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BY THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL

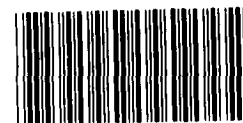
Report To The Congress

OF THE UNITED STATES

International Assistance To Refugees In Africa Can Be Improved

Political instability, economic difficulties, and social unrest in Africa have created one of the most severe refugee and displaced persons problems in the world. Although African asylum countries, the governments of other countries, and international organizations contribute greatly to resolving refugee problems, better planning, program guidance, and resource coordination by the principal international assistance organization--the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees--could increase the benefits derived by refugees from this assistance.

In this report, GAO makes recommendations directed at improving the U.S. evaluation of international assistance efforts to ensure more effective U.S. contributions. Further, GAO identifies conditions that should exist in asylum countries before programing direct U.S. development aid to refugees in asylum countries.



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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON D.C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

This is our report on how international assistance to refugees in Africa can be improved.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget; Secretary, Department of State; and the Administrator, Agency for International Development.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles A. Bowsher".

Comptroller General
of the United States

D I G E S T

More refugees and displaced persons are in Africa than any other continent in the world. Two to four million people need emergency relief, protection, ongoing care, and assistance in arranging for their return home or resettlement elsewhere.

African countries, which are among the least developed in the world, traditionally have offered refugees temporary asylum and assistance. These countries, however, cannot provide long-term relief, so a continuous need for external assistance exists. Such assistance from the international community is channeled primarily through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Through prior reports and studies, the Department of State, the Agency for International Development (AID) and congressional committees have raised concerns about the management of refugee assistance programs in Somalia and particularly about the High Commissioner's implementation of refugee programs and policies. GAO drew upon these reports in planning this review. In assessing the continued U.S. support of the High Commissioner's activities in Africa, GAO concentrated its work on refugee assistance activities in Sudan, Djibouti, Chad, and Cameroon.

U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE

The United States plays a leading role in providing assistance to African refugees by offering aid through international organizations and resettlement opportunities in America. The U.S. refugee policy emphasizes that the financial, political, and social burden of such assistance must be shared by the international community. The Department of State is responsible for carrying out this policy. The Department is also responsible for pressing for improvements in the High Commissioner's operations and for holding the organization accountable for effectively using U.S. contributions. AID oversees the donation of U.S. food assistance to African refugees. (See ch. 2.)

From 1980 through 1982 the United States committed about \$313 million for refugee assistance in Africa, and over \$140 million--45 percent of those commitments--was channeled through the United Nations. The United States has funded about one-third of the High Commissioner's annual budget for African refugee programs. (See ch. 2.)

The High Commissioner for Refugees administers assistance programs in some 27 African countries. The High Commissioner's ultimate goal centers on developing lasting solutions to refugee problems--either repatriating refugees or resettling them in asylum or third countries. (See ch. 2.)

NEED TO IMPROVE REFUGEE ASSISTANCE
PLANNING AND COORDINATION

Resolving refugee problems and providing care for hundreds of thousands of people seeking asylum and assistance is difficult and many governments and private organizations have done much to help. However, in the four countries visited, GAO found that efforts to meet refugee needs can be improved by better planning and coordination. Inequitable amounts and types of assistance have been provided to refugees in Africa. The U.N. programs tend to be open-ended and without plans for phasing out assistance. Continuous and high levels of assistance, in addition to being costly to the international community, often served as a deterrent to achieving the preferred lasting solution--refugees' voluntary repatriation. At two camps in Djibouti, for example, the amount of assistance provided to refugees has exceeded the living standards of the local population. (See ch. 3.)

GAO believes these problems occurred because the High Commissioner did not

- establish comprehensive country-program plans and agreements with governments of countries offering asylum and specifying roles, responsibilities, and authority to implement programs;
- establish program guidance, including objectives and milestones for providing and phasing out material assistance; and
- effectively coordinate other donor assistance.

The lack of clear and unrestrictive refugee policies by countries offering asylum makes it difficult for the High Commissioner (1) to determine appropriate amounts and types of material assistance needed and (2) achieve lasting solutions to refugee conditions. The High Commissioner has been reluctant to press for such stated policies. (See ch. 3.)

NEED FOR INCREASED EVALUATION OF REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

Department of State officials recognize the continuous need to improve international assistance capabilities--primarily the High Commissioner's--to better meet refugee needs and effectively use U.S. funds. The Department of State, however, does not sufficiently evaluate the High Commissioner's programs to determine if the programs are effectively meeting refugee needs and are properly administered. The Department's difficulties in keeping the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees accountable for U.S. contributions are due to

--the Department's limited in-country assessment of, and reporting on, the High Commissioner's activities and projects and

--the fact that about 95 percent (in 1981) of U.S. contributions to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was unrestricted and inherently difficult to track. (See ch. 4.)

LESS RESTRICTIVE ASYLUM-COUNTRY POLICIES NEEDED FOR AID REFUGEE ASSISTANCE TO BE EFFECTIVE

As part of the direct U.S. assistance programs in Africa, AID is proposing a \$30-million development-type project to help refugees, returnees, and displaced persons to economically integrate and become self-sufficient in some asylum countries. These programs include efforts to resettle farmers, herdsmen, and urban dwellers who need skills training and to increase the self-sufficiency of these people. However, AID plans for such projects permit project implementation even if asylum-country governments do not allow refugees to integrate into the countries' economies. GAO found that in both countries

where these AID projects are planned, the governments consider the refugees only as guests and limit the extent to which refugees can effectively resettle and integrate into the economy. (See ch. 4.)

Further, AID should confirm that these refugee development plans do not conflict with (1) U.S. objectives and efforts to share the cost and responsibility of refugee assistance with the international community and (2) ongoing international efforts to accomplish voluntary repatriation of refugees. (See ch. 4.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

GAO recommends that the Secretary of State

--encourage the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to better plan, coordinate, and implement material assistance programs. (See p. 35.)

--in conjunction with AID, establish a means to better evaluate and report on the High Commissioner's African refugee assistance activities and programs. (See p. 40.)

GAO also recommends that the Administrator, AID, ensure that African asylum-country governments remove barriers to economic integration of refugees before U.S. funds are committed to development-type assistance programs for refugees. (See p. 41.)

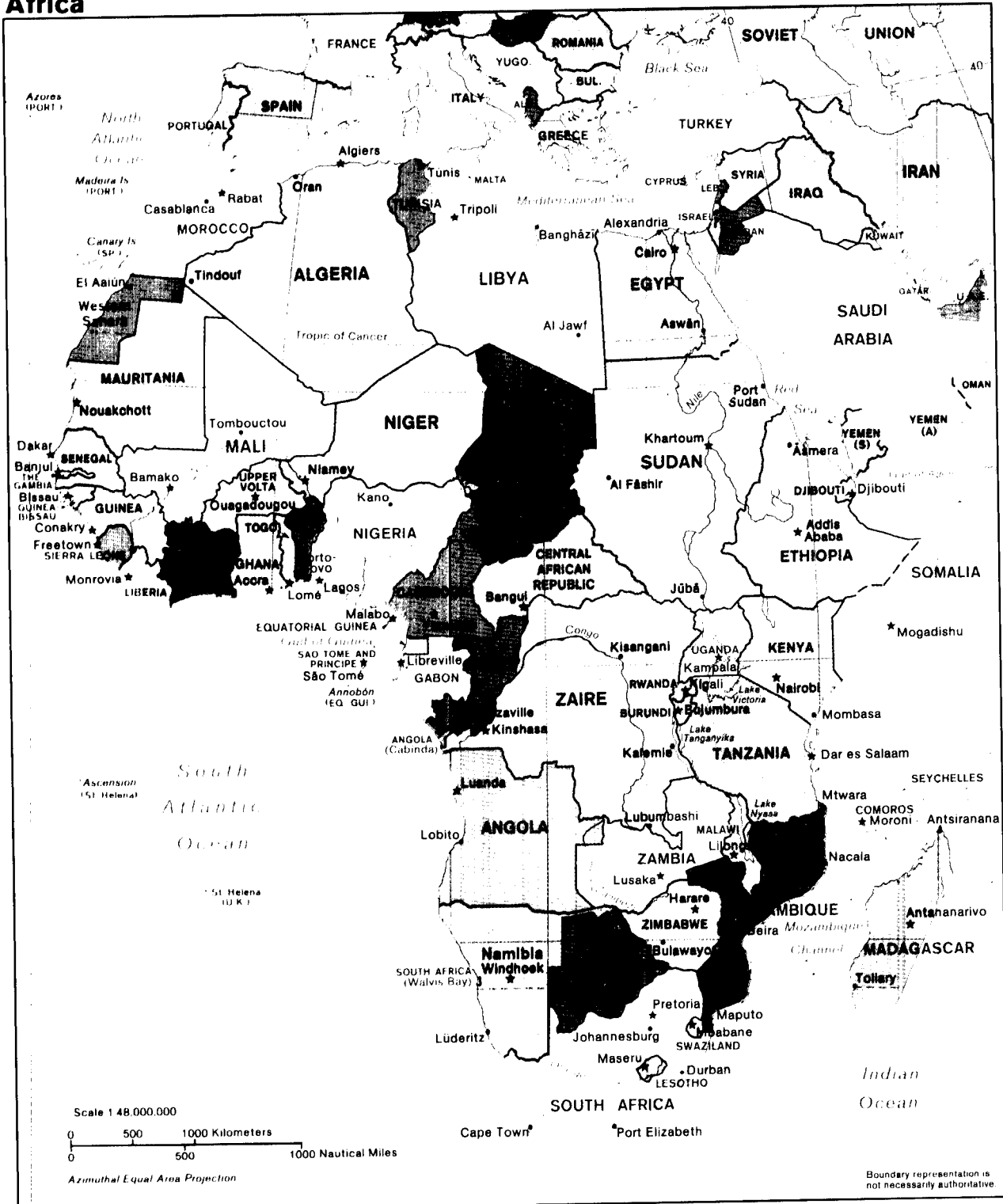
AGENCY COMMENTS

A draft of this report was submitted to the Department of State and AID for review and comment. In a joint response, both agencies generally concurred that GAO's findings and recommendations reflect many problems related to the High Commissioner's programs in Africa. They said, however, that the High Commissioner has in the past 2 years made improvements in African program management and administration. In addition, State has taken specific measures in Somalia and elsewhere to ensure more effective use of U.S. contributions. Clarification was also provided concerning AID's overall role in providing refugee assistance and the current objectives of the AID-administered refugee assistance project in East Africa. (See app. III.) GAO has made appropriate

changes in the report as a result of agency comments and GAO's discussions with agency officials. (See p. 41.)

GAO also made revisions to the proposals in the draft report that State better monitor refugee assistance programs and that AID development projects be initiated only after the asylum countries allowed refugees to permanently resettle in the country. Based on State comments noting the extent of program monitoring, GAO refocused its proposal from more monitoring to better evaluation and reporting on the High Commissioner's programs. Based on AID comments, GAO agrees that such AID programs can be effective without permanent resettlement, but only if asylum countries assure that refugees will be allowed true economic integration. (See pp. 41 and 42.)

Africa





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ABBREVIATIONS

AID	Agency for International Development
GAO	U.S. General Accounting Office
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
PVO	Private and Voluntary Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WFP	World Food Program

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Africa has more refugees and displaced persons than any other continent. This plight represents one of the world's major humanitarian problems. Armed conflict and civil strife in countries like Ethiopia, Chad, Uganda, Angola and Zaire--coupled with natural disasters throughout the continent--have caused millions of people to seek asylum and assistance outside their own countries. Generally included in the group called refugees are

--people who have fled their own countries and crossed an international border seeking political asylum, and

--families and individuals who have left their homelands simply because they cannot make a living or who are escaping starvation because of droughts or difficult economic conditions.

Refugees come from varied economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. Most are women and children. Many are people seeking free food and shelter at refugee camps. Generally, most refugee men are only minimally skilled although some are leaving professional practices. They include nomadic herders, sedentary farmers, urban dwellers, students, and soldiers. Moreover, these refugees have sought asylum and assistance in countries which rank among the least developed in the world. In spite of the voluntary repatriation of some refugees and the integration of others into the countries of first asylum, many people continue to need assistance.

Although most African countries grant refugees asylum for extended periods of time, until they can be repatriated or resettled, refugees tend to severely strain asylum-country resources. Refugees sometimes compete with indigenous populations for limited employment opportunities and government services, creating social problems and contributing to internal political tensions. Unfortunately, the number of refugees remains high while the availability of asylum-country and international assistance, 1--including food and materials, such as shelter, tools, equipment, health facilities, and educational and other communal facilities--are limited.

The United States plays a leading role in providing refugee assistance. The U.S. refugee policy stems from the principle that the world's refugee problems cannot, and should not, become the exclusive responsibility of the U.S. Government and that the responsibility for such assistance rests with the international

1/For the purpose of this report, further discussions of assistance will, unless otherwise noted, include all foods and materials.



SOURCE: GAO STAFF

UGANDAN REFUGEES AT OPARI III- EXTENSION CAMP IN SOUTHERN SUDAN PREPARING FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION.



SOURCE: UNHCR/11232/N. VAN PRAAG

CHADIAN REFUGEES ARRIVE AT N'DJAMENA, 1981

community. In the Refugee Act of 1980, the U.S. Congress declared that

"* * *it is the historic policy of the United States to respond to the urgent needs of persons subject to persecution in their homelands, including, where appropriate, humanitarian assistance for their care and maintenance in asylum areas (and) efforts to promote opportunities for resettlement or voluntary repatriation * * *. The Congress further declares that it is the policy of the United States to encourage all nations to provide assistance and resettlement opportunities to refugees to the fullest extent possible."

The U.S. policy on refugee assistance to African countries emphasizes sharing the financial, political, and social burdens of refugee assistance with the entire international community. Thus, to implement refugee relief and resettlement policies, the United States places maximum reliance on international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

PRIOR REPORTS ON AFRICAN
REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

During the past 3 years, congressional, Department of State (State), and Agency for International Development (AID) reports have raised concerns about the management of refugee assistance programs (primarily in Somalia) and the UNHCR implementation of humanitarian programs and policies. In planning our review, we drew upon these reports. Summaries of these reports follow.

--A report 1/ assessing the refugee situation in Somalia concluded that UNHCR was very slow in responding to the crisis and that the relief system had serious deficiencies which were due, in part, to the lack of accurate estimates of refugee populations, poor food accountability and delivery assistance, and poor donor coordination.

--A report 2/ on refugee aid concluded that UNHCR was not providing the leadership, planning,

1/"An Assessment of the Refugee Situation in Somalia," (Sept. 1980; A staff report prepared for the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate.)

2/"Reports on Refugee Aid," (Mar. 1981; Reports of Staff Study Missions to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives.)

and coordination needed to effectively implement external refugee assistance in Somalia. The report cautioned that the United States should avoid becoming embedded in a bilateral aid relationship in Somalia which would commit the U.S. to carrying out the bulk of the refugee burden indefinitely.

--A State/AID strategy survey team report 1/ examining the results of refugee assistance to Somalia concluded that the performance of international organizations responsible for providing such assistance--primarily UNHCR--was poor. The UNHCR response to refugee problems was slow, and it was unable to plan, organize, staff, or coordinate donor assistance. Reasons given for these problems include UNHCR's traditional reluctance and inability to accept higher levels of control and operational responsibility for program effectiveness, coordination problems between asylum countries and UNHCR, and the inherently high political nature of the organization.

Reacting to its much-criticized performance in Somalia, UNHCR made some management and organizational changes to improve response capabilities. These changes include increasing the annual allocations for emergencies, establishing an emergency unit within the UNHCR office, and establishing a Program Management Bureau to more effectively monitor and evaluate projects. Moreover, UNHCR has developed an operations plan for Somalia for 1982 which, according to UNHCR, may serve as a general guide for the refugee relief assistance program and will include detailed budgets. State officials believe that although the plan will be more timely and detailed, it will still be limited.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of our review was to assess how the effectiveness of U.S. assistance to African refugees can be increased. We sought to determine how State could more effectively manage and implement U.S. refugee policies and programs and improve the ability of UNHCR to carry out U.S. African refugee assistance.

We examined how State monitors U.S. funds and resources devoted to African refugee relief. We also examined U.S. and international organization strategies to phase out refugee assistance and how well they were coordinated with current assistance programs in the African asylum countries.

1/"United States Government's Policy and Strategy For Refugee Affairs in Somalia," (Jan. 1982.)

In this review, we did not attempt to evaluate the basic U.S. policy of depending primarily on international organizations to implement U.S. refugee relief. We did not assess if such a policy minimized overall U.S. costs and direct bilateral involvement in providing such assistance, or if the international community equitably shared the costs of such assistance. In addition, because only a limited number of African refugees have been resettled in the United States during the past several years, we did not examine U.S. African refugee resettlement policies and programs.

We conducted our review work in Washington, D.C.; Geneva, Switzerland; and four African countries. In Washington, we reviewed legislation relevant to U.S. refugee assistance policy and implementation. We held discussions with State Department and AID officials and analyzed data from both agencies, including program and budget documents, reports, and communications with international organizations. We also held discussions at the UNHCR-Washington Liaison Office.

In Geneva, we examined documents and held discussions with officials at the headquarters offices of UNHCR, ICRC, and the U.S. Mission to the European Office of the United Nations and other international organizations. We performed fieldwork at U.S. embassies and AID missions in Chad, Djibouti, and Sudan and at UNHCR and other international and private and voluntary organization (PVO) offices in these countries. In these African countries, we reviewed available data and talked with officials responsible for providing emergency relief, care, and protection for refugees.

From Cameroon, we received official responses to a detailed questionnaire we submitted to the U.S. embassy and AID mission relevant to U.S. refugee programs and policies in that country. We also observed UNHCR repatriation efforts in Chad, examined material assistance programs at refugee camps in Djibouti and Sudan, reviewed resettlement efforts in northern Cameroon, and talked with international and private organization officials--as well as refugees--at some camps. Due to adverse political and security conditions in eastern Sudan in May 1982, we were unable to make planned visits to the refugee camps there.

The selection of African countries for our fieldwork was based primarily on the extent of refugee problems in the countries and the amount of assistance being provided. Although Somalia has experienced one of the most severe refugee emergencies in Africa, the situation has been addressed and described in a number of studies during the past 3 years by congressional committees in both the House and Senate, State, AID, the United Nations, and others. This review concentrated on the refugee situation in other African countries which have not been as highly publicized, but are, we believe, also serious.

The diverse refugee conditions in the countries we selected provided us with a cross section of refugee problems and assistance programs. In Sudan, for example, the magnitude of the refugee problem and the relatively generous policy of the Sudan Government toward refugees allowed us to examine the effectiveness of (1) international refugee care and planned resettlement programs and (2) planned U.S. development projects which include refugees. In Djibouti, limited repatriation and the host-government policy of not providing refugees with local resettlement opportunities allowed us to examine a refugee problem with few, if any, apparent lasting solutions. The refugee programs in Chad and Cameroon (considered by State to demonstrate some of UNHCR's most successful efforts in Africa) allowed us to observe a UNHCR repatriation effort (Chad) and the permanent resettlement of refugees in a country of asylum (Cameroon).

Our review was conducted in accordance with generally accepted government audit standards. We believe the composite picture presented in this report represents an accurate description of U.S. and international organization refugee assistance in Djibouti, Sudan, Chad, and Cameroon.

CHAPTER 2

THE AFRICAN REFUGEE PROBLEM

AND THE U.S. RESPONSE

Political instability, economic difficulties, social unrest, and drought have created in Africa one of the most severe refugee problems in the world today. Though the number of refugees changes frequently and an accurate count is impossible, estimates range from two million (by State) to four million (by UNHCR) refugees on the continent. Tens of thousands more are reportedly displaced in their own countries. During fiscal years 1980 through 1982, the United States, pursuant to the Refugee Act of 1980 and other legislation, committed \$312.8 million to assist these refugees and to promote opportunities for their repatriation or resettlement to other countries. Moreover, the State Department plans to spend about \$137.4 million during fiscal years 1983 and 1984 to assist these refugees.

The end of most western colonialism on the African continent in the 1950s and 1960s brought on huge population shifts and changes in tribal society. Boundaries drawn to signify limits of government authority seldom bore any relationship to tribal homelands, common language, or historic African frontiers. Nationalistic and liberation movements caused widespread political instability and ultimately led to civil strife and armed conflict throughout much of Africa. Fighting, coupled with severe droughts and economic deprivation, caused millions of Africans to flee their homelands to neighboring countries seeking asylum and assistance.

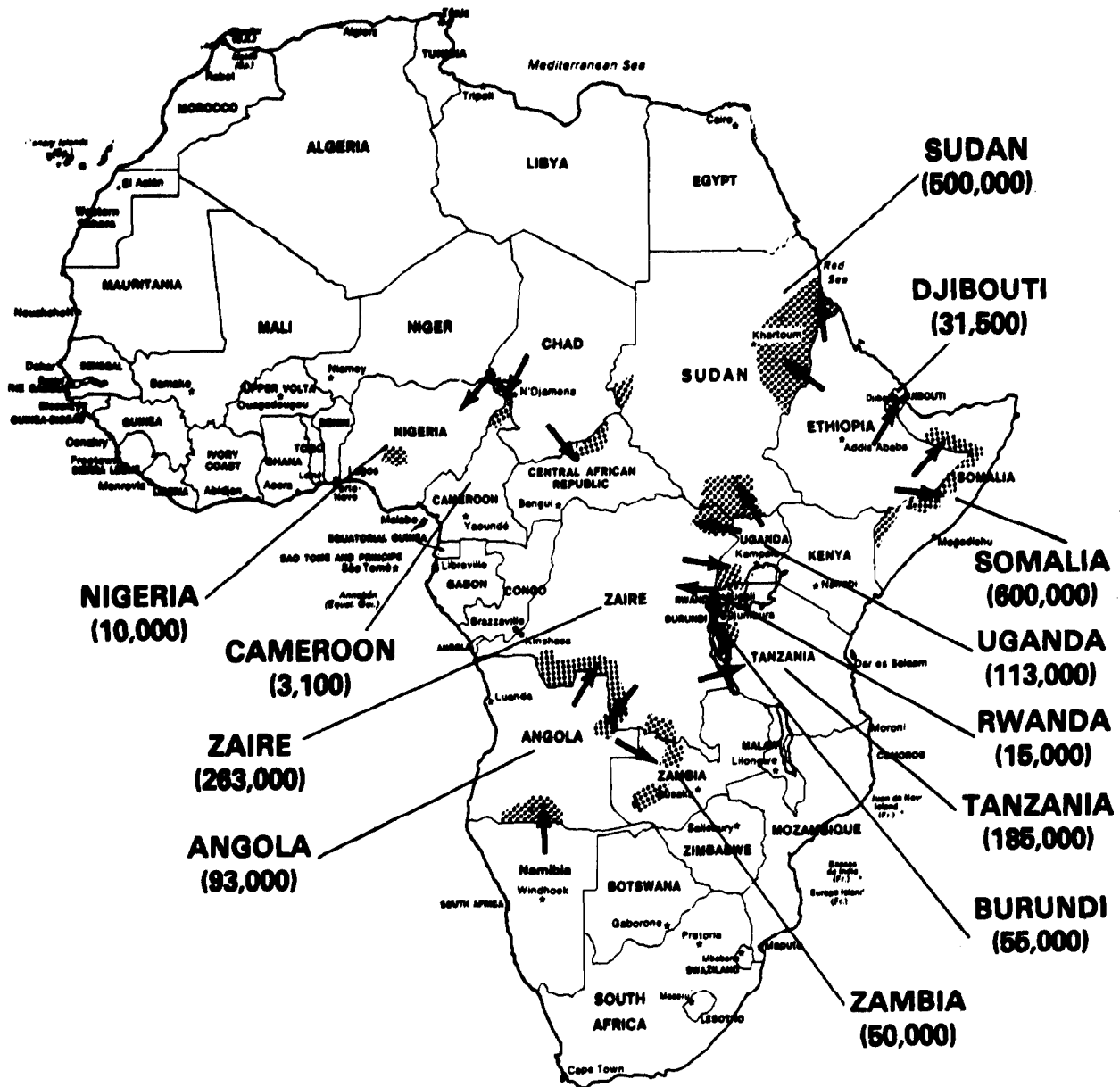
In the early 1970s, favorable asylum-country policies toward refugees and voluntary repatriation served to prevent the situation from becoming unmanageable. However, prolonged droughts and unsettled political conditions have increased the number of refugees. A decade ago there were reportedly fewer than one million African refugees; today, there are perhaps three or four times as many.


CAUSES OF REFUGEE FLOWS

In about 27 of the world's most barren and least developed countries, refugees have sought shelter and safety because their homes were lost to wars and natural disasters. The map on page 8 illustrates the major refugee flows, and some of these are discussed below.

The Somali invasion of the Ogaden region of Ethiopia in 1977 and 1978 resulted in hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians crossing the border into Somalia and, to a lesser extent, Djibouti. In addition, droughts which destroyed grazing land and livestock caused thousands of people to be displaced throughout the Horn of Africa.

MAJOR FLOWS AND CONCENTRATIONS OF REFUGEES IN AFRICA (Sept. 1982)



 LOCATION
 AND ESTIMATED
 NUMBER OF REFUGEES
 IN ASYLUM COUNTRIES

Due primarily to the Ogaden conflict, large numbers of refugees began arriving in Somalia in 1977. According to UNHCR, by the end of 1979, the number had reached one million. About 350,000 were in refugee camps; the remainder was scattered among the local population.

The fighting in Ethiopia was also the initial cause of refugees fleeing to Djibouti. More recently, refugees have crossed the border into Djibouti to seek economic assistance. Presently, a UNHCR-requested census counted about 30,000 refugees in the two camps near the border.

Political hostilities associated with liberation movements in northern Ethiopia have similarly resulted in hundreds of thousands of refugees crossing the border into eastern and northeastern Sudan. Most of these refugees are living in cities and in temporary camps in the rural areas. The majority are political refugees from Eritrea (a region in North Ethiopia) where wars for independence from Ethiopia have raged since 1962. Other refugees have crossed into eastern Sudan since the military regime came into power in Ethiopia in 1974.

About 84,000 Ugandan refugees sought asylum in southern Sudan to escape civil strife during the rule of Idi Amin in the 1970s; thousands more followed during the fighting to overthrow his regime. Still other Ugandans fled to neighboring Zaire.

To escape continued outbreaks in Chad's long civil war and the subsequent Libyan occupation, over 100,000 Chadians crossed into neighboring Cameroon, Nigeria, the Central African Republic, and Sudan.

THE AFRICAN RESPONSE

In Africa, most countries have traditionally accepted refugees, and regional cooperative efforts have resolved some refugee problems. African countries generally meet their international responsibilities to provide refugees asylum and prefer that refugees be repatriated or resettled on the African continent. The African tradition of accepting refugees is illustrated by the President of Tanzania who, in May 1979, said, "* * *the refugees of Africa are primarily an African problem and an African responsibility." Most countries grant refugees asylum, consider them as guests, and provide them with at least a limited amount of assistance and protection. This granting of first asylum to refugees provides time for the development of solutions to their problems.

The response by the international community during the past several years has eased most African refugee situations. International mechanisms now exist to help African countries of first asylum to provide immediate humanitarian relief and longer term care, and to seek solutions to refugee conditions. In some African



Source: UNHCR/12108/Y. Muller

Ugandan refugees registering at Sudan Border, 1982



Source: UNHCR/12105/Y. Muller

Ugandan refugees receive kitchen utensils and agricultural tools from UNHCR, 1982

countries, the combination of the asylum offered by host governments and the protection and assistance from international organizations has provided refugees with new homes. An estimated 250,000 people who fled the civil war in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), have voluntarily repatriated to their native land and are receiving assistance. About 25,000 Hutu tribe people driven from Burundi now run a settlement in Tanzania that supplies food to nearby towns; about 35,000 Rwandans also settled permanently in Tanzania and received citizenship. In west Africa, thousands of Guineans resettled successfully in several neighboring countries. In addition, some southern African countries absorbed several thousand south African refugees, and up to half a million refugees of various nationalities resettled in Zaire.

THE U.S. RESPONSE

The U.S. response to African refugee problems can be divided into two major components--refugee relief and refugee resettlement in the United States. U.S. refugee relief policy is to emphasize lifesaving assistance in first-asylum countries, support voluntary repatriation where that is possible, and to facilitate resettlement in asylum countries. The Refugee Act of 1980 reiterates the U.S. tradition of assistance to victims of persecution and aggression and outlines U.S. concerns for the burdens that refugee populations place on countries of asylum in general, and developing countries in particular.

The Department of State has the primary authority and responsibility for administering refugee assistance programs and provides such assistance both multilaterally through international organizations as well as bilaterally through U.S. agencies and private voluntary organizations. The use of international institutions serves several purposes, including

- the practical one of making use of existing expertise,
- the political one of diffusing anti-U.S. and anti-refugee criticism, and
- the economic and social one of spreading responsibility and costs among the international community.

AID provides direct assistance to refugees through the Public Law 480 (Food-for-Peace) program. Indirectly, AID also provides assistance to refugees through country development programs authorized by the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. Most funding for U.S. refugee assistance, however, is authorized by the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act and is administered by State.

State's role--multilateral
refugee assistance

The Bureau for Refugee Programs in State is responsible for managing U.S. interests in refugee assistance and promoting solutions to refugee problems. The Bureau is further responsible for ensuring that U.S.-funded programs devoted to refugee assistance and resettlement are effectively planned, programmed, and monitored. The major goals and objectives of the Bureau emphasize the use of diplomatic channels to eliminate the causes of refugee flows and support the principle of the international response to refugee problems by placing maximum responsibility on appropriate international organizations--primarily UNHCR. According to the Bureau, the United States as a major donor to UNHCR, has responsibility

"to press for programmatic and operational improvements in this organization so that it can meet the basic needs of refugees for protection, food, shelter and medical care while other more lasting solutions to their plight are being worked out."

AID's role--bilateral
refugee assistance

AID assistance to African refugees is mostly in the form of emergency food. AID food assistance for refugees under Public Law 480, Title II, goes directly to foreign governments, U.N. agencies like UNHCR, the World Food Program (WFP) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). For example, in Somalia during fiscal year 1981, AID provided \$28 million in food assistance; in fiscal year 1982, the amount of food provided was expected to total about \$10 million. Food aid has also been provided for refugees in other African countries, including Djibouti, Sudan, Chad, and Cameroon.

The AID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance also assists during refugee emergencies. For example, this office, with State funding, recently arranged for the transport of approximately 50,000 donated quilts and blankets and assisted in locating and procuring 105 tons of tinned fish to respond to the UNHCR appeal for emergency aid to Chad. Also in Chad, the office provided a \$58,571 grant to a French voluntary agency for delivering medical services to Chadian people, including returning refugees and displaced and wounded people in the capital city of N'Djamena.

Except for administering Public Law 480 and assisting with disaster relief programs, AID has no formal or specific role in providing assistance to refugees in Africa. AID staffs in African countries, however, frequently assist international and private organizations in identifying refugee problems and the

need for technical assistance. They also sometimes assist in monitoring and reporting on programs. Because AID has experience in the logistical, administrative, program, and management aspects of assistance, asylum-country governments and international organizations have relied upon AID to assess the needs for refugee relief programs.

Funding levels

Total U.S. Government assistance for African refugees, including food and other assistance from State and AID, rose from \$63 million in fiscal year 1979 to about \$101 million in fiscal year 1981. Approximately half of the fiscal year 1981 monies (\$50.0 million) went to UNHCR. Since fiscal year 1980, State's policy has been to fund one-third of the UNHCR budget.

State obtained \$107 million for fiscal year 1982 refugee programs in Africa. State planned that \$58 million of that amount (54 percent) would be used to finance UNHCR programs in Africa and \$7 million would be contributed to ICRC for its humanitarian work there. In addition, \$12 million was for direct U.S. and voluntary agency projects for those aspects of refugee problems not adequately dealt with by the responsible international organizations. The fiscal year 1982 State budget also included a one-time appropriation of \$30 million to fund long-term, AID-administered projects to assist and resettle refugees and displaced people in Africa. State's fiscal year 1982 and projected fiscal years 1983-1984 African refugee assistance programs funding follow:

STATE DEPARTMENT
African Refugee Assistance Programs

<u>Programs</u>	<u>Fiscal year</u>		
	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>
	----- (millions) -----		
UNHCR	\$ 58.0	\$61.0	\$45.0
ICRC	7.0	7.9	7.5
Special projects	12.0	8.0	8.0
AID-implemented projects	<u>30.0</u>	---	---
Total	<u>\$107.0</u>	<u>\$76.9</u>	<u>\$60.5</u>

Refugee admissions

The United States also supports and funds programs to resettle a limited number of African refugees in the United States. During fiscal year 1981, 2,200 were resettled in the United States. The U.S. admissions program for these refugees extends resettlement opportunities to those who either cannot be

resettled in Africa or whose lives are endangered in African asylum countries. The number of refugees allowed to resettle in the United States is also limited because (1) most African refugees have been granted asylum in African countries or have been repatriated and (2) African governments have traditionally viewed refugees as an African problem and prefer African solutions. The admission level for African refugees during fiscal year 1982 was 3,500, representing only 2.5 percent of the ceiling for all refugees to be admitted to the United States during the year.

Reliance on international organizations--primarily UNHCR

UNHCR--the primary vehicle for implementing international (including U.S.) African refugee assistance--is responsible for providing protection and assistance to refugees and seeking lasting 1/ solutions to their problems.

Upon requests of asylum governments, UNHCR provides various types of assistance. UNHCR assistance to refugees generally consists of (1) emergency relief, (2) refugee care programs, and (3) efforts to make refugees self-sufficient. UNHCR considers that its assistance role ends when lasting solutions are developed. UNHCR officials emphasize that their role is to coordinate assistance programs. Further, UNHCR officials in Geneva told us the agency is not, and can never be, a traditional development agency and that providing such assistance to refugees should be the responsibility of other U.N. agencies, such as the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), or of other donors through direct aid. UNHCR does not provide development assistance to refugees. However, due to the absence of basic support in many asylum countries, some types of UNHCR assistance have, by necessity, been developmental.

Emergency relief is to insure refugee survival and consists of providing such things as food aid, potable water, shelter (often tents), blankets, clothing, and medical supplies. UNHCR emergency relief efforts are frequently hampered because refugees settle in or are assigned to relatively uninhabited areas where basic support services and supplies are either scarce or nonexistent. Refugee camps are sometimes established by the refugees with little, if any, planning by the asylum countries. On other occasions, asylum-country governments purposely locate refugee camps away from international borders because the refugees are considered political or security risks. Relief supplies are often not available locally or are quickly exhausted. In addition, the logistics of transporting food and non-food relief supplies to refugees in such areas as Chad, southern Sudan, or eastern Zaire, is a major impediment to timely emergency relief.

1/UNHCR uses the term "durable" to describe what they consider to be lasting or permanent solutions to refugee problems. In this report, we use the term "lasting solution."



SOURCE: GAO STAFF

UGANDAN REFUGEES AT KIT I REFUGEE CAMP IN SOUTHERN SUDAN.



SOURCE: GAO STAFF

**UNHCR-SUPPLIED EMERGENCY TENTS FOR UGANDAN REFUGEES AT
OPARI III- EXTENSION CAMP IN SOUTHERN SUDAN.**

Once emergency situations have passed, refugees often require food aid, adequate sources of water, additional shelter, medical facilities, and schools. This phase represents the major portion of UNHCR's assistance budget and may continue for years. The UNHCR's objective is to find a lasting solution so that refugees do not become dependent on international assistance.

In conjunction with the asylum-country government, UNHCR attempts to make refugees self-sufficient to reduce their burden and dependency on both the asylum countries and the international donor community. For most refugees, becoming self-sufficient requires that they be provided adequate land to farm, seeds, agricultural tools, and technical assistance. In addition, some refugees need to be allowed to become involved in income-generating projects. Even after basic self-sufficiency is attained, some assistance may still be required, but the refugees no longer completely depend on the host governments or international assistance.

Voluntary repatriation is the preferred solution to the African refugee problem, but refugees will not return home until the conditions which caused their flight have either been eliminated or significantly altered. When refugees refuse to return to their homes for fear of persecution (or for other reasons), UNHCR attempts to resettle them in the country where they first sought asylum or in a third country--either in Africa or elsewhere.

Resettlement in African countries of first asylum is either temporary or permanent. Resettlement can vary from situations where refugees are barely self-sufficient (in some camps in southern Sudan) to where refugees are economically and socially integrated, included in the asylum-country development plans and, in rare cases, even granted full citizenship (in Tanzania). Most African governments consider refugees as "guests" and only provide them temporary resettlement until they can be voluntarily repatriated.

In seeking resettlement solutions, UNHCR has determined that their obligations to refugees have been met by providing assistance (usually within a refugee camp) up to the point when they become self-sufficient and are no longer a serious drain on asylum-country resources. After achieving basic levels of self-sufficiency, UNHCR terminates its assistance and prefers to leave the task of economic and social integration--and the inclusion of refugees in the asylum-government development plans--to other U.N. agencies or to other donors.



TRADITIONAL ETHIOPIAN REFUGEE HOUSING AT ALI SABIEH CAMP, DJIBOUTI, JUNE 1982



CHAPTER 3

UNHCR AFRICAN REFUGEE ASSISTANCE--

BETTER PLANNING AND COORDINATION NEEDED

UNHCR provides assistance to hundreds of thousands of refugees in some 27 African countries. Resolving refugee problems and providing adequate care for these people seeking asylum, food, and shelter is difficult in some of the poorest countries of the world and in the harsh environments of refugee camps. UNHCR, PVOs, asylum-country governments, and many donors have contributed much to relieve the hunger and discomfort of millions of refugees in Africa. However, more can be done from a management perspective to increase the benefits which refugees receive from the international community.

From our review of UNHCR assistance programs in four of these countries, we believe that UNHCR has many difficulties to overcome in meeting refugee needs and developing lasting solutions to refugee problems.

We found that basic needs are not being met in some refugee camps while, in others, excessive assistance inhibits lasting solutions. For instance:

- In Djibouti, excessive assistance has contributed to refugees not wanting to voluntarily repatriate to Ethiopia, thus, perpetuating the need for international assistance.
- In northeastern Port Sudan, UNHCR plans are underway to provide housing assistance to only 10 percent of the Eritrean refugee population; no plans exist to assist the rest of these people.
- In southern Sudan, there has been insufficient food aid and UNHCR has not been able to sufficiently help the Ugandan refugees become self-sufficient, thus, contributing to continued malnutrition in some camps.

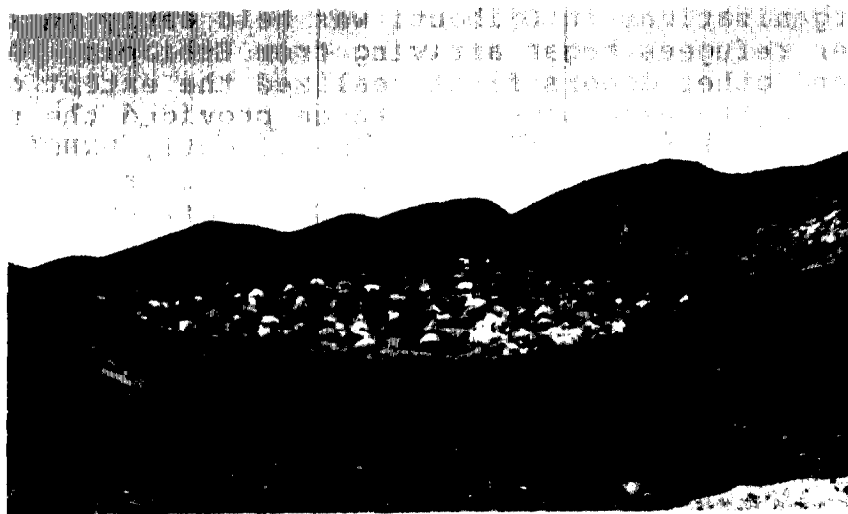
In our opinion, such problems occurred partly because of UNHCR's (1) lack of comprehensive country plans and guidelines, (2) acceptance of unclear and sometimes inconsistent asylum-country policies toward refugees, and (3) limited coordination of PVOs and other donor assistance.

DJIBOUTI--LACK OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

After 5 years of providing material assistance to Ethiopian refugees in Djibouti, no lasting solution has been found, and

near-term solutions to their problems are also not materializing. Voluntary repatriation is not occurring, refugees are not allowed to permanently resettle in Djibouti, and resettlement opportunities in third countries are, according to U.S. Embassy officials, insignificant. Efforts to make refugees self-sufficient are not supported by the Government, and refugees remain as dependent as ever upon international assistance. The lack of specific UNHCR program objectives and clear government policies concerning refugees, we believe, has resulted in excessive assistance which, in turn, has clearly served as a barrier to finding lasting solutions.

In addition to providing basic supplies, UNHCR programs in Djibouti are directed toward improving the standard of living for the refugees by providing better housing in the camps, constructing communal facilities, and improving health-care programs. Specific projects include purchasing and storing supplies; constructing classroom and teachers' quarters; and building a center to treat tuberculosis. In addition to the initial construction of traditional housing for 1,000 families in the camps at Ali Sabieh and Dikhil, another project was initiated in 1981 to construct



ALI SABIEH REFUGEE CAMP IN DJIBOUTI, GENERAL VIEW, JUNE 1982

more houses and sanitation facilities to benefit another 1,500 families. Vocational training is also provided to develop special skills aimed at improving refugee resettlement.

Material assistance exceeds local population standards

The amount of assistance--for food, shelter, medical, and education--which is provided at the Dikhil and Ali Sabieh camps,

for the most part exceeds the living standards of the local population. PVO officials told us in May 1982, for example, that refugees had been receiving quantities of food from various international donors (including U.S. sorghum and rice) which surpassed subsistence levels and local population consumption. In addition, rations were based on Government of Djibouti population estimates which were not verified (since no census had been conducted) and were overstated, according to AID and PVO officials. Adult rations were also provided the entire population even though about 50 percent were children. According to World Food Program (WFP) and AID officials in Djibouti, some refugees were actually trading the excess food across the border in Ethiopia.

The extensive amount of assistance at the camps served as a magnet for refugees and non-refugees alike. As a result of severe droughts in the region in 1980-1981, many Ethiopian nomadic herders were drawn to the camps where they could obtain free food and other aid. Djibouti Government officials at both camps told us that as many as 80 percent of the people were in the camps for economic reasons and had no fear of crossing the border.

One reason the assistance was so extensive is that donor contributions were not coordinated. The first formal meeting of major donor organizations in Djibouti was held early in 1982--over 5 years after refugees began arriving from Ethiopia. At this meeting, UNHCR and other donors first realized the extent of program duplication and the excessive assistance provided the refugees. According to U.S. Embassy officials in Djibouti, UNHCR tried on several occasions before 1982 to coordinate donor actions. The Embassy officials said, however, that UNHCR efforts lacked perseverance and government support.

Continued high levels of assistance are a barrier to lasting solutions

The types, amounts, and duration of assistance provided Ethiopians in Djibouti hinders UNHCR efforts to repatriate or make these refugees self-sufficient. The Government has clearly stated that refugees will not be allowed to permanently resettle in Djibouti, yet UNHCR continues providing refugees with permanent housing, schools, and even plans to assist in constructing a mosque. According to PVO officials, refugees have been provided clothing and household goods which are superior to those they had in their homelands and better than those of the local population.

UNHCR refugee programs in Djibouti also lack plans for decreasing or phasing out material assistance provided refugees and for reducing refugee dependence on the international community. Moreover, the Government of Djibouti refuses to initiate



SOURCE: UNHCR/7234/M. DELLUC/VIVA

ETHIOPIAN REFUGEE FOOD DISTRIBUTION AT CAMPS IN DJIBOUTI

programs to make refugees self-sufficient. In the absence of near-term prospects for voluntary repatriation, refugees continue to receive free international assistance. The absence of UNHCR plans to phase-out assistance perpetuates this dependence. UNHCR officials in Djibouti concurred that as long as extensive assistance is provided, without an end in sight, the refugees have little incentive to voluntarily return to Ethiopia.

In discussing our observations with UNHCR officials in Djibouti, they acknowledged that their programs in Djibouti were not without problems. We discussed the lack of

- effective coordination with PVOs,
- program direction because of the previously unclear Government position on allowing refugees to resettle and integrate into the economy, and
- milestones to phase out refugee assistance.

UNHCR officials also acknowledged that they concentrated too much on permanent-type projects, that refugees live better than the local populations, and that it will now be difficult for refugees to voluntarily leave the camps.

UNHCR plans based on a misreading of Djibouti refugee policies

Receiving mixed signals from the Government of Djibouti, UNHCR officials told us they misinterpreted the Djibouti policy on local resettlement of refugees and, in 1982, initiated plans for refugee self-sufficiency projects. Had these plans been implemented, they would have cost approximately \$9 million--about \$4 million above the UNHCR 1982 refugee budget for Djibouti--and would have required additional funding by the international community.

The President of Djibouti stated that refugees would not be allowed to resettle in the country, yet UNHCR interpreted the Djibouti Minister of Interior statements in late 1981 (hinting that limited self-help projects and local integration might be workable) as a breakthrough in government resistance to such projects. The plans called for this additional funding of \$4 million to be obtained from the international community--much of it from the United States. The plan was later scrapped when the Djibouti President reiterated that repatriation to Ethiopia was the only solution to the refugee problem.

SUDAN--REFUGEE NEEDS NOT MET

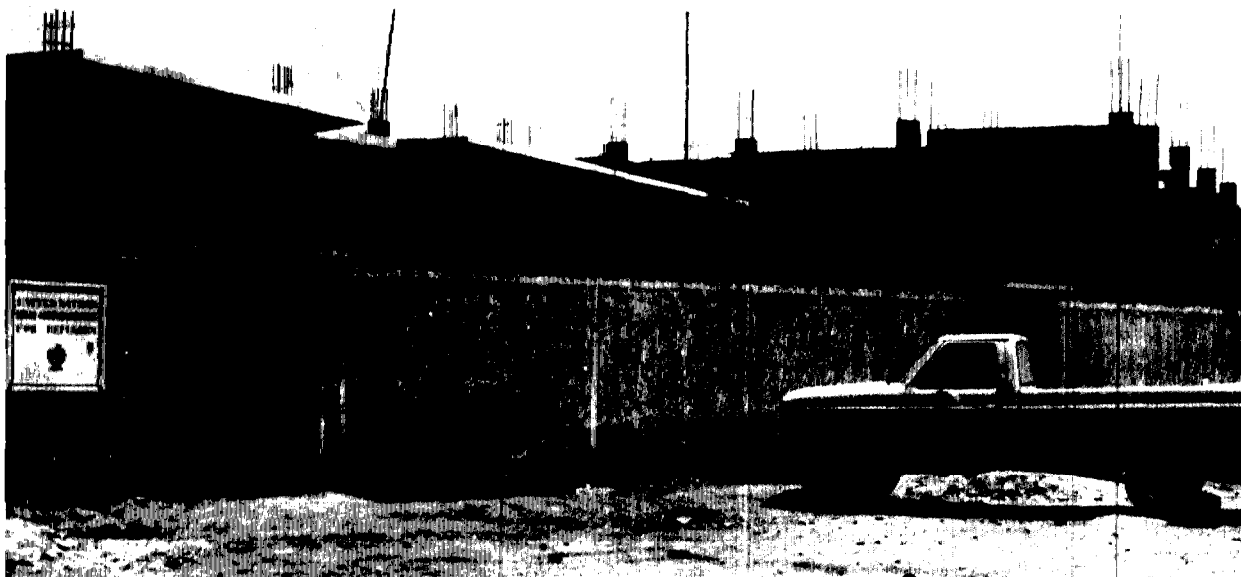
In the two refugee areas of Sudan we visited, refugees were receiving inadequate assistance. In northeastern Sudan (Port Sudan), UNHCR plans to provide housing to only a small, select

number of Eritrean refugees. In southern Sudan, essential food supplies are not reaching many Ugandan refugees. In addition, Government of Sudan restrictions prevent permanent settlement and limit economic integration of refugees into the country.

The rapid increase in the refugee populations in Sudan led the government to decide to place refugees in organized, semi-urban, or rural settlements where opportunities could be created for refugees to become productive and self-sufficient. UNHCR projects in Sudan concentrate on financing these settlement programs.

In these settlements, UNHCR assistance includes providing housing, communal facilities--such as dispensaries, schools, and water supplies--and agricultural supplies. Food is provided by WFP until the settlements become self-sufficient.

According to the 1981 UNHCR project report, an estimated 95,000 Ethiopian refugees in the eastern part of the country received agriculture, housing, education, and sanitation assistance. In some rural camps, refugee families received tractors, tools, seeds, and plots of land to cultivate. In the south, approximately 35,000 Ugandans were expected to receive similar assistance.



UNHCR in Port Sudan

Source: GAO Staff

Planned housing in Port Sudan will only accommodate 10 percent of the refugee population

The lack of clearly defined UNHCR and Government of Sudan roles, responsibilities, and authority in designing and implementing projects have resulted in a refugee housing project that will only assist a small number of the total refugee population in northeastern Sudan. UNHCR plans to provide permanent housing to only 10 percent of the total population of Eritrean refugees in the Port Sudan area. A method to determine who will live in this housing has yet to be established. The original housing plans in-

cluded shelter for most refugees, but the local government pressured UNHCR into altering the plans.

About 30,000--mainly urban Eritrean--refugees have settled outside the city of Port Sudan. Recognizing that these predominantly political refugees will not return to Ethiopia in the foreseeable future, UNHCR proposed a project in 1979 to provide basic housing and water for as many as 20,000 people. In conjunction with the original UNHCR housing plans, the U.S. is funding a \$3 million, AID-monitored water supply system project that will, in part, support up to 30,000 refugees in this UNHCR settlement. However, at Government insistence, the UNHCR now plans to provide housing for only 3,000 refugees--about 10 percent of the reported refugee population. UNHCR and PVO officials said that the housing project was modified at the request of the Sudan Provincial Commissioner who did not want low class housing or "new slums" in Port Sudan. According to an engineering company official who is designing the project, the 700 units to be constructed will be "of much better quality than most locals live in." Moreover, PVO officials told us that Eritrean refugees may never use the planned houses because of the political and social problems expected if refugees move into such relatively high-standard, permanent housing.

UNHCR officials stated that the original housing plan was not an official proposal and that they did not pursue one housing plan over another. UNHCR did not object to the Government of Sudan decision to reduce the number of houses built. UNHCR officials also consider these planned homes to be equal to normal Sudanese "low-rent housing." The U.S. Refugee Coordinator in Sudan believes that UNHCR could have done more to object to and modify the government views.



ERITREAN REFUGEE HOUSING IN PORT SUDAN, JUNE 1982

Inadequate assistance reaching refugees in southern Sudan

We found evidence of insufficient food aid reaching Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan which contributed to severe malnutrition in some camps and intolerable conditions in others. We believe this occurs because UNHCR neither effectively coordinates donor assistance nor provides guidance to PVOs willing and able to assist UNHCR. The failure to accomplish program objectives has resulted in food shortages, conflicting donor approaches to solving refugee problems, and program duplication.

Many Ugandan refugees arrive at the refugee camps in southern Sudan already showing signs of malnutrition. The small amounts of food assistance which were subsequently distributed to the camps did little to improve that condition. No camp we visited was receiving what the WFP considers minimal daily food requirements.

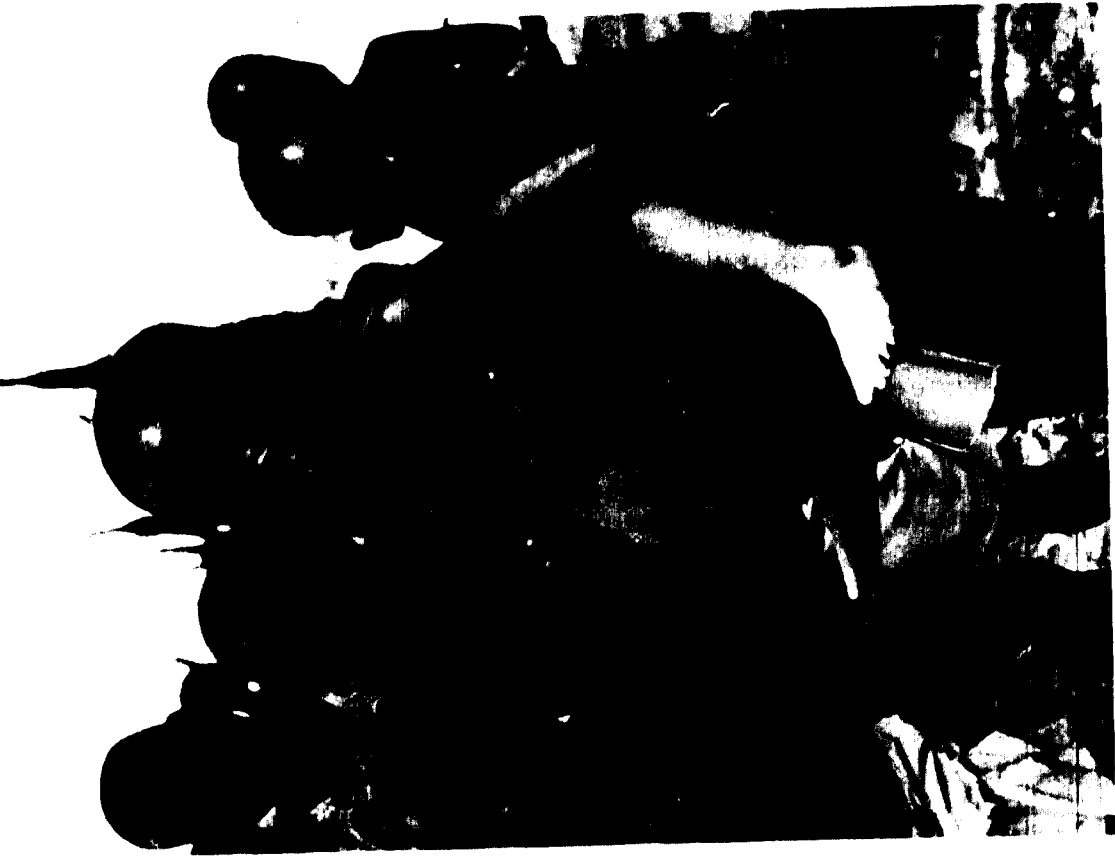
Imported commodities not reaching camps

As the lead agency for providing and managing refugee assistance in Sudan, UNHCR is responsible for coordinating all refugee assistance, including WFP food delivered to southern Sudan. UNHCR is also ultimately responsible for actually distributing donated food to the refugees in the camps. The wheat, rice, and edible



SOURCE: UNHCR/12106/Y. MULLER

UGANDAN REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN SUDAN CAMP, 1982



SOURCE: GAO STAFF



UGANDAN REFUGEES AT OPARI III - EXTENSION CAMP IN SOUTHERN SUDAN.

oils which WFP acquires from international donors and transports to the city of Juba in southern Sudan are sold on the local market. The generated monies are used to purchase food locally for distribution to the refugee camps. We found that Ugandan refugees in Kit I refugee camp southeast of Juba were receiving only dura (sorghum) which WFP purchases locally in Sudan. We were also told that many Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan prefer the wheat that was being shipped to Juba rather than the dura they were receiving.

Long lead times involved in ordering and transporting the imported commodities overland from Mombassa, Kenya to Juba--combined with the availability of dura locally--are factors causing the refugees in southern Sudan to receive only dura. Nonetheless, UNHCR did not ensure that the refugees received adequate supplies of food.

UNHCR officials told us that because of the continued influx of Ugandan refugees and the emergency conditions in the south, logistics problems are major, and new distribution efforts are not always successful. They believed that the camps were receiving dura, oils, and milk and that if they were not, it was a WFP responsibility. WFP officials told us that although they had responsibility to deliver food to Juba, it was the UNHCR's responsibility to distribute the food to the camps.

Food shipments terminated
and inadequately coordinated

Another factor restricting UNHCR efforts to meet basic refugee needs in southern Sudan is the WFP planned termination of food aid to some refugee camps. WFP established a policy (in conjunction with UNHCR) whereby food aid to refugee camps is terminated after two crop cycles (approximately 18 months) at which time the refugees are expected, with assistance from UNHCR, to be agriculturally self-sufficient. At some camps, the food cutoff occurred before UNHCR established the necessary support systems in the camps--road, water, sanitation, medical, and community development projects--to assist the refugees in becoming self-sufficient. WFP officials told us that to avoid creating open-ended commitments with any refugee camp for food distribution, they terminate food assistance irrespective of whether the refugees become self-sufficient.

Food shipments to the Kit I refugee camp were cut-off before the refugees became self-sufficient. The refugees from urban areas in Uganda at this camp advised UNHCR that they would settle in this primarily agricultural area of southern Sudan but they would be unable and unwilling to farm the land. Nonetheless, UNHCR continued with its plans to assist the refugees in becoming agriculturally self-sufficient. The refugees, however, did not become self-sufficient even after 3 years. According to the refugees who manage the camp, this occurred partly because UNHCR did



UGANDAN REFUGEE WOMAN GRINDS SORGHUM IN SOUTHERN SUDAN, 1985

not (1) supply sufficient seeds and tools, (2) secure adequate land from the Government of Sudan, or (3) provide the needed technical assistance. With donated food terminated, these refugees have neither a dependable source of food supplies nor the means to provide for themselves.

Some urban refugees enjoyed higher living standards in Uganda than did rural southern Sudanese. Because of this factor, UNHCR and AID officials believe that the Ugandan refugees at some camps will be uncomfortable with the agricultural-type assistance that UNHCR provides. However, these officials pointed out that the refugees were not totally without food after the WFP cut-off because some other organizations were still providing them assistance.

Officials from certain PVOs said that, although some of this assistance was available through them, UNHCR made few attempts, and even seemed reluctant, to coordinate the supply and distribution of such resources. Furthermore, some of these officials expressed concern that their assistance programs may be duplicating those of UNHCR. Others believed UNHCR was unresponsive to their offers of assistance. They noted that because UNHCR did not have an overall plan to coordinate such assistance, the PVOs were not sure where their resources could best be used.

UNHCR officials stated that, until recently, dealing with, and coordinating--the activities of PVOs was done exclusively by the Government of Sudan, and it was difficult for UNHCR to coordinate with these organizations. These officials also stated that some Islamic and African organizations preferred not to work with UNHCR. UNHCR officials said that they always had informal information on the projects of these organizations and that contact with PVOs was increasing.

WFP and UNHCR officials in Juba acknowledged that they did not adequately inform the refugees that food assistance would be curtailed after two crop cycles. Thus, the Ugandan refugees expected the food assistance to continue indefinitely. The refugees told us that when the WFP food was terminated, they lost faith in UNHCR programs.

Government of Sudan policies restrict refugee integration

The Government of Sudan provides asylum to refugees from several neighboring countries. The government recognizes that most of these refugees will remain in Sudan for a long period and allows them limited participation in the Sudan economy. According to a June 1982 State Department report, however, imposed government restrictions prevent full economic integration of refugees and, in



SOURCE: UNHCR/10063/V.ULRICH

ETHIOPIAN REFUGEES IN EASTERN SUDAN RECEIVE AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE, 1980

effect, discourages efforts to resettle them. These restrictions on refugees include

- limited freedom of movement;
- the unavailability of Sudanese citizenship;
- no procedures established for licensing the practice of professionals among the refugees, such as doctors, nurses, teachers; and
- periodic "round-ups," forcing refugees to return to rural camps.

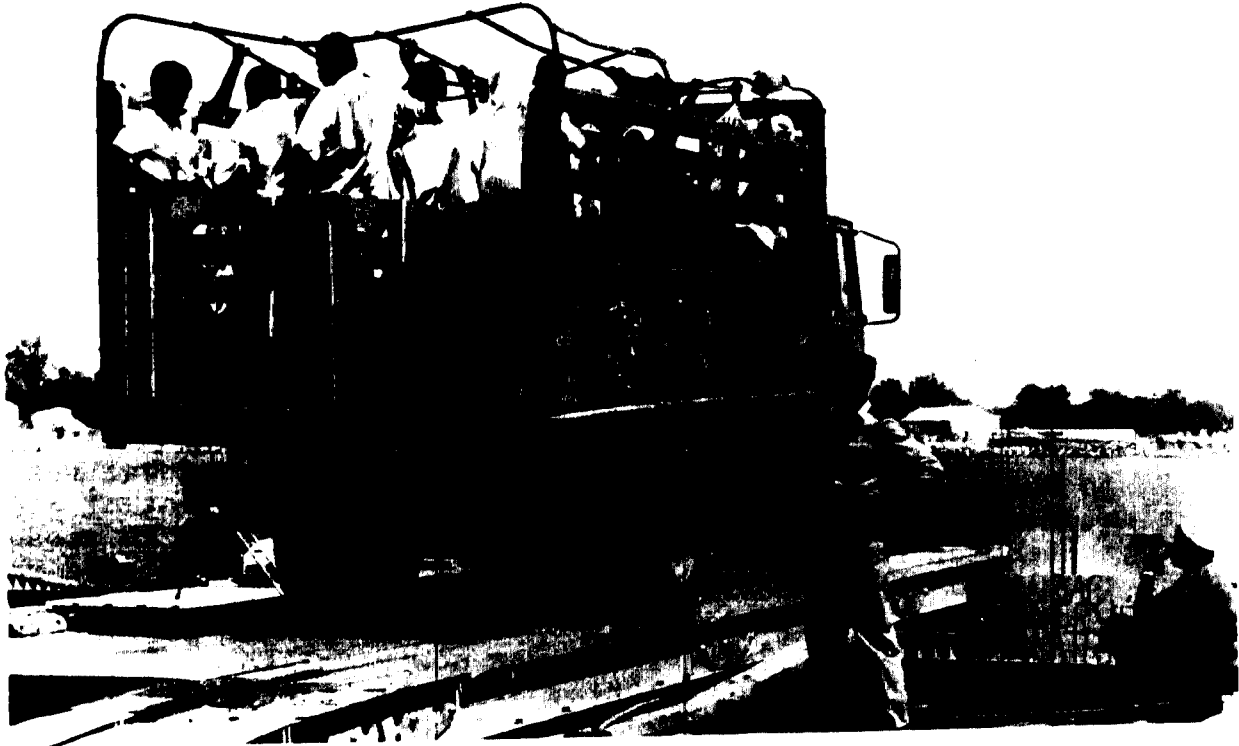
More recently, a September 1982 international refugee seminar held in Khartoum, Sudan drew attention to the Government of Sudan's easing of restrictions placed on refugees and the need to close the gap between refugee relief efforts and development. The seminar concluded that the traditional approaches to self-sufficiency and organized agricultural settlements can no longer suffice and that regional economic development was now vital to generate opportunities for refugees and nationals alike to be productive. Accordingly, the seminar urged that, to the extent possible, the Government of Sudan allow refugees more freedom of movement and access to markets and areas where employment can be sought.

CHAD AND CAMEROON--PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED
BUT REPATRIATION AND RESETTLEMENT ACHIEVED

The UNHCR experience in Somalia and subsequent response to international donor criticism ultimately resulted in UNHCR being better prepared to respond to Africa's next major refugee emergency in Chad and Cameroon. Although UNHCR was able to find what is hoped to be a lasting solution to the refugee problem by voluntarily repatriating most of the refugees from Chad and resettling others in Cameroon, the assistance program encountered some problems similar to those in Djibouti and Sudan.

As a result of new outbreaks in Chad's long civil war in 1979 and 1980, more than 100,000 people reportedly fled across the Chari River to northern Cameroon; tens of thousands more sought asylum in neighboring Nigeria, the Central African Republic, and Sudan.

UNHCR became involved in providing refugee assistance in 1980 when the Government of Cameroon realized the refugee problem might continue indefinitely and that the assistance program at the refugee camp at Kousseri, Cameroon--just across the Chari River from Chad's capital of N'Djamena--was too large for the Government of Cameroon to administer effectively. At this time, however, neither



SOURCE: UNHCR/11228/I. GUEST

UNHCR LORRY BOATS FERRY CHAD REFUGEES BACK ACROSS CHARI RIVER, 1981



SOURCE: GAO STAFF

**REPATRIATING CHAD REFUGEES IN NORTHERN CAMEROON
RECEIVE HOUSEHOLD UTENSILS FROM UNHCR.**

the Government nor UNHCR roles, responsibilities, and authority, were clearly established. For instance, UNHCR was not initially given a central role by the Government of Cameroon which wanted to maintain authority for all facets of the relief program and only use UNHCR personnel as technical advisors. UNHCR normally uses the asylum governments as operating partners; however, UNHCR officials in Cameroon complained about the Government retaining responsibility for implementing an assistance program it could not administer effectively. The Government of Cameroon, on the other hand, was initially disappointed with UNHCR because the staff lacked technical expertise and because the organization was not initially prepared to furnish much food or other assistance.

Although the initial UNHCR response in Cameroon was slow, (distribution of refugee registration cards, food deliveries, and funding of the Kousseri refugee camp's water supply system were delayed), UNHCR eventually assumed a coordinating and implementing role and managed most relief programs. UNHCR organized a repatriation effort to assist most of the refugees at the Kousseri camp in returning to N'Djamena. UNHCR also assumed responsibility for repatriating refugees from neighboring countries and assisted those persons displaced in Chad. Many refugees returned to N'Djamena voluntarily. According to U.S. officials in Cameroon, UNHCR-coordinated donor assistance was handled competently and efficiently. The successful management of the refugee camp at Kousseri and the repatriation of most of the refugees was also due to the efforts of (1) the Government of Cameroon for its cooperation in managing relief efforts at the Kousseri camp, (2) the AID Mission in Cameroon for its delivery of some 6,000 metric tons of U.S. sorghum from N'Djamena to Kousseri during the initial crisis, and (3) the Government of Chad for offering amnesty to the those returning refugees.

Delays in establishing a permanent resettlement site in Cameroon

Numerous delays hampered UNHCR efforts to permanently resettle (in Cameroon) 15,000 refugees who refused to be repatriated to N'Djamena. In July 1981, the Government of Chad proclaimed amnesty for those refugees who had left Chad. To encourage refugees to return, the Tripartite Commission--made up of the Governments of Chad and Cameroon and UNHCR--agreed to discontinue food distributions to the Kousseri refugee camp after September 30, 1981, and begin distributions in N'Djamena October 1, 1981.

For those originally estimated 15,000 refugees who indicated they did not wish to return to Chad, the Government of Cameroon provided a resettlement site near Poli in north-central Cameroon. Actual resettlement did not begin however, until March 1982--6 months after the repatriation effort began and food distribution

ended at Kousseri. These delays were caused by problems in selecting a suitable location--and subsequent site changes--by the Government of Cameroon. These problems included insufficient water supplies. Rumors of the river blindness disease at one of the sites also caused reluctance on the part of refugees to resettle in Cameroon.

These delays resulted in the refugee camp at Kousseri remaining open for months after the Chad repatriation took place and food distributions ended. Cognizant of the potential for famine at the camp, UNHCR convinced the Government of Cameroon, for humanitarian reasons, to allow another distribution of food at the camp. Although UNHCR originally anticipated resettling up to 15,000 refugees in Cameroon, in October 1982 the U.S. Embassy reported that only about 400 Chadians chose to remain in Cameroon.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe that the absence of comprehensive UNHCR plans and guidelines and clear and unrestrictive asylum-country refugee policies limit effective implementation of African refugee assistance programs. These problems, combined with the organization's inability to effectively coordinate internationally provided food and assistance, contribute to unsatisfactory amounts and types of UNHCR assistance provided refugees and hamper the UNHCR's ability to find lasting solutions to the plight of refugees.

UNHCR is the primary vehicle for carrying out U.S. African refugee assistance and for ensuring that refugee needs are met. From our observations of UNHCR refugee assistance in Sudan, Djibouti, Chad, and Cameroon, we believe there should be clear understandings and agreements between UNHCR and the asylum-country governments concerning the specific roles, responsibilities, and authority in dealing with refugee protection, care, resettlement, and repatriation. Such agreements should include asylum-country government policy toward refugees, including government positions on accepting refugees on a long-term or permanent basis and allowing refugees to resettle in the countries. With a clear understanding between UNHCR and the country governments, we believe UNHCR should be urged to develop, where feasible, a multiyear plan to resolve refugee problems in those countries where near-term lasting solutions do not appear possible--for example Sudan, Somalia, and Djibouti. Such plans should consider and provide alternatives for

--the duration and magnitude of the care needs;

--how UNHCR will meet its objectives in providing assistance;

--how material assistance objectives will complement UNHCR efforts to achieve lasting solutions; and

--milestones for meeting objectives and for phasing out refugee assistance.

UNHCR long-range plans should also include a projection of resources available from PVOs in asylum countries and a description of how these organizations will be used to implement the overall refugee assistance programs.

UNHCR officials in Khartoum contend that preparing an overall plan for Sudan is not feasible because of the constant state of flux of Ugandan refugees in the south. We believe that comprehensive, multiyear plans are possible for the rest of the country. Conditions at the refugee camps in the east and in Port Sudan appear relatively stable. Furthermore, the Government of Sudan has recognized (and UNHCR acknowledged) that these refugees will not soon return to their homelands. Thus, we believe that more comprehensive and longer-term planning for refugee assistance can be accomplished in Sudan. Such long-term plans are also feasible in Djibouti and are reportedly being prepared for Somalia.

To meet its responsibilities to press for improvements in UNHCR operations and to hold the organization accountable and responsible for meeting refugee needs, the Department of State should encourage UNHCR to better plan, coordinate, and implement its material assistance programs.

We, therefore, recommend that the Secretary of State encourage UNHCR, in planning and implementing African refugee assistance programs, to

--develop a more comprehensive working agreement with asylum governments, defining the specific roles, responsibilities, and authority of the UNHCR and the asylum governments; and

--develop a multiyear plan of operations for those countries where near-term solutions to refugee problems do not appear possible.

Such a plan of operations could include (1) a projection of how long refugee care will be needed, (2) a description of how UNHCR plans to meet its objective for providing material assistance, (3) an assessment of how such assistance will complement efforts to achieve lasting solutions, and (4) milestones for meeting objectives and phasing out material assistance.

The plan could also identify the roles and resources of PVOs in-country and include how these organizations will be used. Their resources could then be coordinated to effectively implement refugee programs.

AGENCY COMMENTS

In their response to our draft report, the Department of State and AID commented that in the past 2 years UNHCR has made significant improvements in African program management and administration. During discussions with agency officials, and as noted in the comments, they agreed that UNHCR programs can be improved. Further, they generally concurred with our description of UNHCR programs and the conclusions and recommendations reached.

CHAPTER 4

WAYS TO IMPROVE U.S.

PARTICIPATION IN REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

In responding to African refugee problems, the Department of State is responsible for

- channeling U.S. assistance through appropriate international organizations,
- overseeing the effectiveness of the planning, programing, and monitoring of refugee assistance programs receiving U.S. funds, and
- pressing international organizations (like UNHCR) to effectively meet refugee needs.

Most U.S. African refugee assistance funds are channeled through UNHCR. State efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of UNHCR assistance programs, however, have been limited, and State generally has not assured that U.S. refugee program funds are being adequately administered. Further, State has been unsuccessful in pressing for improvements in UNHCR operations to meet refugee needs--from emergency relief to finding lasting solutions to their problems. We believe this situation is due to the limited in-country evaluation of and reporting on, UNHCR program effectiveness and the unrestricted method the United States uses to fund most UNHCR programs.

STATE EVALUATION OF UNHCR REFUGEE PROGRAMS SHOULD BE IMPROVED

The September 1980, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations report on the refugee situation in Somalia stated:

"The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees should have the authority to raise the alarm about a major humanitarian problem (and) should be held accountable for doing so. * * * If the UNHCR is not held accountable by the international community for responding to the problem, nobody will be * * *."

As specified in the Refugee Act of 1980, and as a result of being a major donor to UNHCR, the United States has a humanitarian obligation and the responsibility to assist UNHCR in meeting refugee needs and to encourage UNHCR to use the donor contributions more effectively in implementing assistance programs. The limited extent of State evaluating and reporting on UNHCR assistance programs reduces its ability to hold UNHCR accountable for program

funds. Presently, there is an absence of (1) in-country assessments of specific UNHCR activities and projects and (2) a system to bring project shortcomings (such as we described in ch. 3) to the attention of the U.S. agencies and UNHCR. In addition, State does not encourage UNHCR to effectively coordinate the uses of all donor contributions to refugee assistance.

The extent of State (or AID mission) in-country monitoring and assessing of UNHCR projects has been at the discretion of the individual country missions. We noted U.S. embassy involvement in refugee activities in Djibouti, Sudan, Chad, and Cameroon, varied widely. Generally, the U.S. country missions see their role as one of reporting on refugee activities rather than monitoring and evaluating refugee programs carried out by international organizations. As a result, State has not adequately ensured that U.S. funds for African refugee relief programs, especially those channeled through UNHCR, are being used efficiently.

Limited in-country assessment at present

State and AID officials in Djibouti monitor and report on UNHCR assistance projects in that country. The embassy, however, did not appear to use this information to encourage UNHCR to more effectively implement such assistance. At a time when refugee assistance was found to be extensive and needed to be phased out, and when repatriation efforts should have been intensified, UNHCR assistance, along with U.S. support, was being increased. From 1981 through 1983, for example, the amount of planned UNHCR refugee assistance was four times greater than the previous 3 years. Though the U.S. embassy recognized that refugee assistance was excessive and that repatriation efforts could have been increased, U.S. funding of UNHCR assistance programs remained unchanged. The extent and/or effectiveness of UNHCR assistance did not appear to be a factor influencing U.S. support for such projects.

The U.S. Embassy in Sudan has been more active in evaluating refugee programs (including establishing a refugee coordinator position in the Embassy), but problems noted are not being systematically brought to UNHCR's attention. Although assistance project problems in Port Sudan and in the Juba area were identified and reported on during field trips to the camps by the U.S. refugee coordinator and other staff, we found no evidence that such information ever reached UNHCR for corrective action. As noted earlier, some UNHCR programs in Sudan are not meeting basic refugee needs.

Direct involvement in refugee assistance programs by the U.S. embassies in Chad and Cameroon is limited. In Chad, this is due mainly to limited staff. In Cameroon, U.S. Embassy officials place sole responsibility for refugee emergency relief and care

on UNHCR and other international organizations. An AID contract officer monitors the receipt, storage, and distribution of U.S. food contributions and provides some assessment of UNHCR refugee assistance in the country. According to AID officials in Cameroon, the mission staff participated in determining refugee needs, but further involvement was limited.

Unrestricted U.S. contributions
difficult to track

The unrestricted mode the United States uses to fund UNHCR's African relief programs makes it difficult to determine if such monies are being used efficiently in meeting refugee needs. For example, in 1981, the United States contributed approximately \$50 million to UNHCR programs in Africa. Of this amount, about \$47.4 million (about 95 percent) was unrestricted cash contributions--not earmarked for specific commodities or countries. (See app. II.) UNHCR was able to direct and spend these funds for any assistance programs in Africa. In contrast, about 70 percent of all other donor countries' contributions was earmarked. Because UNHCR does not routinely maintain records of how specific donor unrestricted cash contributions are spent and because State does not request that UNHCR keep such records, it is virtually impossible to determine if specific U.S. contributions are being efficiently used. These U.S. unrestricted cash contributions represented approximately 55.7 percent of the total UNHCR unrestricted cash contributions of \$85.1 million.

In this review, we did not examine the implications of increased U.S. earmarking of funds to UNHCR. However, State officials, in responding to our draft report, commented that the United States is increasingly resorting to earmarking its pledges to try to improve its ability to ensure that such U.S. funds are being used effectively.

MORE CLEARLY DEFINED CRITERIA NEEDED
FOR AID INVOLVEMENT IN REFUGEE ASSISTANCE

Although refugee relief and resettlement operations are now consolidated within State, AID's responsibility for long-term economic development programs could include some involvement in resettling refugees in asylum countries. AID officials have stated that because refugee programs could have serious consequences for asylum-country development, they must be formulated and implemented within a development context. As such, some AID and State officials believe that the Agency can, and should, seek increased responsibilities for assistance keyed to refugee development needs.

To meet this responsibility, a one-time project--African Resettlement Services and Facilities Project--was proposed in fiscal year 1982 to assist in resettling refugees, returnees, and

displaced persons in Africa. The AID-administered project was intended to provide these persons with the opportunity to become productive members of the asylum countries. In October 1982, State and AID officials told us that project emphasis had changed and the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons no longer was the primary objective of the project. Emphasis now is on providing these people the skills and resources necessary to allow them to become self-sufficient in asylum countries while preserving the option for more satisfactory and long-term solutions--primarily repatriation.

The Congress earmarked \$30 million of the 1982 migration and refugee appropriations for this project, provided that AID use the funds "for settlement services and facilities for refugees and displaced persons in Africa * * *." According to AID officials, this project will allow the Agency to move into the gap between the ongoing care of refugees largely managed by UNHCR, and the additional development needs of asylum countries which stem from refugee problems. Generally, UNHCR and other international organizations have not provided for these needs.

AID anticipated providing similar self-reliance projects as part of its program in Africa after 1982. AID recognizes, however, that certain conditions must be met before such assistance is provided. Specifically, asylum governments must

- decide to integrate or reintegrate the refugees and displaced people into the economy,
- be willing to expand current services or provide alternative services to those already being provided, and
- not be perceived by the citizens as providing more for refugees than for its own people.

AID planned refugee development

AID plans for the \$30-million African Resettlement Services and Facilities Project include efforts to resettle farmers, herdsmen, and urban refugees who need skills training and to increase the self-sufficiency of these people. These sub-projects in east and central Africa include small-scale agriculture and forestry activities and non-formal vocational training, as well as employment programs in Sudan and Somalia.

The Government of Sudan considers the refugees as guests, but imposed restrictions prevent many refugees from obtaining work permits and effectively integrating into the Sudan economy. (See ch. 3.) In addition, according to State reports, the Government of Somalia, although endorsing refugee self-reliance activities in principle, does not allow refugees to permanently resettle

or integrate into Somali society. Further, refugees are not included in the country's development plans. Both of these governments believe that, for most refugees, voluntary repatriation is the only solution. Notwithstanding these asylum-country policies limiting refugee resettlement and restricting their economic integration, AID continues to develop plans to help refugees become self-sufficient and to economically integrate in these countries.

Because the proposed project was in the planning stage during our review, we did not analyze plans and evaluate the objectives of fund allocations among countries. We believe, however, that providing development assistance to refugees in such countries as Sudan and Somalia, where the governments restrict refugees' opportunities for resettlement and economic integration, may be counterproductive by conflicting with efforts to promote voluntary repatriation. Long-term refugee development assistance will work only if asylum countries ease existing restrictions and allow the refugees to economically integrate.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe that State Department efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of U.S.-funded African refugee programs have been limited and, thus, State cannot effectively meet its responsibility to press UNHCR to meet refugee needs. Because of the recognized need to improve UNHCR capabilities to efficiently respond to refugee conditions in Africa, we recommend that the Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Administrator, AID, where appropriate, establish a means to better evaluate and report on specific UNHCR refugee programs. State Department oversight of UNHCR programs should determine if such programs

- provide assistance to all refugees who require assistance,
- provide reasonable amounts and types of assistance in keeping with UNHCR standards and objectives,
- are effectively coordinated with other donors and PVOs, and
- promote lasting solutions to refugee problems.

Some refugee problems are beyond the resources available to UNHCR and other international organizations and may require additional direct assistance from individual countries. Recently, AID and State have sought to program bilateral assistance to resettle and integrate African refugees into the economies of asylum countries and try to make refugees self-sufficient. Because such assistance was being planned during our review and no formal agreements with prospective recipient governments in east and

central Africa were reached, we did not attempt to assess the extent to which benefits could be realized from such U.S. investments. We do, however, concur with AID that certain asylum government commitments to refugees must be made (including removing barriers for economic integration) before such direct U.S. assistance is provided. Yet, AID project plans permit project implementation even if such asylum-government commitments are not made. In seeking a greater operational role in providing development-type assistance to refugees (including skills training and employment programs), we believe State and AID should clearly determine that opportunities for economic integration of refugees exist in these countries which will allow refugees to use these skills, become self-sufficient, and make the projects effective.

To eliminate any conflict with U.S. refugee policy to share the costs of refugee assistance with the international community, State and AID should clearly state why direct U.S., rather than multilateral, assistance is necessary. Finally, State and AID should then consider whether these projects in asylum countries will conflict with, or hinder, UNHCR and other international efforts to voluntarily repatriate refugees. Accordingly, we recommend that the Administrator, AID, closely monitor Agency plans for bilateral refugee assistance to assure that asylum countries remove barriers to economic integration of refugees before making such direct U.S. commitments.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Department of State and AID, after reviewing our draft report, jointly concurred with the general theme that better monitoring and evaluation of UNHCR programs can ensure that U.S. contributions are effectively used. They also referred to measures taken in Somalia and elsewhere to ensure more effective U.S. contributions. We have refocused our recommendation in this final report to emphasize the need for better evaluation and reporting, not just monitoring.

Clarification was also provided by AID concerning the change in emphasis of the planned African Resettlement Services and Facilities Project. We recognize that the project's shift from a refugee resettlement emphasis to one of self-reliance and productive activities for people in refugee-impacted areas may relieve AID and State of certain pressures to determine the likelihood of eventual refugee repatriation. We made changes, where appropriate, to reflect current program objectives and Agency concerns, including modifying the proposal in the draft report that asylum-country governments allow refugees to resettle permanently in the country before such assistance is provided.

We also recognize that AID does have a comprehensive project review process intended to assure that planned projects are proper and consistent with overall U.S. refugee assistance objectives. We do, however, continue to believe that top management in AID must give particular attention to its final plans for direct U.S. assistance. We believe that before such projects proceed, State and AID should justify that bilateral, rather than multilateral, assistance is necessary to allow for effective implementation of U.S.-funded projects which are aimed at lessening the economic impact of refugees on asylum countries.

UNHCR
EXPENDITURES IN 1980 BY COUNTRY OR AREA AND
MAIN TYPES OF ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

<u>Country</u>	<u>Local settlement</u>	<u>Resettlement</u>	<u>Voluntary repatriation</u>	<u>Relief and other assistance</u>	<u>Total</u>
	--(\$ 000)--				
AFRICA					
Algeria/Morocco/ Tunisia	\$ 59.4	\$ 1.8	\$ 8.8	\$ 63.8	\$ 133.8
Angola	5,101.6	-	-	540.2	5,641.8
Botswana	525.5	5.0	350.9	264.0	1,145.4
Burundi	371.7	0.7	-	-	372.4
Djibouti	4,341.1	22.4	0.3	87.6	4,451.4
Egypt	1,150.8	33.4	1.4	134.6	1,320.2
Ethiopia	929.8	73.4	14.6	1,745.8	2,763.6
Gabon	21.0	-	-	-	21.0
Ghana	145.3	-	-	-	145.3
Kenya	1,865.5	20.4	57.0	477.9	2,420.8
Lesotho	345.3	15.7	53.7	241.7	656.4
Mozambique	4,717.2	3.2	5,006.3	1,423.4	11,150.1
Nigeria	586.9	-	-	106.0	692.9
Rwanda	145.5	23.4	-	40.9	209.8
Senegal	249.5	-	-	0.3	249.8
Somalia	3,288.9	4.9	-	55,173.7	58,467.5
Sudan	13,870.3	25.3	184.5	993.1	15,073.2
Swaziland	828.7	12.0	0.7	374.5	1,215.9
Uganda	1,976.0	5.1	4.7	766.6	2,752.4
United Rep. of Cameroon	8,708.1	1.6	-	687.4	9,397.1
United Rep. of Tanzania	6,081.4	3.7	146.2	190.3	6,421.6
Zaire	7,474.7	-	2.2	499.2	7,976.1
Zambia	2,905.9	1.3	3,716.8	54.9	6,678.9
Zimbabwe	1,401.3	-	-	21,914.3	23,315.6
Other countries	775.0	0.5	7.3	295.0	1,077.8
Global allocation for followup on recom- mendations of Pan African Conference on Refugees	-	-	-	445.9	445.9
Totals	<u>\$67,866.4</u>	<u>\$253.8</u>	<u>\$9,555.4</u>	<u>\$86,521.1</u>	<u>\$164,196.7</u>

Source: UNHCR Report on UNHCR Assistance Activities in 1980-1981 and Proposed Voluntary Funds Programs and Budget for 1982, (Aug. 10, 1981).

INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO
UNHCR PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

1981

<u>Donor government</u>	<u>Cash contributions -unrestricted-</u>	<u>Cash contributions -country specific-</u>	<u>In-kind contributions</u>	<u>Total contributions</u>
Australia	\$2,309,179	\$ 5,316,207	\$14,063,587	\$ 21,688,973
Bahrain	-	50,000	-	50,000
Belgium	-	66,141	1,471,019	1,537,160
Cyprus	-	504	-	504
Canada	-	5,466,857	-	5,466,857
Chile	15,000	-	-	15,000
China	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000
Denmark	1,694,915	1,134,521	-	2,829,436
Finland	-	424,891	-	424,891
France	884,956	-	5,205	890,161
West Germany	670,841	4,664,397	3,776,677	9,111,915
Ghana	50,000	-	-	50,000
Greece	-	-	15,000	15,000
Iceland	10,000	-	-	10,000
Indonesia	20,000	-	-	20,000
Ireland	47,250	22,230	-	69,480
Italy	-	82,645	-	82,645
Japan	5,000,000	-	-	5,000,000
Kuwait	2,000,000	-	-	2,000,000
Liechtenstein	9,901	-	-	9,901
Luxembourg	7,692	-	104,478	112,170
Malawi	5,882	-	-	5,882
Mexico	-	2,928	-	2,928
Netherlands	1,923,077	-	-	1,923,077
New Zealand	172,048	-	-	172,048
Nigeria	3,000,000	-	-	3,000,000
Norway	1,818,182	506,186	-	2,324,268
Pakistan	44,444	-	-	44,444
Portugal	-	2,500	-	2,500
Qatar	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000
Republic of Korea	20,000	-	-	20,000
Saudi Arabia	15,000,000	16,000,000	-	31,000,000
Singapore	10,000	-	-	10,000
Sweden	920,810	3,783,968	86,580	4,791,358
Syria	10,000	-	-	10,000
Thailand	10,000	-	-	10,000
Turkey	10,000	9,543	-	19,543
U. Rep. of Tanzania	12,121	-	-	12,121
United Kingdom	-	5,991,809	176,211	6,168,020
E.E.C.	-	17,193,361	4,057,831	21,251,192
Switzerland	-	469,484	2,664,866	3,134,350
Totals	<u>\$37,676,298</u>	<u>\$61,188,172</u>	<u>\$26,421,454</u>	<u>\$125,554,264</u>
United States	47,441,027	1,670,000	888,973	50,000,000
TOTALS	<u>\$85,117,325</u>	<u>\$62,858,172</u>	<u>\$27,310,427</u>	<u>\$175,554,264</u>

Source: UNHCR, External Affairs Division.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Comptroller
Washington, D.C. 20520

October 20, 1982


Dear Frank:

I am replying to your letter of September 20, 1982, which forwarded copies of the draft report: "U.S. Oversight of African Refugee Assistance Can be Strengthened."

The enclosed comments on this report reflect the views of the Department of State and Agency for International Development.

We appreciate having had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report. If I may be of further assistance, I trust you will let me know.

Sincerely,


Roger B. Feldman

Enclosure:
As stated.

Mr. Frank C. Conahan,
Director,
International Division,
U.S. General Accounting Office,
Washington, D.C.

GAO Draft Report: "US Oversight of African Refugee Assistance Can be Strengthened."

This is in response to the draft GAO Report entitled, "U.S. Oversight of African Refugee Assistance Can Be Strengthened." The Department of State and AID are replying to your draft report in a joint response because we wish to emphasize the close working relationships and similarities of view we share in dealing with the many problems of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa.

We are pleased that the GAO, State Bureau for Refugee Programs and AID staff held several long review sessions to discuss the substance and recommendations of your draft report. As a result of these meetings, a number of corrections of fact (e.g., estimates of refugee populations), necessary distinctions (e.g., the difference between refugees and displaced people) and suggestions concerning tone and nuance have been accepted by the GAO and will, we understand, be reflected in the final report. We are also pleased the GAO has found helpful the cabled comments from our Embassies in Djibouti, Sudan and Cameroon, and that many of the field comments have been used to revise portions of the draft report. Because of the amicable and productive discussions we have held with the GAO, we believe your final report will be more accurate and fair, both in its narrative and recommendations.

In this response we comment on your proposed conclusions and recommendations. While closer evaluation and monitoring of UNHCR programs in Africa are a given, and a goal for which we are continually striving, we believe that significant improvements have been made in Africa program management and administration by the UNHCR in the past two years. This has been, in large part, owing to continuous USC prodding of UNHCR, both in the field and at their Geneva headquarters. In the case of Somalia, for example, the U.S. resorted to earmarking of its pledge to bring about just those points which you propose to make in the report's conclusions and recommendations. And we will continue to earmark--judiciously--to bring about the kinds of programs appropriate to the conditions extant in each host country. In the process of preparing for the just concluded UNHCR Executive Committee meeting, our Embassies in Africa were requested to evaluate proposed individual UNHCR country programs and budgets for the year ahead (samples of the reporting cables have been provided). These and other measures have been and will continue to be taken to strengthen U.S. efforts to evaluate and improve upon the effectiveness of U.S.-funded refugee programs in Africa.


The most important subject we wish to clarify in the final report, however, is the \$30 million Special Appropriation transferred to AID for their African Resettlement Services and Facilities project. The title of this project is now a bit inaccurate, since in the evolution of our thinking and development of the guidelines

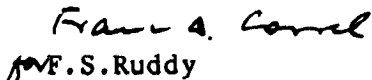
- 2 -

for the project (copy attached), we came to the conclusion that self-reliance and productive activities for the target groups were more consistent objectives than resettlement of refugees prior to definitive determination that voluntary repatriation was not possible. It has never been our intention to develop activities with the \$30 million which would be counter-productive to the official U.S. and internationally accepted policy of encouraging voluntary repatriation to country of origin as the preferred solution for refugees. The guidelines for the \$30 million project now explicitly aim to make the target groups, whether refugee, displaced person or returnee, more productive through encouraging greater self-reliance. At the same time, activities under the project are directed at decreasing the financial and administrative impact of these populations on the host country while trying to insure that whatever development momentum is underway in the host country is not lost due to the necessity of providing assistance to the refugees. We believe the review process instituted for each of the proposed activities under the \$30 million appropriation insures that the activities are examined thoroughly from a number of different perspectives, not only for their intrinsic value as development oriented activities but also to insure there is no attempt made to inhibit the voluntary repatriation of the target group to its country of origin, should the opportunity present itself. In this way, we believe we are consistent with the objective of voluntary repatriation of refugees. At the same time, through support of the activities, we are lessening the impact of the refugees on their country of asylum. We hope to make the target groups more productive in situ and, hopefully, in their country of origin when they have been repatriated.

We believe the direction in which we are proceeding is consistent with the activity data sheet for the project presented by AID in the FY 1982 Congressional Presentation for Africa and with testimony by the Agency before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in March 1982. With our emphasis on self-sufficiency and productivity in the project, the preconditions put forward in the draft GAO report would have to be modified.

Please let us know if we can be of further assistance to you in the preparation of the final report to the Congress.


James Purcell
Director, Bureau for Refugee
Programs
Department of State


F. S. Ruddy
Assistant Administrator
for Africa
Agency for International
Development

Attachment:
As stated

POLICY AND PROGRAM GUIDELINES FOR
AFRICA RESETTLEMENT SERVICES AND FACILITIES
PROJECT 698-0502

PREFACE

In the FY 1982 Congressional Presentation, AID requested \$20 million of Development Assistance funds for a project designed to increase self-sufficiency among refugees, displaced persons and returnees in Africa, thereby reducing their dependence on host governments (AID CP FY 1982, Annex 1, Africa Programs, p. 556). The Congress responded to AID's request by earmarking a portion of the \$503 million in non-DA funds appropriated for migration and refugee assistance activities of the Department of State as follows: "...Provided that \$30,000,000 of this amount shall be transferred to the Agency for International Development to be used only for resettlement services and facilities for refugees and displaced persons in Africa....".

What follows explains the policies governing how the funds will be used and establishes guidelines for project design and implementation. The \$30 million and all activities deriving therefrom will be obligated under the broad policy guidance of the Department of State.

INTRODUCTION

There are probably as many as three million people throughout sub-Saharan Africa who are either refugees, internally displaced persons or returnees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates the continent has more than two million political refugees. In addition to those unfortunate people, up to another million Africans have left their homes and countries because of the impact of specific environmental and economic conditions. These people represent the diverse motivations for flight, encompassing movement for economic, ecological and life-threatening reasons in addition to the traditional political/religious motives. No matter why these people fled, they place a significant burden on their host countries, nations which are already faced with severe economic problems and lack of resources.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project are twofold:

- to help refugees become more productive and self-reliant through participation in development activities; and
- to reduce the need for and burden of refugee care and maintenance on the host country and international donor community.

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The objectives are interlinked, but reducing the welfare dependency depends in great part upon providing opportunities for and achieving increased productivity among refugees. In order to achieve the objectives, funds available through this project will be obligated for medium- and longer-term development activities. Going beyond relief or care and maintenance programs, which provide from external sources the bare essentials to keep people in camps alive, these activities will provide beneficiaries with:

- skills, to make them more productive,
- inputs, to increase their self-sufficiency, and
- the atmosphere necessary to make the transition from non-productive, life-in-camps to more productive and satisfactory solutions to their refugee or displaced status.

BENEFICIARIES

The principal beneficiaries of activities under the project will be African refugees, displaced persons and returnees residing in African nations. But the activities envisaged cannot be undertaken solely amongst these people. All people in a project area should be allowed to participate in an activity and must perceive benefits accruing to them from their participation. To exclude the indigenous, non-refugee population is to court failure and risk exacerbating what may already be perceived as privileged status for refugees.

The \$30 million appropriation will permit us to begin activities to make African refugees, displaced persons and returnees, in rural and urban areas, in camps and who have settled spontaneously, more productive while bringing them under the umbrella of host government and donor-supported assistance programs. This is a logical follow-on to the usual refugee relief program, which concentrate more care and maintenance of people in refugee camps.

AREA OF CONCENTRATION

In the past, African refugee relief programs have been life-support efforts, providing life support to people in a temporary situation. It is generally hoped the recipients will eventually repatriate voluntarily to their country of origin. There is little desire or effort to change these temporary refugees from their dependent status. There is seldom much effort in the beginning to achieve some degree of refugee self-reliance and, further, no attempt to involve refugees in general country development programs. Refugee programs have been conceived and implemented in this fashion for several reasons, primarily because

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immediate, life-support needs are often real and urgent, but also because refugee assistance programs in Africa and host government attitudes have been slow to adapt to the changed nature of the refugee situation on the continent. Nowadays one must also think of refugees who will not return home in the near term, or wish to settle in their country of asylum or a third country.

The basic policy objectives of this project are to make people more productive and less burdensome to the international donors and host country - while preserving the option for more satisfactory solutions in the longer term. As a result, activities contemplated will go beyond emergency and life support actions and provide a basis for development. It is anticipated such activities will build on and carry to a logical conclusion germane life support programs.

Given the development needs of African countries, the first and clearest priority is to increase their capability to feed their people. Further, the greatest opportunities for almost all Africans, including the target groups of this project, will come from increasing agricultural production. Therefore, those schemes aimed at increasing agricultural production as the means to making people more productive, primarily through people-intensive approaches involving land usage, water resources development, fuel production/conservation and skills training, will have highest priority under this project.

While agricultural production is the primary emphasis and highest priority, there are numerous other areas of concern. These areas include, but are not limited to, off-farm employment, vocational and skills training in urban areas for local industry, increasing productivity of spontaneous refugees in urban areas and secondary and tertiary activities having an impact on agricultural production.

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The funds available will be allocated for activities throughout Africa that meet the criteria of and are consistent with the policies of these guidelines.

The State/AID approach is to exercise prudence while being flexible and innovative. We encourage missions to examine carefully current and proposed portfolios of other donors, international organizations, commercial entities, private and voluntary organizations and host governments, particularly their submissions to the International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa in 1981 (ICARA), to determine if our funds could act as catalyst or

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supplement to plans and projects of others in the same area. Missions should also use availability of funds under this project to stimulate thinking on creative approaches to the problems of refugees.

This project is developmental and, even though some of the target groups may not yet be included in the host country's development plans, activities planned hereunder should be consistent with the individual country CDSS/SPSS.

A. USAID MISSION

Since many missions already have projects aimed at increasing agricultural production, funds from this project might be used to complement on-going or planned activities. Missions should review their portfolios to see if other activities meet this project's guidelines and whether expansion through amendment is appropriate.

This activity can benefit from linkage with other activities, such as Food for Work, programs financed by local currency proceeds (from PL-480 and ESF programs, for example), Embassy special self-help activities, or non-emergency PL-480 Title II programs. Future local currency proceeds could be programmed to help achieve the objectives of the project.

B. PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

Numerous non-governmental organizations such as PVOs have been extensively involved in refugee relief programs in African countries. Undoubtedly, several of them could make the shift from relief to income-generating agricultural production activities. These organizations are familiar with the country environment, refugees in camps, development problems in rural areas and are in an excellent position to coordinate self-reliance, development activities. Indeed, some PVOs have already undertaken self-reliance and development oriented activities involving refugees and are capable of expanding their programs.

In talking with PVOs about the project it should be borne in mind that we are interested in larger, multi-year development activities using grant, cooperative agreement or contract financing. In addition, our objectives for projects involving PVOs are:

- large-scale units of management, larger activities that are more development-oriented than the programs they have undertaken in refugee camps in the past;
- maximum self-reliance/development impact on the target group rather than building up the PVO's institutional capability;

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- participation, consistent with Agency guidelines, towards meeting project costs from the PVO's own resources;
- multi-year development projects; and
- regular reporting and outside evaluation of project activities during and after completion of the activity.

C. STUDIES

In general, there is insufficient information on refugees. It is important that proposed activities take the special circumstances and skills of the target groups into consideration. Many people in target groups are women and children, or nomadic, or farmers, or skilled in some way. These skills and capabilities must be known and factored into project activities. In order to design reasonable and effective activities, funds available under this project will be allotted to field posts and AID/W for necessary studies and project design.

D. PRIORITY FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

Those countries with the greatest concentration of people in the target group, most urgent need for environment conducive to implementing the types of activities described will receive priority consideration for allocation of funds.

Based on these guidelines, agricultural production activities are favored, implementation by PVO or other non-AID method is preferred; and countries having positive (i.e., supportive and helpful) policies towards increasing productivity of refugees, displaced persons and returnees will receive higher priority in allocation of funds.

On the latter point, and consistent with the intent of this project, funds could be obligated to help governments develop and institutionalize a capability to respond positively to the self-reliance/development needs of this project's intended beneficiaries.

E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The \$30 million has been appropriated to the Department of State's Bureau for Refugee Programs and, after authorization, will be transferred to AID. Guidelines for expenditure of the funds represent the joint policies of State RP and AID. The AA/AFR will become the allottee of the funds and the Africa Bureau will manage the project. AID will monitor and report on the use of the funds. At present the funds are available for obligation through September 30, 1982, but AID is working with the Department of State and the Congress to have the availability extended.

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The funds for this program of assistance to African refugees and displaced persons are funds authorized pursuant to the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (MRA Act) and appropriated to the Secretary of State for migration and refugee assistance by the Foreign Assistance and Related Programs Appropriation Act, 1982 (Pub. L. 97-121). As noted previously, the FA Appropriations Act requires the transfer of the funds (\$30 million) to AID to be used only for resettlement services and facilities for refugees and displaced persons in Africa.

Section 4(b) of the MRA Act authorized the allocation or transfer of funds available under that Act to any other Federal agency to carry out the purpose of the Act. Section 4(b) further provides that such allocated or transferred funds shall be available for obligation and expenditure in accordance with authority contained in the MRA Act or under authority governing the activities of the Federal agencies to which funds are allocated and transferred.

This legal setting provides flexibility in the design and implementation of projects and activities under the program since the MRA Act does not contain any of the special requirements found in the Foreign Assistance Act, such as source and origin requirements, that are designed to apply to traditional technical assistance or commodity-financed activities. While the initial obligation for each project may be made with funds from the \$30 million, subsequent obligations for the same activity must be financed from a different funding source.

Prudent management requires, however, that the basic principles which govern the design and implementation of traditional AID assistance projects should be the guidelines for the design and implementation of activities which are to be financed with the transferred funds.

The general requirements are as follows:

Procurement source/origin and nationality guidelines

Apply in order of preference as follows:

- (1) United States (Code 000)
- (2) Host Country or Geographic Code 941
- (3) Geographic Code 935

Ocean Shipping

Cargo preference requirements apply

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Projects design procedures

Apply generally the normal AID procedures (e.g., PID, PP, etc.) and the procedures set forth at Section 6B1 of Handbook 3.

Procurement procedures

Apply Handbook 11 or AIDPRs as with host country contracts or direct AID contracts.

Agreements

Utilize standard project grant agreements or agreements with private organizations, modified as may be necessary to accord with these guidelines.

F. REVIEW PROCEDURE FOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES

All activities proposed for implementation under the project, except those to be financed from the studies and design money, will be reviewed in the same fashion as a normal development project. The AID/W review process will begin with consideration of a PID or PID-like document submitted by the appropriate AID mission.

The AID/W review committee will be chaired by the appropriate AID/Africa Development Resources division and will include relevant technical and program representation including the Department of State's Bureau for Refugee Programs, the Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance and the PPC and Africa Bureau Coordinators for Refugees. Mission participation in the review is encouraged.

The goal of the review committee will be to recommend to the AA/AFR the maximum permissible delegation of authority at the time the PID approval cable is sent.

G. OTHER

The Africa Bureau's Coordinator for Refugee and Humanitarian Affairs (located in AFR/DR/ARD) will be responsible for monitoring the receipt and review of all project-related documents. In addition, the Coordinator will be responsible for preparation of all project-related submissions for the ABS, CP and OYB (project 698-0502), and for managing the allotment of study and design funds to the field.

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