

EAST TIMOR

INITIAL OBJECTIVES

- Promote voluntary repatriation to East Timor in safety and dignity and meet the special needs of the most vulnerable.
- Contribute to reintegration through assistance projects that are directly linked to the protection of the most vulnerable.
- Seek an effective transition from initial reintegration assistance to longer-term community rehabilitation, development and reconciliation.
- Support national and local-level peace and reconciliation programmes.
- Prepare a longer-term strategy to ensure that an independent East Timor enacts appropriate refugee legislation and accedes to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS

Voluntary Repatriation

As of 30 June 2001, some 182,000 East Timorese refugees had repatriated to East Timor. Over 70 per cent had returned in organised voluntary repatriation movements facilitated by IOM/UNHCR. Of that number almost 7,200 returned in 2001. UNHCR has been continuing to play a major role in co-ordinating various national and international partners at district, sub-district and village levels, to ensure that repatriation is carried out in safety and dignity.

UNHCR's primary partners in facilitating voluntary repatriation include the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the Peace-Keeping Force (PKF), the United Nations Civilian Police (CivPol), the National Council of Resistance (CNRT), UN Military Observers and NGOs. In addition, in collaboration with Civil Military Affairs (CMA/PKF), CivPol, IOM, and UNTAET, UNHCR developed standard

operational procedures for voluntary repatriation, outlining the respective roles and responsibilities of the concerned organisations. Since May 2001, the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) established in late 2000 in anticipation of a mass return and to assist with co-ordination among relevant actors has been reduced but it has the possibility to be reactivated should returns increase.

Since the Atambua tragedy of 6 September 2000 and subsequent withdrawal of all UN staff from West Timor, UNHCR has not been in a position to fully facilitate voluntary repatriation movements nor to directly monitor the refugee situation in West Timor. UNHCR's primary counterpart in West Timor has been the Indonesian Refugee Taskforce (SATTGAS) which, in co-operation with the Indonesian Army (TNI), has been responsible for organising repatriation movements. Following a Security Council recommendation, the United Nations Security Co-ordinator (UNSECOORD) decided to conduct a security assessment mission in July to West Timor to review the security situation in that province.

Reintegration

UNHCR's main reintegration activity in East Timor remains the shelter programme. As of 30 June, some 32,000 out of a total of 35,000 shelter units had been delivered to often-remote rural locations throughout East Timor. The shelter kits comprise corrugated roofing, timber, nails and concrete. Other NGO's are providing an additional 15,000 shelter kits, but with UNHCR's programme close to completion, a shelter "gap" has yet to be resolved. A World Bank Trust Fund assessment is due to report back on the extent of the unmet shelter needs in August 2001. UNHCR has highlighted to donors and international development agencies that urban areas in Dili, Baucau, Los Palos and Suai have not received any shelter

assistance. Furthermore, no provision has been made for meeting the shelter needs of future returnees from West Timor.

In addition to the shelter programme, UNHCR has implemented a total of 32 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs). These projects which aim to assist in the reintegration of returnees into their communities should be completed by September 2001. Returnees continue to benefit from 'repatriation kits' which comprise kitchen sets, blankets, jerry cans, mosquito nets, sarongs, sleeping mats, buckets, plastic sheeting and 10 KGs of rice (provided by the WFP).

Although the number of returnees who have faced rejection by their communities upon return has been relatively low, it could be expected that with the return of more hard line pro-autonomy supporters, the number of cases with reintegration problems would increase. UNHCR has been working with community leaders and district refugee task forces to support the return and reintegration of refugees in safety and dignity. In sensitive cases, UNHCR co-operates closely with CivPol, UNTAET Human Rights Officers and community structures to facilitate returns. Although the priority is to assist returnees reach their communities as soon as possible, when this is not possible, a number of safe houses have been established to provide temporary accommodation and security.

UNHCR in co-operation with other agencies has held a number of reconciliation meetings and workshops. A national consultant completed a study on traditional conflict resolution mechanisms in each of the districts. A comprehensive study was also undertaken in each sub-district to estimate the total number of East Timorese remaining outside the territory. The study concluded that there were some 84,000 East Timorese 'missing' or unaccounted for.

UNHCR has held several meetings with relevant Cabinet members to assess the likelihood of an independent East Timor acceding to the 1951 Convention and 1967

Protocol. Initial impressions are that East Timor may be willing to accede soon after independence. A draft ad interim refugee determination procedure is being prepared.

In light of the imminent phasing down/out of UNHCR presence in some districts, a number of brainstorming sessions have taken place at the district level. These sessions seek to ensure that there is a continuation in the communities in the defence of certain principles guiding the reception and the reintegration of the returnees in safety and dignity once the international presence is reduced.

UNHCR's protection strategy includes a civic education campaign engaging the most active sectors of civil society, including youth groups, the religious community, UNTAET and non-governmental organisations. Co-ordination and regular dialogue between UNHCR and the components of UNTAET remains imperative so as to ensure complementary policies and practices for returns, returnee reintegration and reconciliation processes.

A major constraint in the reconciliation process is that while the great majority of the population favours reconciliation with justice, investigations and prosecution have been hampered by a lack of human (including interpreters), technical, financial and logistical resources. After lengthy and intense discussions, a draft regulation for the establishment of the Reception, Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been prepared for approval by the Cabinet and the National Council.

The repatriation and reintegration of returnees has been supported through a significant UNHCR multi-sectoral programme of protection-based and community-sensitive assistance. Recognising and responding to the massive needs in East Timor, UNHCR has also provided humanitarian assistance to many thousands of internally displaced persons. As a policy decision, this was translated into UNHCR's community-based programme

that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable.

Food support for vulnerable persons was provided by WFP through their vulnerable feeding programme with UNHCR Community Services recommendations in specific cases. The programme was terminated in June 2001, although the provision of food to institutions (orphanages, boarding schools, hospitals etc) continues.

It is clear that many hundreds of Timorese women and girls were subjected to physical and mental torture, including rape at the hands of militiamen. Many were taken as “war prizes” to West Timor. Some have returned to their communities, many pregnant and deeply traumatised. UNHCR’s psycho-social assistance programmes are designed to support such victims, and UNHCR places the emphasis on partnership with national and local NGO’s to provide counselling and specialist assistance.

UNHCR has provided direct support to the seriously mentally ill returnees and works to strengthen community-based support groups. A mobile psychiatric support unit including a doctor and nurses was established in East Timor to provide counselling and to prescribe medication where needed.

UNHCR child tracing programme, in collaboration with its implementing partner, has reunited over 500 children with their families to date. Some 400 children in West Timor still remain registered in addition to an unknown number of children who are located in other parts of Indonesia. UNHCR missions to visit East Timorese children in Indonesia were subject to intimidation and harassment. UNHCR continues to receive reports of children being 'relocated' from refugee camps in West Timor to other locations in Indonesia.

UNHCR continues to conduct a mass information campaign in both East and West Timor, with the objective of promoting refugee returns and reconciliation. To promote the dissemination of objective information amongst refugees in West Timor UNHCR supported several 'Go and See' visits by refugee leaders and Indonesian journalists to East Timor. These visits were in addition to the on-going mass information programme which utilised local radio and newspaper, videos, pamphlets, posters, as well as, community activities such as painting, theatre, songs and group discussions.

Progress as measured against selected indicators

INDICATORS	PROGRESS
Number of separated children identified.	Over 500 children identified in the first half of 2001; 133 children registered for reunification; Identification ongoing including missions to orphanages in Java.
Number of children reunified with their families.	Total of 66 children reunified with their families.
Increased involvement of local NGOs.	Increased awareness among the population of the special services available for women noted by a significant number of reports of violence both to the local organisations and CivPol.
Decrease overall level of intimidation directed at returnees.	Among 7,200 returns during the first six months of the year, the number that have faced rejection (in a violent or non-violent manner) by the communities has been relatively low.
Reintegration/material assistance to returnees.	A total of 32,000 out of a target of 35,000 kits delivered to East Timor. Distribution ongoing. Final distribution will be finalised by September 2001.
Number of QIP projects that directly assist beneficiaries	36 UNHCR-funded Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) have been approved and commenced implementation by UNHCR Implementing Partners and other communities through UNHCR Field Offices.

REVISED OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES FOR JULY-DECEMBER

UNHCR's overall objective, from July to December 2001, will continue to be focussed on facilitating the voluntary return of East Timorese and their reception and reintegration within a climate of full security, safety and dignity. Although the exact number of refugees remaining in West Timor is not clear, it is the opinion of refugee leaders, the Indonesian authorities and UNHCR that the vast majority, still languishing in refugee camps, wish to return.

Despite a number of initiatives by UNHCR and UNTAET to encourage refugees to return before the East Timor elections on 30 August 2001, it is apparent that many refugees wish to take stock of the security situation in their home-land before returning. The process of East Timor's steps towards independence (e.g. elections) and the directions provided by their community leaders will influence their ultimate decision.

The original objectives outlined in the Global Appeal will continue to guide UNHCR's

operations for the rest of 2001. Following a review of UNHCR activities in East Timor and a slower than anticipated return of refugees, the field offices will be maintained until the end of 2001. They had initially been scheduled to be phased down by mid-2001. By the end of September 2001, UNHCR's shelter programme will be completed as will, the provision of material assistance to returnees. The remaining UNHCR offices will then focus on protection monitoring of returnees. As outlined above, the priority for UNHCR operations in the second half of 2001 will be to ensure returnee protection and finalise the shelter and material assistance programmes. National systems and procedures to manage future returns will be strengthened in line with the phase-down of UNHCR. This will include assisting an independent East Timor in enacting appropriate refugee legislation and promoting its future accession to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. UNHCR will continue to support national and local peace and reconciliation programmes, in addition to ad hoc voluntary repatriation programmes from West Timor.

FINANCIAL DATA (USD)

	Initial Budget	Revised Budget	Total Funds Available ¹	Total Funds Obligated
APB	6,671,827	9,406,923	3,000,860	3,777,300

¹Includes income from unrestricted contributions, income from contributions restricted to the regional, sub-regional and/or country level, opening balance and adjustments.