

Uganda

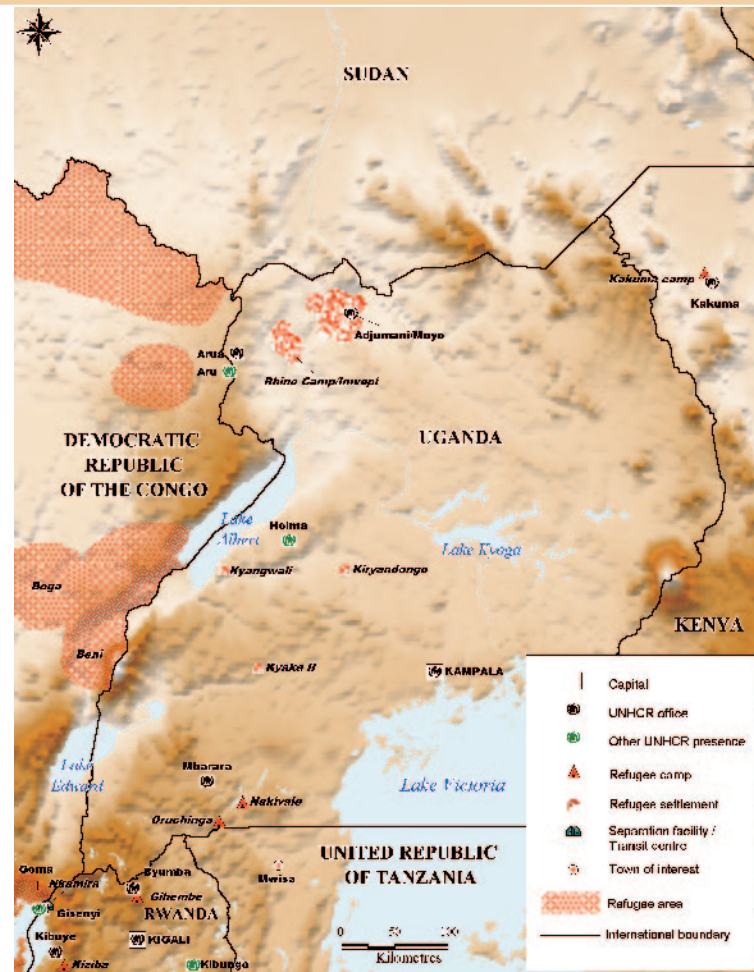
Main Objectives

- Provide international protection and assistance to refugees from various countries in Uganda and pursue durable solutions for them, including voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement.
- Help Sudanese refugees attain increased self-reliance and work towards the integration of refugee services into the national service structure, in collaboration with the Government of Uganda, implementing partners and development agencies.
- Support urban refugees with the necessary assistance and ensure that they achieve a certain level of self-reliance.

Working Environment

Recent Developments

In March 2002, Uganda and Sudan agreed to engage in operations against the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in southern Sudan. The agreement allowed for the temporary deployment of troops of the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) in southern Sudan. When the UPDF military action, code named "Operation Iron Fist", was launched in April, it was thought that this might cause people to flee from the hostilities into northern Uganda. UNHCR drew up a contingency plan to prepare for a possible refugee influx. However, the mass outflow of civilians never materialised.



Instead, northern Uganda was infiltrated by LRA rebels, leading to widespread insecurity and brutal attacks on local communities, refugees and IDPs as well as on United Nations and other humanitarian agencies operating in the area. Refugees were deliberately targeted on several occasions. In the most serious attack, on 5 August 2002, some 50 people were killed and 24,000 Sudanese refugees were forced to flee their settlement in Achol-pii.

Apart from looting and destroying vehicles and other property, the rebels announced in a letter that they would directly target refugees and UNHCR staff, and that all refugees and UNHCR must leave northern Uganda. Subsequent attacks in Adjumani and Maaji, on 9 and 13 September respectively, displaced another 6,000 refugees.

Planning Figures

Population	Jan. 2003	Dec. 2003
Sudanese Refugees	170,000	157,000
Rwandan Refugees	25,000	22,000
Congolese Refugees (DRC)	11,000	10,400
Other Refugees	270	290
Total	206,270	189,690

Total Requirements: USD 15,774,204

UNHCR took immediate action to assist and relocate the newly displaced refugees. While the 6,000 displaced persons in the northwest found refuge in safer refugee settlements within Moyo district, the 24,000 Achol-pii refugees were temporarily hosted in a transit centre in Kiryandongo. Since then, 8,800 of them have been transferred to Kyangwale refugee settlement, where they have been assigned land and are receiving multi-sectoral assistance from UNHCR and its partners. The remaining 15,200 refugees are due to be moved from Kyriandongo to more permanent sites, as soon as agreement has been reached with the Government as to their final destination. They continue to be assisted at the centre while awaiting relocation.

During the first half of 2002, some 8,400 new arrivals were recorded in refugee settlements in Uganda, with the largest increase noted in Nakivale camp, which took in 2,900 people. Most of these were Rwandan Hutus, who had previously been refugees in the United Republic of Tanzania. In the north, 2,079 newly arrived Sudanese sought refuge in Adjumani.

With regard to UNHCR operations, a series of roundtable discussions held in 2002 in Adjumani, Moyo and Arua districts led to an agreement with the district authorities on the basic principles of the Self-Reliance Strategy (SRS), preparing the ground for the further implementation of activities.

Constraints

Unfavourable weather conditions continued to hamper crop production by refugee communities – thus reducing their self-reliance. The first harvest (from the March to July crop season) failed to meet even the most pessimistic expectations. The dispiriting effect of the shortfall was compounded by the overall shortage of agricultural land available to refugees. As refugees' economic activities in northern Uganda are limited to subsistence farming and small-scale trading, agricultural output correlates closely with the overall well-being of refugee communities. In addition, the escalation of violence in several northern districts and the subsequent displacement of refugees have seriously compromised the past and future achievements of the SRS in those areas.

Strategy

Protection and Solutions

In view of repeated setbacks in the Machakos Peace Process, conditions in the Sudan are unlikely to become conducive to large-scale voluntary repatriation in the immediate future. Nevertheless, UNHCR will continue to systematically update its contingency plans to reflect the latest developments and pursue durable solutions where possible. In this context, UNHCR will continue to facilitate the resettlement in third countries of refugees who meet the relevant criteria. The Office will furthermore encourage the Government of Uganda to maintain its liberal refugee policy and to keep its borders open. Efforts will be made to build capacity among Ugandan officials dealing with cases requiring individual RSD.

Assistance

UNHCR's main focus in 2003 will be to ensure basic assistance for refugees and to encourage the integration of refugee services into national structures in line with the SRS. In some cases, services for refugees have already been incorporated into the District Development Plans. The SRS, which aims to improve the well-being of both refugees and host communities, will prepare the refugees for their eventual return and successful reintegration by giving them skills and knowledge as well as confidence in themselves. Refugees will be treated no differently from nationals and will share responsibilities with their local communities. An evaluation of previous SRS activities is planned for the coming year; this should help to point up how the programme might be adjusted or improved. As the success of the strategy depends to a large extent on the co-operation of the local authorities involved in its implementation, it is important to carry out SRS sensitisation activities and to build the capacity of the relevant administrative departments in refugee-hosting districts. This will be done jointly by the Government of Uganda and UNHCR. Emphasis will also be placed on the strengthening of refugee self-management, and UNHCR will continue to encourage development agencies to incorporate refugee-affected areas into their comprehensive strategy.

The participation of refugee women in agricultural production and smallholder associations will be supported. Women will furthermore benefit from training in basic management principles and other small business activities. UNHCR will continue to promote the participation of refugee women in management committees and their assumption of leadership positions. Education campaigns on the rights of women will continue, targeting both the refugee and local communities.

Education in general will be a priority (especially primary education), with interventions addressing issues of access and quality, as well as the construction and improvement of infrastructure. Additional efforts will be made to increase school attendance of refugee girls and to integrate specific girls' education issues into ongoing teacher training programmes. Secondary education and vocational and skills training will also continue with an emphasis on promoting girls' participation. At the same time, UNHCR will support non-formal education and social and recreational activities for refugee children and youth. Community-based nursery and pre-school programmes will continue, and children who have experienced trauma will receive specialist counselling. A recent initiative in refugee-hosting areas, the School Feeding Programme (i.e. school meals) organised by WFP, UNHCR, NGOs, and the District Education Offices, will continue in 2003. Its success is more than simply nutritional insofar as it can be seen to encourage, indeed enable, children to attend classes regularly. In line with UNHCR's central policy of zero tolerance with regard to sexual exploitation of children and all forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), the Office will undertake a range of education and sensitisation activities.

Both refugees and the host communities will benefit from primary health care services as well as a variety of reproductive health care and HIV/AIDS activities.

Environmental education and awareness campaigns will be intensified, with a focus on increased



Newly transferred refugees arrive at Kiryondongo. UNHCR / S. Mann

use of fuel-saving stoves and the establishment and maintenance of tree nurseries. It is hoped that these activities will help prevent further environmental degradation in areas affected by the presence of large numbers of refugees. The environment programme, which has already been expanded to the southwestern refugee settlements, will be maintained throughout 2003.

UNHCR will make improvements to the local infrastructure of refugee-hosting areas through a range of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). These projects will not only ensure better services for refugees, but also promote and maintain good relations with the local populations.

Desired Impact

Through SRS activities, the majority of the refugees in the settlements should achieve food self-sufficiency and overall food security. The integration of social services for refugees and nationals also implies that refugees will eventually contribute the same as nationals as part of a cost-sharing scheme. This will go a long way towards restoring refugees' self-esteem.

A greater involvement of development agencies in the SRS will further strengthen the programme, ensure the sustainability of measures and allow for a smooth transition from humanitarian to development assistance.

Education activities are intended to guarantee access to schooling for all school-aged refugee children and reduce dropout rates from primary school – especially among girls.

Positive changes in attitude towards the environment will be achieved through environmental education and awareness campaigns for all refugee populations.

UNHCR's protection training workshops for relevant government and law enforcement officials, as well as NGO staff, should improve their understanding of refugee matters and the work of UNHCR.

Offices
Kampala
Arua
Kyangwali
Mbarara
Pakelle / Adjumani

Partners
Government Agencies
District Directorate of Health Services (Adjumani districts, Arua, and Moyo)
District Forestry Office (Adjumani districts, Arua and Moyo)
District Education Office (Adjumani districts, Arua and Moyo)
Office of the Prime Minister
NGOs
<i>Aktion Afrika Hilfe</i>
<i>Action Contre la Faim</i>
Integrated Rural Development Initiatives
Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development
African Development and Emergency Organisation
African Humanitarian Action
Danish Assistance to the Self-reliance Strategy
Equatoria Civic Fund
Finnish Refugee Council
German Development Services
International Aid Sweden
International Rescue Committee
Jesuit Refugee Services
Lutheran World Federation
Ockenden International
Transcultural Psychosocial Organisation

Organisation and Implementation

Management Structure

UNHCR's operations in Uganda are co-ordinated by a country office in Kampala, supported by three field offices in Arua, Pakelle/Adjumani and Mbarara as well as a satellite office in Hoima. The field office in Kitgum was closed following the flight and relocation of Achol-pii refugees. The Uganda programme will be managed by a total of 94 staff members.

Co-ordination

UNHCR is a member of the United Nations Country Team under the leadership of the UN Resident Co-ordinator. The Office takes part in the preparation of CCA, the CAP and the UNDAF process. UNHCR maintains close working relations with relevant government authorities, UN sister agencies and national and international NGOs.

Budget (USD)	
Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	2,248,209
Community Services	395,844
Crop Production	419,206
Domestic Needs	188,539
Education	2,127,767
Fisheries	16,474
Forestry	450,418
Health	1,652,547
Income Generation	91,392
Legal Assistance	151,297
Livestock	86,137
Operational Support (to Agencies)	1,927,776
Sanitation	114,029
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	852,000
Transport / Logistics	2,669,852
Water	321,022
Total Operations	13,712,509
Programme Support	2,061,695
Total	15,774,204