UNHCR Operational Highlights for May 2014

- Completion of Child Protection and Best Interest Assessment Training in Umkulu Refugee Camp
- UNHCR Eritrea signed Annual Work Plan for 2014 with the National Union of Eritrean Women for a Joint Programme on Gender and Advancement of Women in Eritrea
- Inauguration of Umkulu Demonstration Center for Urban and Peri-Urban Horticulture
- Conduction of Child Protection Training in Umkulu Refugee Camp

Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Country as of 31 May 2014 (by country of origin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN</th>
<th>Refugees</th>
<th>Asylum Seekers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>3,056</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,163</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Population (Stateless, IDPs, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>TOTAL NUMBER</th>
<th>ASSISTED BY UNHCR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others of Concern</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tot. Budget</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNHCR Operation in 2014 (in USD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BY POPULATION</th>
<th>EXCOM approved BUDGET</th>
<th>Earmarked Contributions</th>
<th>Short fall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refugees</td>
<td>4,770,398</td>
<td>11,600</td>
<td>4,758,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returnees</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDPs</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tot. Budget</td>
<td>4,770,398</td>
<td>11,600</td>
<td>4,758,798</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GENERAL SITUATION

In 2012, the State of Eritrea (GoSE) signed the 1969 OAU Convention on the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, but has not yet ratified it. It has also not acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. Eritrea does not yet have a comprehensive and cohesive domestic legal framework to regulate refugee matters. State-owned asylum and refugee status determination procedures are also not yet in place. Access to asylum and protection of the State of Eritrea for non-Somali asylum seekers is currently not open in practice. Protracted prima facie Somali refugee caseload enjoys a level of protection that is overall satisfactory. UNHCR in Eritrea supports the GoSE in providing protection and advocates for the appropriate level of protection to be realized. The Agency provides protection and assistance to approximately 3,200 refugees mainly Somali, Sudanese and South Sudanese. Somali refugees
are located in Umkulu Camp near the port city of Massawa in the Northern Red Sea Region, whereas others reside in urban centers.

Despite being in Eritrea for almost two decades, refugees have not yet found durable solutions. Furthermore, their stay in the country is subject to a few limitations, particularly in relation to access to formal labor market, which directly impact on their level of self-reliance. While non-Somali groups enjoy a higher level of integration (although, formally they are no longer recognized as refugees by the State of Eritrea), the camp-based Somali refugees are still far from realizing their potential. Their wellbeing has been ensured by provision of food and non-food assistance, as well as by UNHCR-funded basic services in health, education, water, sanitation/hygiene and shelter. Services and assistance are provided by UNHCR through its implementing partner, the governmental refugee agency Office for Refugee Affairs (ORA).

In 2011, a reflection on the strategic direction of the UNHCR Operation in Eritrea resulted in reorienting programmes from protracted Care & Maintenance to solutions, socio-economic integration and self-reliance. This strategic shift aims at restoring the dignity of refugees and finding solutions to their plight. Based on recently conducted surveys, a cash programme has been launched, complemented by revised in-kind food assistance. Following these assessments, a multiyear livelihoods strategy and plan of action are being implemented to improve refugees’ stay in Eritrea while awaiting durable solutions, mainly resettlement and voluntary repatriation, to become available on a larger scale. Local integration opportunities, through increased socioeconomic integration, are also being explored with Governmental partners.

Other priority matters under discussion with the authorities are: support to fight human trafficking; status of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees; access to asylum and the development of state-owned eligibility procedures that are in line with international norms; improvement of in-country case-processing by resettlement countries (Canada, Australia, USA); capacity building plan on refugee matters for key governmental authorities.

DEVELOPMENTS

The Regional WASH Officer was on mission to Eritrea on 02 - 12 May 2014 to provide technical advice and recommendations and to redesign the water supply system of Umkulu Refugee Camp. Provision of water in Umkulu Camp presents a challenge as it is currently based on daily trucking of all water needs to the camp. The Officer met and discussed with UNHCR/ORA staff and Government counterparts alternative solutions to the current challenges. A recommendation and design works to renew the water system, through the activation of four boreholes drilled in the vicinity of the camp in 2013, have been submitted to UNHCR Eritrea in mid-May 2014.

A mission was undertaken by the Regional Support HUB to UNHCR Asmara on 29 May - 06 June 2014 to provide a support to the Operation on pre-Audit exercise and also to deliver a two day training to 25 UNHCR and ORA staff on Programme Management, Finance and Project Control and Monitoring and Supply on 02 - 03 June 2014.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Under the auspices of the Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) between UN Agencies and the State of Eritrea, UNHCR has signed an Annual Work Plan for 2014 with the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) for a Joint Programme on Gender and Advancement of Women in Eritrea. The Work Plan stipulates planned activities to be undertaken in Umkulu Refugee Camp by NUEW this year, such as training and awareness raising programmes for combating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, including Female Genital Mutilation.

In May 2014, UNHCR and ORA established an improved interagency coordination mechanism at the central and camp levels. The objective is to have a more unified vision and direction, to foster transparency and improve trust between the two agencies.
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN MAY 2014

Child Protection
UNHCR Eritrea conducted a Child Protection Training in Umkulu Refugee Camp on 21-22 May 2014. The training focused on disseminating the UNHCR framework for protection of children and interactive sessions to strategize on how to strengthen the community based child protection network in the camp. The training covered the six goals in the framework for child protection, their systems components, as well as expected outputs under each goal, and highlighted the principles to follow. The participants went through a recap of the main problems and forms of child abuse prevalent in the refugee camp and undertook a mapping of the existing community structures and networks that can be utilized better to protect children. The participants were also able to identify focal persons to lead targeted actions to strengthen the existing mechanism to protect children. In the overview of goals, participants agreed that initiatives under registration and documentation, Persons with Specific Needs (PSN) network and durable solutions were well covered. However, the need to maintain closer coordination with the PSN Working Group and registration and protection staff covering resettlement and voluntary repatriation were also emphasized.

Resettlement
Based on developed strategies to improve child-specific protection services in Umkulu Refugee Camp, training on Best Interest Assessment (BIA) was conducted on 14-16 May 2014 by the Protection team to UNHCR and ORA staff. As part of the training session, four Best Interest Assessment (BIA) interviews were conducted by the Protection Officer with Somali refugees bound for the next Emergency Transit Facility (ETF) movement. Following each BIA-interview a case conference was undertaken to review the specific issues in each different interview, as well as a review of the relevant UNHCR BIA guidelines. The Protection Officer took the opportunity to clarify any issues and provide direction as necessary. The orientation on how to undertake a comprehensive BIA is part of the enhanced strategy for the protection of children so that eventually all children identified to be at risk can have a completed BIA on file.

Education
A UNHCR/ORA joint Working Group was established during the reporting month to discuss key findings and recommendations made during the Umkulu Camp Education Assessment. The working group is expected to develop a draft action plan and set of recommendations to improve the education services provided and/or available to refugees, after consulting all the stakeholders involved in the process.

Family Tracing
In the continuous joint efforts by UNHCR and ICRC to assist separated families to maintain contacts, 9 Red Cross messages were received from ICRC for distribution to refugees.

Shelter Construction
The third phase of construction of shelters in Umkulu refugee camp is ongoing with the full participation of refugees. The total number of shelters expected to be completed at the end of June 2014 is 10 units, including 10 latrines. This will bring the total number of refugees benefiting from this project to 50. Most beneficiaries are single male/female headed households.

Livelihoods
As part of the livelihood project, UNHCR and the governmental refugee agency ORA have identified 20 Somali youth to be enrolled in computer skills training in Massawa.

The opening of Umkulu Camp Horticulture Demonstration Center took place on 28 May 2014. The Center was officially inaugurated by the Mayor of Massawa with the presence of the UNHCR Representative, Head of ORA, Administrators of Umkulu Sub-Zone and Somali community leaders. Currently, the Centre is providing training to 35 beneficiaries from the refugee and host community.

The Energy Saving Stove (ESS) Project funded by the Swiss Embassy in Sudan has officially started Mid May. Earlier, 10 Somali refugee women had been trained by an expert from the Ministry of Agriculture in constructing improved stoves on order to be able to train new beneficiaries. Under the ESS Project, these
refugee women will train an additional 60 women on construction and installment of the stoves for environmental protection, as well as contribution to household economy.

**Nutrition**

UNHCR Eritrea, with the collaboration of ORA, has fully mapped Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) cases in Umkulu Refugee Camp. The Health and Nutrition Coordinator, with the assistance of the Health and Nutrition Promoters from among the refugee community, will conduct continuous household visits to monitor the affected households, observe practices and take corrective actions.

A refresher information session was organized by UNHCR/ORA in Umkulu Camp to raise awareness on the potential risks of drinking unprocessed/raw milk. This effort is a cautionary follow-up to the Goat and Sheep Project that was launched in late 2013 for improved nutrition and livelihoods of refugee households, as the livestock have now started producing milk.

**Staffing:** 12 National and 3 International Staff, 2 International Consultants, 2 International UN Volunteers and 4 National Consultants