

tions of the European Anti-Corruption Agency. At the same time, it is highly probable that an Independent Audit and Oversight Committee will be established, which will report not only to the management, but also directly to member states through the chairman of the Executive Committee. UNHCR's governing bodies' discussions on the mandate of this Committee are now reaching conclusion.

UNHCR has adopted a resolution to base its accounting practices on the International Public Sector Accountability Standard (IPSAS) from 1 January 2012, which will make it possible to publish an IPSAS-certified financial report for 2012.

3. Norway's policy towards UNHCR

Norway is a strong, declared supporter of UNHCR, has long been deeply engaged in refugee issues and is the fifth largest contributor of funding for the agency (second largest on a national per capita basis). Norway's annual core contribution to UNHCR in the period 2009-2011 totals NOK 290 million. In addition, Norway has provided support for the agency's activities in certain countries.

Norway seeks not only to be a predictable donor, but also a relevant, constructive partner in addressing issues relating to specific refugee situations and future challenges. Protracted refugee situations are an area in which Norway has contributed political and financial assistance. One example is the situation for Eritrean refugees in East Sudan, the oldest refugee situation not counting the Palestinians in the Middle East. In collaboration with development stakeholders and the Sudanese authorities, UNHCR is trying to phase out the camps and integrate the refugees into local communities. Norway is supporting these efforts by providing both humanitarian and development funds, and by resettling Eritrean refugees under its resettlement quota. In Iran, too, Norway has actively promoted a "strategic" use of the resettlement instrument, i.e. selecting resettlement refugees while pursuing a dialogue with the host country authorities on increased protection of the large group who remain in the country.

Norway has long been at the forefront of efforts to secure UNHCR's mandate and resources to take responsibility for internally displaced persons, a group who have far weaker legal protection than refugees. Norway has also advocated that UNHCR should be able to help environmentally displaced persons, individuals who flee their countries due to a natural disaster. These are people who are not entitled to protection under the Refugee Convention, but who nonetheless often

have just as great a need for protection. Most of them will be internally displaced persons, many for just a short time. UNHCR takes a pragmatic approach whereby the agency is willing to provide assistance where capacity is available and the host country permits it. This is a policy that Norway supports. It is highly likely that climate changes will cause the number of environmentally displaced persons to multiply in the future, and Norway intends to join forces with UNHCR in seeking to focus greater international attention on the issue of their protection.

Norway has for several years urged UNHCR to strengthen the gender perspective in its activities and increase the proportion of women in leading positions in the agency. Norway has participated in a steering group to ensure that UNHCR carries out its own AGDM plan (see above). The AGDM process also includes protection of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, trans- and intersexuals. There is no consensus among member states regarding this group's need for protection, making it all the more important to support UNHCR's efforts to this end.

UNHCR is also an important partner in Norway's efforts to implement its own asylum policy. On the whole, Norway follows UNHCR's recommendations on asylum and, as one of relatively few countries, resettles 1,200 "quota refugees" every year. The selection of these refugees is carried out in close cooperation with UNHCR. Accepting resettlement refugees helps to ease the pressure on UNHCR resources, but is not registered as assistance for the agency. More important, perhaps, is the fact that resettlement helps to ensure more equitable burden-sharing. At present, the neighbouring countries still bear the brunt of the costs of refugees worldwide.

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<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/selected-topics/un>.

1. Facts and figures

Type of organisation: UN agency

Established in: 1950

Headquarters: Geneva

Number of country offices: 135

Head of organisation: High Commissioner António Guterres (Portugal)

Dates of Executive Committee meetings 2011: 1-3 March, 21-23 June, 21-22 September, 3-7 October

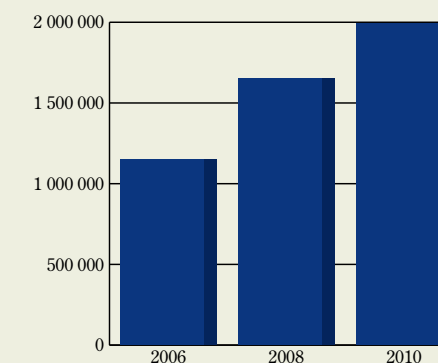
Norway's representation on Executive Committee: Member of the Executive Committee

Number of Norwegian staff: 23

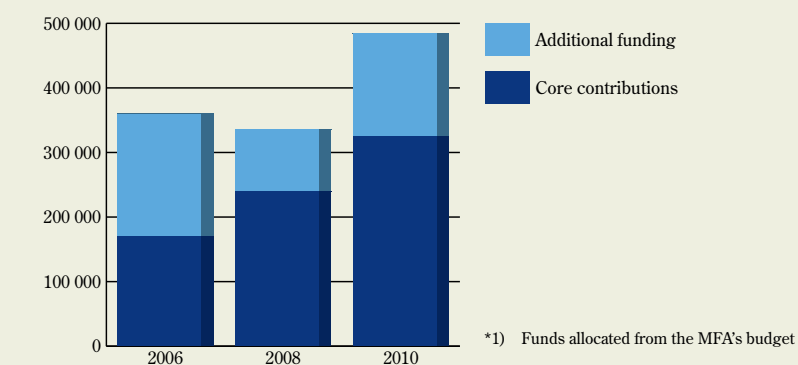
Responsible ministry: Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), (Norwegian Ministry of Justice for resettlement refugees)

Website: www.unhcr.org

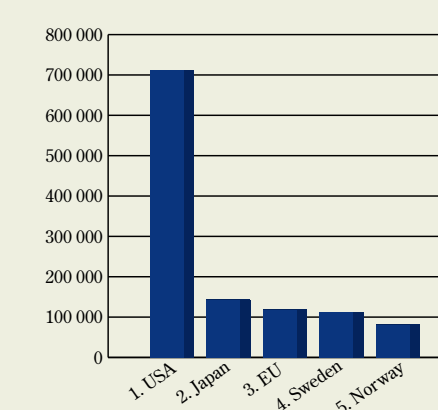
Total revenues (in US\$ 1000)



Norway's contributions ^{*1)} (in NOK 1000)



The five largest donors in 2010 (in US\$ 1000)



Mandate and areas of activity

Under the 1951 Refugee Convention, UNHCR's mandate is to provide protection and assistance to persons who are fleeing from persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, and to seek durable solutions to the world's refugee problems. The High Commissioner is also increasingly engaged in efforts to assist internally displaced persons (IDPs), even though the agency's mandate requires decisions in that respect by the UN's governing bodies and is based on the possibilities available to UNHCR through its already established country offices. In accordance with the UN's cluster approach aimed at ensuring a more effective humanitarian response, UNHCR plays a leading role in providing protection and shelter and administering camps for IDPs. UNHCR's mandate does not cover Palestinian refugees (approx. 4.8 million), who are the separate responsibility of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). In practice, UNHCR assists many people who are not, strictly speaking, refugees, but persons living in refugee-like situations, called "persons of concern".

The agency's activities are reviewed and overseen by the Executive Committee (comprising 85 member states in 2011), which meets formally once a year, but several times a year as a "working group" in the Standing Committee. UNHCR reports annually to the General Assembly and ECOSOC.

UNHCR's budget for 2011 totals approximately NOK 18.5 billion. The agency's revenues have traditionally been adequate. Due to the changeover to needs-based budgeting, the budget for 2010 increased dramatically, thereby increasing the likeli-

hood of underfinancing. Only around three per cent of the agency's activities are financed from the UN's regular budget, and the rest is based on voluntary contributions.

Results achieved in 2010

In 2010, UNHCR provided protection for 25.2 million people, including 10.5 million refugees and 14.7 million IDPs. It is estimated that there are close to 12 million stateless people in the world. However, this is a problem that is difficult to quantify, and UNHCR only has data covering 3.5 million stateless persons in 65 countries. Developing countries host 80 per cent of the world's refugees and the least developed countries host two million refugees. 75 per cent of the world's refugees live in countries that are neighbours of their countries of origin. Nearly 200,000 refugees repatriated voluntarily in the course of 2010, the lowest number in over 20 years. The trend for IDPs was more positive; in 2010 the number of returnees exceeded 2.9 million, the highest number in almost 15 years. At the end of 2010, 7.2 million refugees were in what is called a protracted refugee situation in 24 countries. The three largest host countries for refugees are Pakistan (1.9 million), Iran (1.1 million) and Syria (1 million). More than two million people affected by natural disasters received assistance from UNHCR in 2010. Close to 73,000 people were resettled through UNCHR in 22 countries as quota refugees, 1,200 of them in Norway. Of the 845,800 applications for asylum that were sent in 2010 worldwide, 11 per cent were registered by UNHCR. Over 15,500 of the asylum applications were submitted by children fleeing on their own. On average, women and children represent 49 per cent of the people covered by UNHCR's mandate.

of the agency's flexibility and capacity to tackle the growing challenges facing its target group at the global level.

Most of the structural changes have now been carried out, resulting, inter alia, in staff cuts in Geneva and decentralisation of operational responsibility. Headquarter costs now account for approximately 10 per cent of the budget, compared with 14 per cent in 2006. A system for results-based management has been established, but is not yet operative everywhere and has therefore not been able to supply figures on results at global level. The management tool combines the planning, budget and reporting functions and is designed to ensure greater transparency and accountability in respect of the target group. The last stage of the reform process consists of harmonising personnel policy (appointments, postings and promotions) with the results-based management software Focus, and establishing supervisory functions.

This comprehensive reform process has freed up resources for providing more protection and assistance in the field, and has won greater support for UNHCR among donor countries that were formerly more critical. This support has been clearly expressed in governing bodies, but also in the form of increased financial support. With regard to asylum policy, UNHCR is perceived as a reliable, predictable partner, even though political considerations at times may compel the agency to maintain a low profile. In many places, UNHCR is dependent on the authorities' goodwill, and must negotiate with them to achieve the best possible results.

Like many other UN agencies, UNHCR is subject to a multitude of cumbersome procedures that hamper the effective utilisation of the agency's resources. This applies, for instance, to the UN's personnel policy and security requirements. These are issues on which UNHCR's senior management is focusing considerable attention.

UNHCR has a strong analysis/evaluation unit that reports directly to the agency's senior management. Each year, it carries out a number of evaluations, both thematic and geographical. UNHCR's internal evaluations meet high standards of quality and culminate in recommendations with which the management strives to comply. The fact that the evaluation unit is so closely linked to the management may raise doubts as to its independence. On the other hand, the choice of evaluations appears to be based on the agency's clearly defined needs and active use is made of the results in policy development and management.

UNHCR as an organisation has also undergone external evaluations, the most recent carried out by Sweden (2010) and the UK (DFID 2011). The agency scored well in both evaluations. The DFID review is of particular interest because it covers many multilateral organisations and ranks them on the basis of specific criteria. Overall, UNHCR is placed in the second best category, which makes it eligible for increased support. UNHCR's score is above average for strategic leadership and results-based management, financial management and cost awareness, but below average for partnership

(including the will/ability to adapt to humanitarian coordination/reform), and for transparency and accountability. UNHCR achieves an above-average score for adaptability, and is considered by DFID to be a responsive organisation that attempts to balance conflicting donor signals. Some donors wish to limit the agency's efforts to its core mandate, which is refugees, while others (such as Norway) want UNHCR to become more actively engaged in efforts to assist IDPs.

In 2011, UNHCR is undergoing an evaluation carried out by the Multilateral Organisations Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), a partnership between 16 countries that basically assess the operational effectiveness of development agencies. The network has developed a common tool for partner assessment that is designed to assess the agencies' suitability for contributing to durable results at country level. The assessment covers strategic leadership, operational approaches, forms of collaboration and institutional learning, based on a combination of document reviews (strategy documents, reviews and evaluations, etc.) and questionnaires. Norway is heading this work and has collaborated closely with UNHCR to help ensure that the analysis tool is as accurate as possible. The results of the evaluation will be presented in autumn 2011.

UNHCR's approach is rights-based and grounded in the humanitarian principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality. Growing emphasis is placed on building local capacity and working in partnership with local and international organisations. The spokesman function is important, both to create an understanding of refugees' and IDPs' need for protection, but also to protect humanitarian space and thereby bolster the security of the agency's own field staff. UNHCR also wishes to play a key role in setting the agenda for international discussion of current and future challenges within its mandate. That is why UNHCR has focused attention on several development trends, such as mass flights of mixed groups (asylum/migration nexus), urban refugees, protracted refugee situations and IDPs. UNHCR has also called for a more predictable regime for the protection of persons displaced by natural disasters (environmentally displaced persons), and has pointed to the need to find suitable protective mechanisms for the environmentally displaced in the future, who are expected to grow in number due to climate change. UNHCR strives today to take account of gender, age and diversity (AGDM: Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming) in all parts of its organisation, including personnel policy and field operations. The AGDM policy that has been formulated is good and UNHCR has worked systematically to integrate it into its corporate culture. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that there is a way to go, as it takes time to change employee attitudes. UNHCR's environmental profile is not very clearly defined, but guidelines have been drawn up and UNHCR is trying to incorporate environmental projects (such as reforestation and installation of solar lighting in camps) into its programmes.

UNHCR's Inspector General's Office oversees the agency's activities. This Office's supervisory functions have recently been reviewed with a view to implementing the recommenda-

Resettlement in a third country can be of strategic importance for resolving protracted refugee situations. It can help to influence host countries to provide better conditions for the remaining refugees. In 2010, 73,000 refugees were resettled, as a rule the most vulnerable individuals, who are not safe or incapable of managing in the first country of asylum. The selection of Bhutanese refugees from Nepal and Afghan refugees from Iran is of the greatest strategic relevance for Norway.

2. Assessments: Results, effectiveness and control

UNHCR plays a highly relevant role in terms of fulfilling the mandate granted to it through the 1951 Refugee Convention. The agency is important in several ways: as a setter of norms, an arena for discussions on refugee issues, and as the protector of individuals and refugee groups. Its operations are adapted to meet changing needs, but its primary task is to ensure that the target group has the possibility of living in safety and with dignity. Where refugees are self-sufficient, assistance is usually limited to safeguarding their legal rights. When refugees lack food, medicines or a roof over their heads, UNHCR or its partner agencies can provide concrete assistance to meet their basic needs. UNHCR is also a key defender of humanitarian space and supporter of humanitarian

reform, even though implementation of the reform still seems to vary a little too much from one place to another. UNHCR must also be said to be a relevant, effective actor in terms of placing new issues on the agenda, such as questions related to urban refugees and mixed refugee flows.

In February 2006, UNHCR adopted a Structural and Management Change Process. This is the most sweeping internal reform process ever carried out in any UN agency. The reform was prompted by the widely held view (particularly among donor countries) that far too many resources were tied to operations at the Geneva headquarters, at the expense