlement mechanism is the best way forward.

The international community must pursue a resolution of all identified issues in the Sarajevo Process. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved, additional efforts will be required to support Serbia in helping refugees to integrate locally. It is estimated that some 20,000 vulnerable people are in need of some kind of assistance, particularly housing.

National and local authorities have made considerable efforts to ensure the social and economic integration of refugees in Serbia. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain. Inadequate housing, unemployment, lack of higher education and lack of documentation are prevailing concerns affecting many refugees and those who have availed themselves of Serbian citizenship. In addition, there are some 1,300 particularly vulnerable refugees living in sub-standard CCs, of which 93 per cent would like to integrate locally.

A limited capacity of the Ministry of Interior to process applications and de-register naturalized refugees is an obstacle to ensuring the legal local integration of the remaining refugees. This has led to a significant backlog of naturalization applications and to outdated statistics.

The strategy outlined below focuses on resolving the problem of remaining refugees in CCs and other extremely vulnerable persons in sub-standard private accommodation. It also aims to strengthen the capacity of the Government and mainstream the refugee assistance into longer-term development programmes.

The results of an on-going comprehensive needs assessment carried out jointly by UNHCR and the Government will be available shortly and will further guide interventions.



## GOAL

---

UNHCR's support to the Government in attaining durable and sustainable solutions for the remaining refugees that provides an exit strategy for UNHCR over the next two years.

## OBJECTIVES

---

Solutions for the most vulnerable refugees in Serbia will be provided through a multi-pronged approach. During the next two years, the strategy has the following objectives:

- 1. Socio-economic integration and self-reliance.**
- 2. Removal of obstacles for those wishing to repatriate.**

# Serbia

## Protracted Refugee Situation - HC's Initiative

As of November 2008



**FIGSS**  
Field Information and  
Coordination Support Section  
Division of Operational Services

Sources:  
UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping  
© 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd.

The boundaries and names shown  
and the designations used on this  
map do not imply official endorsement  
or acceptance by the United Nations.



Printed: 24 November 2008

mapping@unhcr.org

# ACTION PLAN

**Short term (end 2008):** a profiling exercise is being carried out for the entire refugee population. Results will be available before December. In particular, it is expected to obtain the following information:

- The number of vulnerable categories, including the type of vulnerability, will be reviewed, thus enabling UNHCR and the authorities to have exact information on they types of beneficiaries that will need assistance.
- The types of needs/assistance will also be available, thus enabling better targeting of assistance<sup>4</sup>.

**Medium Term (2009):** based on the results from the assessments, targeted project proposals will be formulated. Results will be shared with stakeholders. Partnerships will be forged with a variety of stakeholders to ensure coordination of all activities and that all needs are met.

**Medium/Long Term (2009 and beyond):** Projects leading to durable solutions for vulnerable categories of displaced people will be implemented. Local authorities are supported to ensure that all individuals with specific needs find solutions and are integrated in the national social network.

Furthermore, UNHCR’s planned interventions relate to the following strategic directions:

## 1. Return to Croatia and clarification of property restitution

Actions	Timeframe
Provide limited repatriation assistance for those who need support (particularly transport of household belongings).	Limited repatriation assistance until the end of 2009.
Increase advocacy to find solutions for the issue of occupancy and tenancy rights, as well as for the other obstacles, within the Sarajevo process.	Engagement in property / pension negotiations until successful completion of the Sarajevo process, or other agreement between Serbia and Croatia is reached.

### Expected results:

- Vulnerable refugees assisted to voluntarily repatriate to Croatia
- 19,000 Croatian refugee families in Serbia receive confirmation of occupancy/property rights and or compensation for lost property;
- Reduced number of Croatian refugees, as a result of their access to rights, particularly property restitution/compensation and access to pensions in Croatia.

## 2. Capacity-building for naturalization and de-registration (support the Government to improve its technical capacity and streamline naturalization procedures)

Actions	Timeframe
Maintain an information flow between UNHCR and relevant local authorities to ensure accurate numbers on naturalized refugees	2009-2010
Monitor naturalization procedures through implementing partners and field presence	2009-2010
Raise awareness about naturalization, in cooperation with relevant ministries	2009-2010

### Expected results:

- The Government clears the backlog and incoming naturalization applications; it is foreseen that during 2008-2009 some 60,000 refugees would naturalize
- A mechanism is in place for the automatic de-registration upon naturalization;
- The Government has accurate and up-to-date records of remaining refugees;
- Durable solutions for remaining refugees will be better targeted;
- Invoke cessation clause for Bosnian refugees.

<sup>4</sup> Initial findings from CCs already show that over 50% of its inhabitants are in need of some type of social housing in order to resolve their problems.

### 3. Improved socio-economic integration

Actions	Timeframe
Provide adequate infrastructure and improved access to public services through advocacy and cooperation with the Government and the private sector.	2009-2010
Provide income generation and micro-finance opportunities through micro-loans from a previously established revolving fund.	2009-2010
Provide vocational training for those people with specific needs, including single mothers.	2009-2010
Construct social housing for people with specific needs, such as the elderly and disabled.	2009-2010
Implement housing projects, such as distribution of building material, purchase of village houses and micro-loans.	2009-2010
Establish partnerships with the EU (through the IPA process) and other donors to ensure that needs are addressed comprehensively.	2009-2010

#### Expected results:

- Durable solution (housing) are identified for all refugees in CCs and vulnerable people in private accommodation;
- Refugees are able to access existing national social protection mechanisms;
- Refugees are trained to enter the job market;
- Social housing projects are handed over to local authorities upon their completion.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

---

Continued engagement by UNHCR and the international community is essential to promote access to rights in Croatia, particularly those related to property, occupancy or tenancy rights and pensions.

Subject to the conclusion of the Sarajevo process and agreement with Government stakeholders, an intensive media campaign on local integration of refugees, with a special emphasis on housing solutions and naturalization, could be launched during 2009.

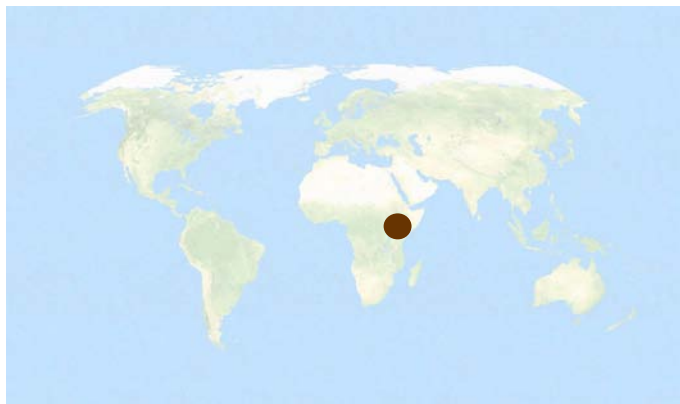
Durable solutions and integration programmes for refugees with specific needs are costly. Therefore, strong financial support is needed. The HC's initiative highlights

opportunities and obstacles to closing the refugee chapter in Serbia.

To achieve durable solutions for the remaining refugees, primarily those living in CCs and in private accommodation, Serbia needs additional resources. UNHCR's contribution is estimated at an additional USD 15 million in 2009-2010. Housing projects are particularly needed. Although costly, they have shown a high degree of sustainability. UNHCR would complement all the projected assistance programmes planned by other stakeholders, in particular those by the Serbian Government and the EC through IPA.



# THE TANZANIA SITUATION: 1972 BURUNDIAN REFUGEES IN THE OLD SETTLEMENTS IN THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



## BACKGROUND ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT

For over a decade, the United Republic of Tanzania hosted the largest number of refugees in Africa. Burundian refugees constituted the single largest group, with some 340,000 hosted in camps in the western part of the country for over 10 years. An additional 218,000 Burundians had arrived in Tanzania in the wake of the 1972 events in Burundi, which produced one of Africa's most prolonged refugee situations. These 218,000 refugees continue to live in three designated settlements in central and western Tanzania, known as the "old settlements": Ulyankulu Settlement in Tabora region, Katumba and Mishamo Settlements in Rukwa region.

The reception accorded to the 1972 Burundian refugees by the Government of Tanzania was one of generosity and accommodation. The settlements were laid out as planned villages and each family was allocated up to 5 hectares of land. With the assistance of the international community, core infrastructure such as roads, water points, school buildings, dispensaries and administrative centers were established. By 1985, the refugees had become agriculturally independent and were returning significant taxes to the host Districts, which in turn continued to provide basic services such as health care and education. The settlements were placed under full government administration and material assistance by UNHCR and its partners was terminated.

The Burundian refugees are today self-sufficient and have reached a high level of socio-economic integration. However, during their protracted stay, there were some persistent gaps: work was largely limited to basic agriculture; education was mostly at the primary-level only; and people continued to hold refugee status, which meant that their movement and wider opportunities were curtailed.

With peace and stability returning to Burundi, UNHCR actively engaged in the pursuit of durable solutions for more recent influxes of Burundian refugees in the camps of northwest Tanzania. This led to large-scale voluntary repatriation and significant resettlement operations. At the June 2007 Tripartite Commission the Tanzanian Government expressed its wish to close the chapter of prolonged refuge for the 1972 Burundian refugees in the old settlements. It indicated that it would consider a solutions package, including naturalisation and local integration, if international resources were available to support this. To facilitate the development of a comprehensive solutions strategy, the Tripartite Commission recommended the establishment of an Old Settlements Task Force (OSTF) with the participation of Tanzania, Burundi and UNHCR. The OSTF developed the Tanzania Comprehensive Solutions Strategy (TANCOSS) and proposed conducting a census and, based on the results, a full registration and intentions survey of the population. The registration was followed by a wider socio-economic study to further articulate a set of solutions options.

The results were presented to the Tripartite Commission in December 2007. The Commission recommended the adoption of a comprehensive solutions strategy for the Old Settlements which rests on three pillars:

1. **Voluntary repatriation** to Burundi for those who wish to return (which at the time of registration was some 46,000 people or 20 per cent of the total) and their full **reintegration**.
2. **Expedited naturalization** for those who have expressed a desire to remain in Tanzania, subject to due naturalization processes (at initial registration, these numbered some 172,000 people or 80 per cent of the total).
3. **Full integration** of those naturalized in Tanzania.



UNHCR / Brenda Barmon / 2008

All three pillars are operating on principles of burden sharing, cooperation and participatory processes. Under the voluntary repatriation and naturalization pillars, UNHCR is working in coordination with the national governments and its partners.

Under the voluntary repatriation/reintegration and integration pillars, a key element is the close involvement of UN partners, through the UN Delivering as One process in Tanzania (for which Tanzania is a pilot country), and other development actors. It is hoped that the latter will also include bi-lateral development partners who can provide experience from development programmes in Tanzania, together with their resources, advocacy, relations and expertise. The fact that these partners have been invited to attend the High Commissioner's Dialogue on protracted situations in December 2008, is a step towards engaging them in this process. A wide involvement of actors in the transition from humanitarian to development assistance is important because of the multi-faceted challenges of human and economic development. As local integration and reintegration move from meeting immediate needs to longer-term development challenges, UNHCR will increasingly play a catalytic role, balanced by greater involvement of the development partners.

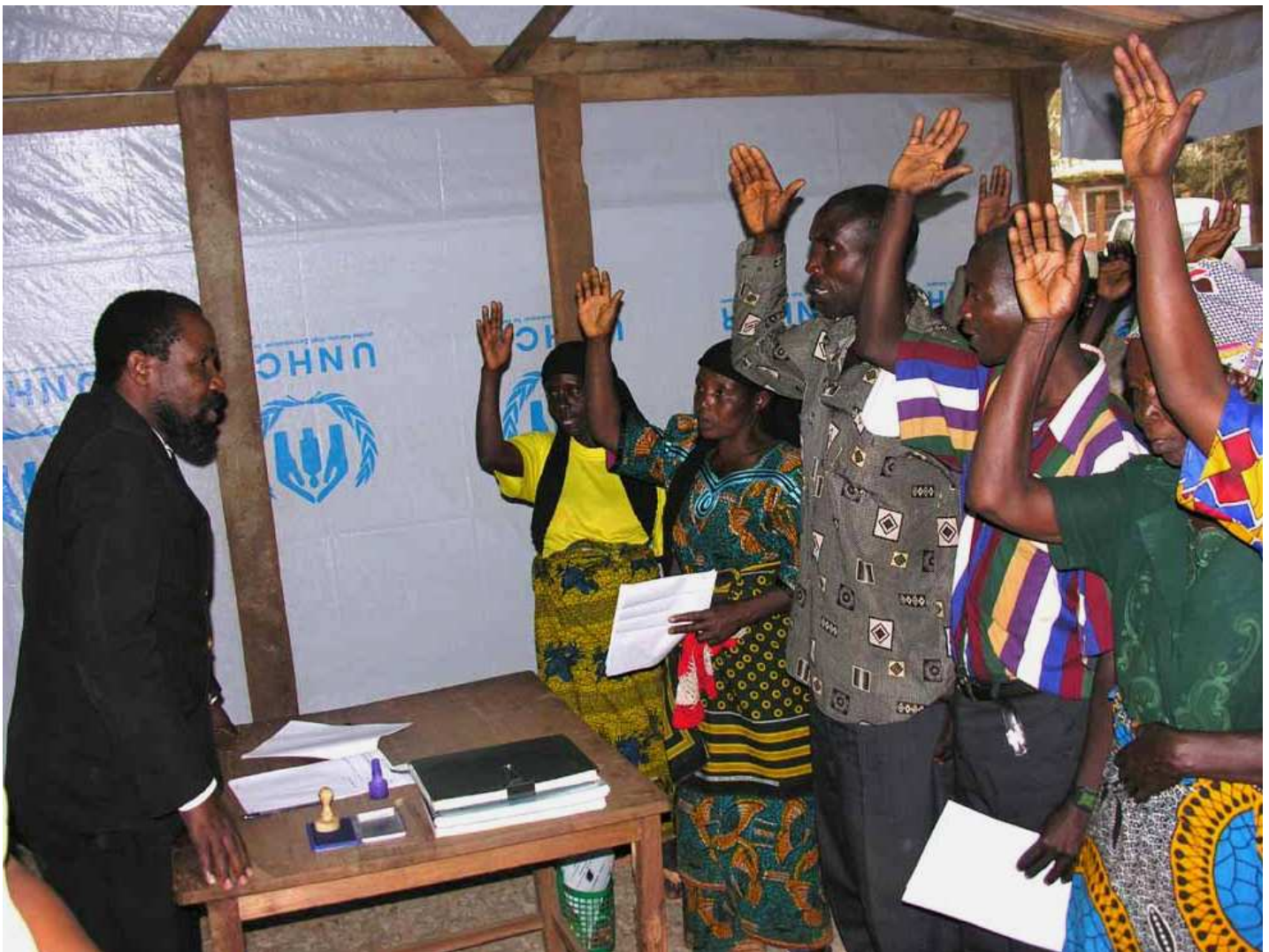
## GOAL

The overarching goal is to find durable and dignified solutions for the 1972 Burundian refugees in Tanzania.

## OBJECTIVES

To meet this goal, the following objectives have been jointly agreed upon by the Governments of Tanzania and Burundi and UNHCR:

- Burundian refugees who opt for voluntary repatriation will repatriate by September 2009 and be successfully reintegrated in their areas of return;
- Burundian refugees who opt to remain, will be naturalized under the citizenship laws of Tanzania by the end of 2008 or early 2009;
- Naturalized refugees will be integrated in their new host communities by the end 2010.
- International support will be mobilized, with UNHCR playing the catalytic role, to ensure burden and responsibility sharing in the implementation of TANCOS.



# United Republic of Tanzania

## Protracted Refugee Situation - HC's Initiative

As of November 2008



**FIGSS**  
Field Information and  
Coordination Support Section  
Division of Operational Services

Sources:  
UNHCR, Global Insight digital mapping  
© 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd.

The boundaries and names shown  
and the designations used on the  
map do not imply official endorsement  
or acceptance by the United Nations.



# ACTION PLAN<sup>5</sup>

---

## 1. Preparation Phase / Short term

The main preparatory activities have been completed:

- Census of the refugee population conducted with active refugee participation (completed end July)
- Individual registration of all refugees, which also captured their intentions (completed by early October 2007)
- Full socio-economic study of the Old Settlements (completed end November 2007)
- Preparation of a comprehensive solutions strategy (TANCOSS) and presentation to key stakeholders for feedback and endorsement (completed end November 2007)
- Presentation of TANCOSS to the Tripartite Commission for endorsement and adoption (completed in December 2007)
- Mobilizing key donors and constituencies of support (January 2008)
- Supplementary Appeal for the financial requirements (launched in February 2008)
- Commencement of implementation (March 2008)

## 2. Pillar 1: Voluntary Repatriation and re-integration in Burundi

Actions	Timeframe
• Establish a UNHCR field presence in Mpanda, with field units in Mishamo and Ulyankulu settlements.	Early 2008 (completed)
• Provide information to the refugees on the situation in Burundi, allowing an informed choice and registration for repatriation.	2008/9 (ongoing)
• Ensure repatriation is well-prepared (establishment of equipped departure centres, medical screening prior to departure, provision of meals prior to and during repatriation movements).	2008/9 (ongoing)
• Provide transport to the returning refugees (train & trucks) and their belongings.	2008/9 (ongoing)
• Establish transit / reception facilities in Kigoma and Burundi for the returnees.	2008 (completed in Tanzania; ongoing in Burundi)
• Provide assistance packages (cash-grant and non-food items) upon return in Burundi.	2008/9 (ongoing)
• Establish reception conditions in Burundi (including temporary transit / accommodation centres).	2008/9 (ongoing with more centres planned)
• Monitor returns, provide legal aid as required (mediation for property re-possession), and issue ID cards.	2008/9 (ongoing)
• Provide shelter assistance to some 4,000 vulnerable returnee families.	2008/9 (ongoing)

### Expected results:

- Refugees make a voluntary and informed choice.
- Over 46,000 Burundian refugees are transported in safety and dignity with their personal belongings, including livestock, by the end of September 2009.
- Upon repatriation, returnees receive an individual cash grant, benefit from relief items, food and non-food depending on their specific needs, as well as temporary accommodation for those without land or homes.
- Returnees are fully integrated into their return communities.

---

<sup>5</sup> For more details, see UNHCR's Supplementary Appeal for Comprehensive Solutions for Burundian Refugees in Tanzania's Old Settlements, available at UNHCR's website: <http://www.unhcr.org/partners/PARTNERS/47b1a2522.pdf>

### 3. Pillar 2: Naturalization

Actions	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out information campaigns in the three settlements on the naturalization process and procedural requirements.</li> </ul>	2008 (ongoing)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide support to the Tanzanian authorities for the naturalization process (refurbish/construct registration centres, temporarily deploy staff from ministries involved in the naturalisation process; hire administrative staff).</li> </ul>	2008 (ongoing; completion end Nov.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support taking and processing fingerprints of the applicants and despatching them to the Forensic Bureau.</li> </ul>	2008 (ongoing completion end Nov.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support due processes for reviewing of the applications (District/Regional Defence and Security Meetings).</li> </ul>	2008-Early 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support to the Immigration Dept. and the establishment of a special Citizenship Processing Unit with equipment and training.</li> </ul>	2008-early 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment of the legal fees and stamp duty and finger print processing fees on behalf of the refugees (the Government agreed to reduced fees).</li> </ul>	2008-early 2009 (ongoing)

#### Expected results:

- Refugees are well-informed about the naturalization process and procedures.
- Some 172,000 Burundian refugees have obtained Tanzanian citizenship through an expedited process by early 2009.

### 4. Pillar 3: Full integration of newly naturalized citizens

Actions	Timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with Regions/Districts hosting refugees (Rukwa, Tabora) selected interventions implemented to support refugee host communities.</li> </ul>	April-Dec 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intention survey conducted amongst refugee heads of households who have opted for naturalization about their preferred Region/district of relocation.</li> </ul>	July 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government announces its plan for local integration of the newly naturalized Tanzanians.</li> </ul>	End 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former refugees relocate from old settlements to their new places of residence.</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean up of the former settlements.</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rehabilitation of district-designated structures for continuous use (administrative, health, education, water structures/facilities), and decommissioning of unwanted structures.</li> </ul>	2008/10 (started)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance environmental preservation and rehabilitation (e.g. use of fuel efficient stoves, tree planting, forest protection).</li> </ul>	2009/11 (not started yet)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fostering peaceful coexistence between the newly-naturalised Tanzanians and receiving communities through mass information campaigns, meetings with cultural leaders, and discussions within the communities.</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted infrastructure and rehabilitation assistance in areas of relocation (water, sanitation, health clinics, education, access to markets, etc.).</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support to the authorities to incorporate the new arrivals under local administrative structures and ensure access to land (including with temporary secondment of staff to operate the new infrastructure until they are included in district budgets).</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building and training to the local authorities.</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support livelihoods activities to promote self-sufficiency.</li> </ul>	2009/11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring local integration and providing legal aid, including on land issues.</li> </ul>	2009/11

#### Expected results:

- Community-based projects enhance existing local infrastructure through the UN Delivering as One initiative and direct support provided from bi-lateral and multi-lateral development players.
- Peaceful and harmonious integration and co-existence is evident in host areas.
- Local Government is capacitated to assume ownership for the inputs provided to the communities.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

The biannual Tripartite Commission meetings between the Governments of Tanzania, Burundi and UNHCR will continue to serve as the overall policy-setting body, with the OSTF continuing to function as the central coordinating organ. UNHCR will continue to coordinate activities on both sides of the border through the existing repatriation programme.

The strategic engagement of key actors is critical for the success of the durable solutions strategy, both in Tanzania and in Burundi. This engagement revolves around:

- **A consultative process of formulating solutions for all parties**, ensuring that all are linked into a strategy of multiple solutions.
- **Robust engagement with donors and other development actors in the solutions process**, which has been essential to ensuring sustainable political commitment, resource mobilization and burden sharing.
- **Creative, non-traditional approaches**, working together with civil society actors and regional and sub-regional actors essential to ensuring ownership and consensus-based policy formulation.

While many challenges remain, specific attention is drawn to the need for a smooth transition from humanitarian assistance to longer-term development, requiring active involvement of the relevant UN agencies and major development actors.

Progress along the relief-to-development spectrum, from emergency assistance to full involvement in national and regional development plans, will continue beyond 2010. Set against this longer-term background, an evenly-paced movement of people will allow for a better implementation of the agreed strategies. It will also create room for longer-term actors to mobilise their resources and swing into action. This approach will ensure that a presently productive and self-sufficient group of refugees will continue to be a productive resource in their new locations.

The international community's response to UNHCR's Supplementary Appeal has so far been very positive. A revision to the programme will be made based on the Tanzanian Government's plans for local integration and additional needs for reintegration in Burundi. The revised appeal will be communicated in January 2009.



# Major Protracted Refugee Situations

As of November 2008



**FIGSS**  
Field Information and  
Coordination Support Section  
Division of Operational Services

Sources:  
UNHCR Global Insight digital mapping  
© 1998 Europa Technologies Ltd.

The boundaries and names shown  
and the designations used on this  
map do not imply any endorsement  
or acceptance by the United Nations.





**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency

PUBLISHED BY:

UNHCR  
P.O. Box 2500  
1211 Geneva 2  
Switzerland

With thanks  
to all colleagues in the Regional bureaux for Africa,  
Asia and Pacific; and Europe for  
their contributions

For more information please contact  
OSTS/Division of Operational Services  
UNHCR HQ Geneva  
[hqts01@unhcr.org](mailto:hqts01@unhcr.org)

**[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)**