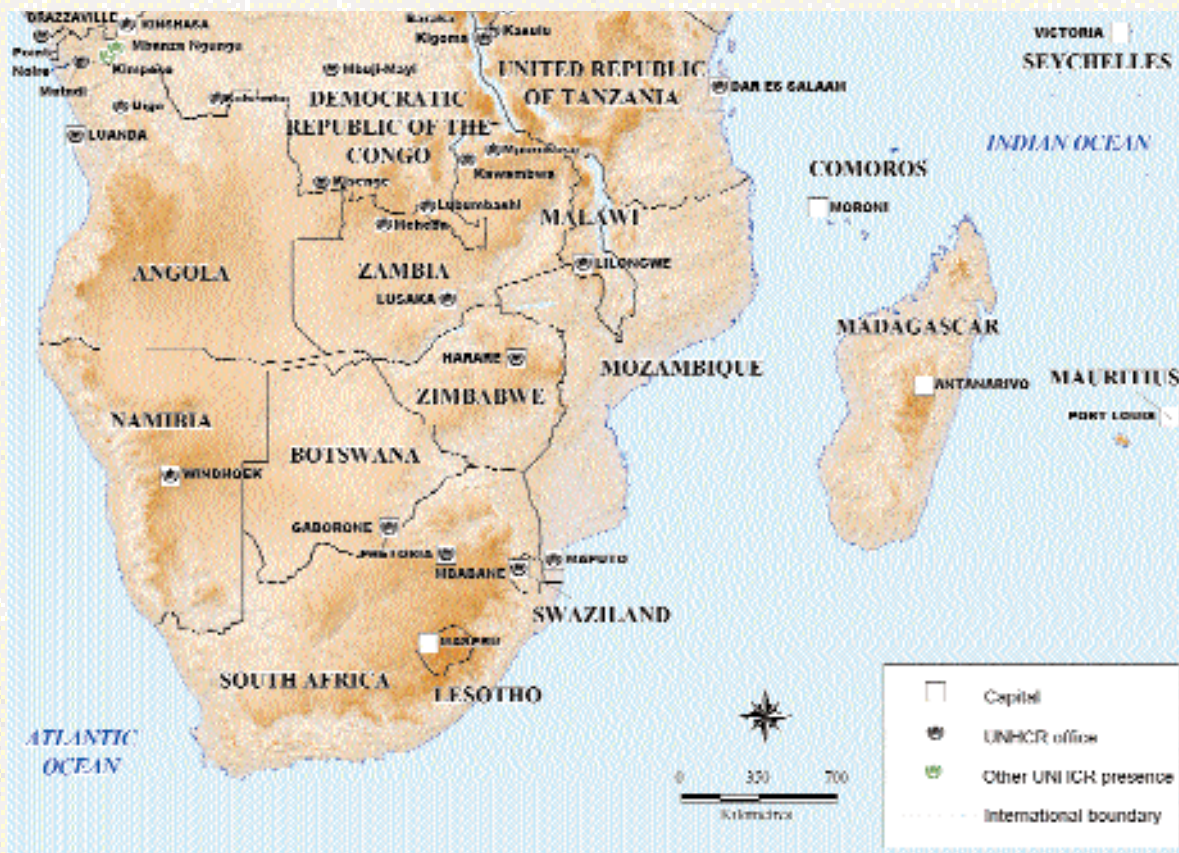


SOUTHERN AFRICA

Regional Overview

Angola • Botswana • Comoros • Lesotho • Madagascar • Malawi • Mauritius • Mozambique • Namibia • Seychelles • South Africa • Swaziland • Zambia • Zimbabwe



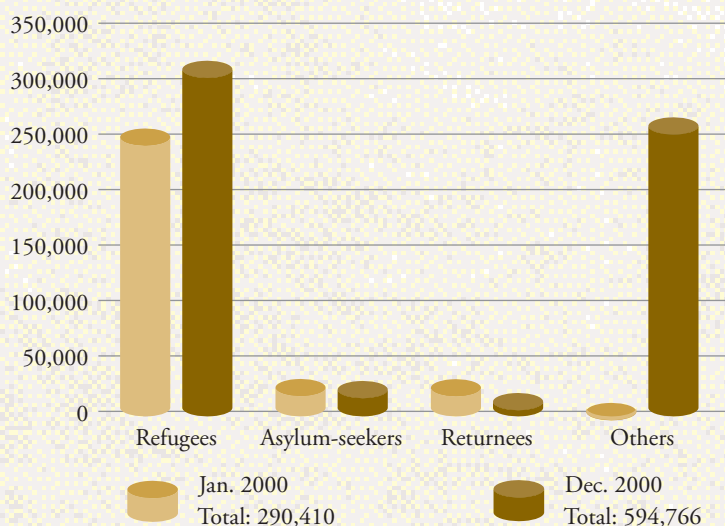
MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Political developments in Southern Africa in 2000 threatened the fragile stability of the region as a whole. The war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) had disturbing regional repercussions, as it drew in many of the countries in the region, directly or indirectly, while Angola's long-standing civil war continued to have a serious impact on population movements. Zambia and Namibia were particularly affected, receiving refugees from both conflicts throughout the year.

In June, at the request of the Government of Angola, and following intensive consultations with the Government and other UN agencies, UNHCR launched a programme to address the critical humanitarian and protection situation of some 300,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) located in three provinces in Angola.

Externally, the Angolan conflict spilled over into Namibia, with armed attacks taking place on both sides of the border. Thousands of civilians lost their lives and many others sought asylum in neighbouring countries. At the end of 2000, the number of Angolan refugees in Namibia stood at 17,740, of whom 10,390 arrived during the year. In Zambia, the number of Angolan

Persons of Concern to UNHCR



refugees assisted by UNHCR stood at 76,654, of whom 34,645 arrived during 2000.

Zimbabwe was shaken during the first half of the year by political violence at home in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in June. As veterans of Zimbabwe's revolutionary war occupied several white-owned farms across the nation and the electoral campaign turned violent, the exodus of thousands of Zimbabweans to neighbouring countries was feared. UNHCR prepared the necessary contingency plans for possible refugee displacements, and organised workshops on emergency preparedness for governments, UN agencies, national and international NGOs in neighbouring countries. Fortunately, the exodus did not take place and the post-electoral climate remained relatively calm. With no Zimbabweans forced to seek refuge outside their country, the emergency preparations were relaxed.

Elsewhere in the region, the most notable humanitarian problems resulted from the floods that devastated the majority of countries of Southern Africa earlier in the year. Although Mozambique captured the international headlines and received the greatest share of international aid, Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe were all affected. In Botswana and Zimbabwe, the floods had an impact on the refugee programmes, either because delivery of assistance to refugees was momentarily disrupted due to damaged roads or because refugee camps were flooded. Additional emergency resources were thus required to mitigate the effects of the floods on refugees in the region.

CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

Laws and official policies in the region are generally favourable towards refugees and asylum-seekers. Virtually all the countries in the region have now acceded to international refugee legislation. One of the most positive developments in this connection was in January, when Swaziland acceded to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the two Conventions on statelessness. In broad terms, governments in the region have kept their doors open to those seeking asylum. Nevertheless, UNHCR's mandate remained far from easy to fulfil. One of the biggest challenges faced by governments and UNHCR in the region was to sustain the institution of asylum in the face of the international community's apparent inability to root out the conflicts which create refugees and impede their return. The ongoing conflicts in Angola and the DRC, which have resulted in increasing refugee emergencies in

Zambia and Namibia, have raised serious concerns. UNHCR worked on a regional contingency plan to maintain preparedness in case of further movements.

At the same time, it has become impossible to ignore a tendency throughout the region for certain individuals to abuse asylum procedures in their quest for better economic and social opportunities. This worsens the backlog of pending asylum applications. With asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants competing for limited employment and services, tensions have unfortunately sometimes arisen. As a result, states have resorted to stricter policies and legal and administrative control measures which have a negative impact on genuine asylum-seekers and refugees. The refugee situation in the Southern African region is thus beset by protection problems, some extremely serious, especially as most refugees gravitate towards cities already struggling to cope with more than their fair share of urban problems. Given such an environment, it is regrettable that due to a lack of sufficient protection staff in the region, UNHCR was not always in a position to provide effective protection.

PROGRESS TOWARDS SOLUTIONS

Despite operational problems, mostly due to reduced funding, UNHCR was able to accomplish its initial strategic objectives: to ensure that refugees gain access to asylum, are treated in accordance with internationally established standards and assisted to find durable solutions. However, refugee welfare was adversely affected by the Office's funding crisis during the year. In Southern Africa, UNHCR was repeatedly forced to revise its refugee assistance budgets in order to identify possible savings.

On a regional level, various initiatives were undertaken, some with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), to address a number of refugee questions of regional interest as well as broader political questions pertinent to refugees. Workshops on international protection and refugee law were held for government officials and NGOs in Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia to enhance knowledge of asylum and protection issues. Despite these efforts, asylum applications remained pending in a number of countries, often because of insufficient institutional capacity to end the backlog. A significant improvement was noted in Botswana, where procedures were streamlined so that newly arrived asylum-seekers could rapidly transfer to Dukwi refugee camp. Another major achievement was in South Africa, where the regulations implementing

the 1998 Refugee Act were issued and a new eligibility procedure came into force. Accordingly, a project was being mounted to clear as many as 30,000 asylum applications.

Many of the long-staying Angolan and Congolese refugees in the region have managed to integrate into their host communities pending their return home. Across the region, progress was made in promoting self-reliance among refugees through income generation and vocational skills training programmes: in Zambia, for example, 28,320 Angolan refugees were able to produce enough food to feed themselves and enjoy a significant surplus. Prospects for voluntary repatriation, however, were slim: the repatriation of Angolan refugees remained suspended and the repatriation of Congolese refugees was not encouraged, given the lack of progress in the implementation of the Lusaka peace agreement during 2000.

OPERATIONS

In 2000, the Regional Directorate for Southern Africa was run by 11 international and 13 national staff. It oversaw operations in 14 countries. UNHCR's operations in **Angola**, **Zambia** and **South Africa** are described in separate chapters.

In **Botswana**, the arrival of new Namibian refugees from the Caprivi region (including some who had repatriated in 1999) compelled UNHCR to suspend repatriation for this group of refugees. UNHCR's activities sought durable solutions and basic humanitarian assistance for the new arrivals. UNHCR continued to assist Namibian refugees at Dukwi refugee camp with food, relief items (blankets, mattresses, clothing and toiletries) and education (127 primary and 37 secondary school students). The number of Somali refugees was also on the increase. They were not able to obtain refugee status because of the "country of first asylum" principle as applied by the Government of Botswana. While continuing its interventions for a more flexible application of this principle, UNHCR had to resort to resettlement in certain cases in the absence of viable alternatives. In all, 57 vulnerable people were resettled, but this had the unintended effect of attracting more asylum-seekers from other countries, hopeful that they too would be resettled. About 40 Somali refugee children were registered at the primary school in Dukwi refugee camp and a further six at the educational resource centre. Some 30 adult refugees attended English courses. Cases of malnutrition were cut by half among infants, although they still remain prevalent among the adults. Vaccination coverage increased from 60 per cent to 95 per cent. UNHCR



supported a number of retail outlets run by Somali refugees. Other refugees were engaged in subsistence crop production and commercial poultry-farming. Angolan refugees continued to receive basic humanitarian assistance at the camp. A reception facility was established at Shakawe and a registration centre at Maun to assist newly arrived Angolan asylum-seekers. The planned naturalisation of some 250 Angolan refugees who arrived in Botswana two decades ago was delayed for administrative reasons (although all refugees had received certificates of land ownership).

In the Indian Ocean islands of **Comoros**, **Madagascar**, **Mauritius**, and **Seychelles**, UNHCR continued to rely on UNDP to help refugees recognised under its mandate. Resettlement was in most cases the only measure that could be pursued. Progress was slow on efforts to promote accession to the international refugee and statelessness instruments, enact national legislation and establish eligibility procedures, as relatively few asylum-seekers are arriving in the islands and the matter is not considered urgent. A similar situation exists in **Lesotho**, where UNDP continued to monitor UNHCR's interests, particularly the welfare of some 30 refugees who are integrating locally.

In **Malawi**, UNHCR's main objective was to provide international protection to refugees and asylum-seekers while promoting durable solutions. In 2000, UNHCR assisted 3,900 refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly from the Great Lakes region. All refugees and asylum-seekers reside at Dzeleka camp, where they have access to safe drinking water, basic sanitation (pit latrines), health services (at the camp clinic and the district hospital) and counselling. Refugee children of primary school age attended the camp's recently enlarged school, while refugee children of secondary school age went to state schools in the area. Refugees were encouraged to participate in camp activities (for example grass cutting and shelter construction), and UNHCR continued to stress, in camp management meetings, the need to involve women in refugee committees to address the specific needs of women and children (such as food distribution and health issues). To help conserve the environment, UNHCR provided paraffin for cooking and lighting. However, refugees continued to search for firewood and charcoal for small businesses such as bakeries and food stalls. Although 231 families received seed and fertilisers, many refugees are not yet fully self-sufficient, particularly those who arrived recently (longer-staying refugees shared their limited produce with the newcomers). Meanwhile, the Office continued to provide rice and vegetable oil, and an NGO partner supplied other basic food commodities. On a less positive note,

UNHCR failed in its efforts to overturn regulations restricting the refugees' freedom of movement and access to employment. Their plight was compounded by the slow process of refugee status determination. At year's end, of 3,900 persons of concern in the country, 2,940 still had no status.

The creation of a more favourable environment for the local integration of refugees in **Mozambique** was a major objective, but the Government had neither the capacity nor the determination to bring that to fruition, as evidenced by the slow pace of refugee status determination. Local integration was made all but impossible by mounting xenophobia, the tight job market, the lack of educational opportunities for adults, and the circumstances in which refugees and asylum-seekers currently live (without identity cards, for example). Meanwhile, UNHCR provided food, household items and medical care for refugees and asylum-seekers. Uniforms and school supplies were also given to refugee students. In an effort to promote self-reliance, agriculture inputs such as seeds, tools and fertilisers were distributed to refugees involved in crop production.

The refugee population in **Namibia** increased from 7,350 refugees in January to 17,740 in December 2000. UNHCR's two main objectives were to ensure the provision of basic humanitarian assistance to Angolan refugees and to promote durable solutions through local integration, voluntary repatriation and resettlement. Inadequate funding and the resulting lack of staff, however, limited UNHCR's capacity to intervene, particularly in the area of refugee protection. This was one of the major challenges during the year, due to the continued insecurity in Kavango and Caprivi provinces. Many refugee families were split up at the border and some Angolans who had spontaneously settled in northern Namibia for many years were deported. UNHCR temporarily deployed additional protection staff to oversee the proceedings of the immigration tribunal and although deportations did briefly cease, they resumed shortly thereafter. A tripartite agreement signed by the Government, UNHCR and a national NGO will require the latter to conduct preliminary interviews with claimants before the national eligibility committee makes a decision.

With regard to material assistance, UNHCR distributed food to the refugees in Osire camp until the end of March, when WFP took over (UNHCR continued to provide dried fish, blankets, mattresses, pots, buckets, stoves and paraffin). Ninety-nine per cent of the 10,000 children registered were vaccinated against tuberculosis, tetanus, whooping cough, measles and polio, but health staff and facilities in Osire camp were often unable to provide ade-

quate general health care for the refugees, even after the expansion of the health clinic by an NGO partner and the deployment of an ambulance later in the year. A network of peer educators worked with young people to provide information on family planning, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. With regard to shelter, 1,165 tents (465 procured by UNHCR and 700 donated by a governmental donor) were distributed, and refugees were given building materials for the construction of 285 houses. Six hundred family latrines and 43 public latrines were built and maintained. Two 95,000-litre water tanks were erected to supply 37 water points, six of them powered by solar energy. In the education sector, the increasing number of school children put the programme under severe strain, with only 28 teachers for 1,915 children, (a student to teacher ratio of 68 to one). Plans to construct an extra 18 classrooms to alleviate the congestion in the primary school had to be scaled down to only four due to a shortage of funds, which also prevented UNHCR from providing much-needed teacher training. Nonetheless, more than 500 refugees were able to attend secondary school and 25 students, including four girls, benefited from the DAFI university scholarship programme (one of the students completed a degree, 23 progressed to the next level and only one dropped out). Forty-nine students were also helped to attend vocational training courses.

Increasing numbers of migrants used **Swaziland** as a springboard to other countries in the region, particularly South Africa. The presence of these migrants furnished a serious challenge, not only for law-enforcers, but also to the principle of asylum. It tended to aggravate xenophobia within local communities and undermine the concept of regional solidarity. Nevertheless, the Government remained committed to refugee protection. One of the main effects of UNHCR's advocacy role was the endorsement by the Executive Cabinet of the Draft Refugee Bill (drafted with UNHCR's assistance) to be submitted to Parliament in 2001. In terms of basic assistance to refugees, UNHCR provided a monthly food basket of maize meal, beans, oil, fish and salt, as well as basic relief items as required. Clean and safe water was provided to refugee camp residents, and latrines were kept in good condition. Access to education improved, compared to the previous year, with 119 students benefiting from UNHCR's assistance. In addition, UNHCR and UNAIDS worked closely with a national refugee youth association on an initiative aimed at raising awareness of the danger of HIV/AIDS.

In **Zimbabwe**, UNHCR's operations were influenced by several events, most notably the violence in the aftermath of the June elections, the unprecedented rise in the cost of living and the natural disaster caused by cyclone Eline,

which provoked floods that cut off access to Tongogara refugee camp and caused damage valued in excess of USD 150,000. Protection remained at the forefront of UNHCR's work, as asylum-seekers were subjected to prolonged periods of detention. Nonetheless, UNHCR's programme in Zimbabwe yielded tangible positive results during the year 2000. Every month an average of 200 asylum-seekers had their applications processed. To support refugees in their efforts to integrate locally, 117 individuals were trained in market gardening and 150 in enterprise management, while another 2,000 were able to sustain themselves through their own businesses, cross-border trade or other gainful employment. A group credit scheme was established for 200 low-income persons living in Tongogara camp. These and other income generation activities allowed the refugees to improve their living conditions. As they became self-sufficient, they were gradually removed from the food distribution list. In addition, basic assistance activities continued throughout the year: food rations were distributed to 700 beneficiaries on a monthly basis and an emergency kit comprising cooking sets, a blanket and plastic buckets was distributed to asylum-seekers. Refugee children attended primary school and an individual allowance was given to pregnant women to help them to acquire appropriate clothing. UNHCR is supporting environmentally friendly systems of agriculture in urban and rural settings in Zimbabwe. Training sessions were held for several hundred refugees and local farmers, with visible results in terms of improved yields, soil and water conservation and greater nutrient retention. Schools were also involved and a number of income generation activities developed around this principle. Encouraged by the refugees' positive reactions to good results and sound environmental management, UNHCR is seeking to extend this experience to other countries in Africa and beyond.

FUNDING

One of the most important obstacles to the achievement of UNHCR's objectives in the Southern African region was the funding crisis. All offices in the region were obliged to conduct several prioritisation exercises, which resulted in the deferral of a number of important activities. Funding sometimes failed to match needs, leading to serious concern about the quality and quantity of services provided to refugees, including in the critical area of protection. On several occasions, the region's leaders overtly criticised what they regard as the disparity between assistance for refugees in Africa and that for refugees in other continents, in terms of availability, appropriateness and speed of delivery.

Voluntary Contributions - Restricted (USD)					
Donor	Earmarking ¹	Annual Programme Budget		Supplementary Programme Budget	
		Income	Contribution	Income	Contribution
Canada	Zambia	137,931	137,931	0	0
	Namibia	137,931	137,931	0	0
Finland	Angola	0	0	145,479	145,479
	Namibia	72,739	72,739	0	0
Germany	Angola	0	0	205,246	205,246
Italy	Zambia	120,893	120,893	0	0
Japan	Angola	560,000	560,000	1,053,490	1,053,490
	Botswana	160,000	160,000	0	0
	Malawi	130,000	130,000	0	0
	Mozambique	100,000	100,000	0	0
	Namibia	210,000	210,000	0	0
	South Africa	823,000	823,000	0	0
	Southern Africa	30,000	30,000	0	0
	Swaziland	70,000	70,000	0	0
	Zambia	840,000	840,000	0	0
	Zimbabwe	100,000	100,000	0	0
	Sweden	Angola	0	0	563,063
Southern Africa		225,225	225,225	0	0
Switzerland	Zambia	266,667	266,667	0	0
United Kingdom	Zambia	1,428,571	1,428,571	0	0
United States of America	Angola	450,000	450,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
	Botswana	150,000	150,000	0	0
	Malawi	120,000	120,000	0	0
	Namibia	1,400,000	1,400,000	0	0
	Southern Africa	450,000	450,000	0	0
	Zambia	3,000,000	3,000,000	0	0
European Commission	Namibia	138,460	138,464	0	0
	Zambia	1,717,137	1,845,722	0	0
<i>Action Réfugiés</i> (FRA)	Mozambique	24	24	0	0
<i>Deutsche Stiftung</i> (GFR)	Angola	0	0	177,880	177,880
<i>Stichting Vluchteling</i> (NET)	Zambia	110,550	110,550	0	0
Private Donors Italy	Angola	0	0	2,701	2,701
Sub-total		12,949,128	13,077,717	4,147,859	4,147,859
UNF, Ted Turner (USA)	South Africa / TF	151,500	151,500	0	0
Total²		13,100,628	13,229,217	4,147,859	4,147,859

¹For more information on the various earmarkings, please refer to the Donor Profiles.

²Total funds available for obligation in the region also included unearmarked voluntary contributions, broadly earmarked contributions, opening balances and adjustments.

Budget and Expenditure (USD)						
Country	Revised Budget			Expenditure		
	Annual Programme Budget and Trust Funds	Supplementary Programme Budget	Total	Annual Programme Budget and Trust Funds	Supplementary Programme Budget	Total
Angola	4,177,207	6,727,692	10,904,899	4,056,239	3,512,581	7,568,820
Botswana	1,358,404	0	1,358,404	1,136,002	0	1,136,002
Malawi	1,213,857	0	1,213,857	1,042,234	0	1,042,234
Mozambique	1,103,190	0	1,103,190	1,076,140	0	1,076,140
Namibia	3,495,602	0	3,495,602	3,370,949	0	3,370,949
South Africa	3,714,200	0	3,714,200	3,318,205	0	3,318,205
Swaziland	416,214	0	416,214	377,833	0	377,833
Zambia	12,596,300	0	12,596,300	11,376,540	0	11,376,540
Zimbabwe	983,188	0	983,188	932,340	0	932,340
Regional Projects ¹	263,293	0	263,293	261,000	0	261,000
Regional Director's Office (South Africa)	1,737,608	0	1,737,608	1,731,025	0	1,731,025
Liaison Unit at Headquarters ²	631,693	0	631,693	631,533	0	631,533
Total	31,690,756	6,727,692	38,418,448	29,310,040	3,512,581	32,822,621

¹Covers scholarships for refugee students.

²Includes commitment at Headquarters amounting to USD 490.