

# RUSSIAN FEDERATION



## Operational highlights

- In consultation with the Government, UNHCR closed its sub-office in Vladikavkaz in mid-2011, and ended direct assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), including shelter and protection operations in the North Caucasus.
- UNHCR worked closely with the Federal Migration Service (FMS) on the comprehensive revision of the draft

Refugee Law to ensure its consistency with international standards.

- Progress was made in the development of reception conditions with the creation of an additional reception centre.
- Those given temporary asylum were granted access to state medical insurance.

## Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Georgia	1,900	940	-	-
	Afghanistan	1,700	1,500	-	-
	Others	330	310	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Afghanistan	400	370	-	-
	Georgia	260	250	-	-
	Various	300	290	-	-
IDPs	Russian Federation	28,500	28,500	-	-
Stateless <sup>1</sup>	Stateless people	178,000	2,100	-	-
Returnees (IDPs)	Various	170	170	-	-
Others of concern	Various	10,200	10,200	-	-
Returnees (refugees) <sup>1</sup>	Various	40	30	-	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>221,800</b>	<b>44,660</b>		

<sup>1</sup> The figure of 178,000 is based on the number of persons who self-identified themselves as stateless in the 2010 census and is subject to further discussion and verification with the Government.

- UNHCR's implementation of a comprehensive approach for long-staying asylum-seekers resulted in new prospects for solutions.
- At the intergovernmental event in Geneva in December 2011, the Russian Federation pledged to introduce new measures to reduce statelessness in its territory.

### | Working environment |

Consultation with the authorities on UNHCR's Responsible Disengagement Strategy was followed by the handover of programme activities to State and NGO legal partners. The move allowed UNHCR to mainstream its protection work into a national, mandate-based programme.

Cooperation with the authorities and partners on the enhancement of the asylum system was intensified, leading to improvements in the reception of asylum-seekers and the determination of their claims in 2011. As a country of asylum and of transit, the Russian Federation receives refugees and asylum-seekers, along with many irregular and regular migrants seeking to reach other European countries. It currently hosts close to 5,000 refugees, receives some 2,500 applications for international protection each year, and counts between 2 and 5 million migrants, mostly from countries in the neighbouring Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The Government continued to give priority to migration management policy development, strengthening the FMS. An increasing number of asylum applications were handled by the competent authorities, which often resorted to providing a temporary form of protection.

The Russian Federation has made strides in tackling statelessness, including the drafting of legislation that would simplify procedures for acquiring citizenship. Between 2003 and 2011, some 630,000 stateless persons obtained citizenship. UNHCR continued to work with the authorities to ascertain the number of persons who remained or were at risk of becoming stateless.

### | Achievements and impact |

#### • Main objectives and targets

##### Favourable protection environment

- UNHCR's comments on the amendment to the Federal Law on Refugees and on the draft Law on Free Legal Aid were largely taken into consideration. A third reception centre with a capacity of 350 people was set up near Moscow with UNHCR's assistance. Work on a joint plan of action with the authorities for the Perm reception centre has seen conditions there improved notably.
- UNHCR improved child protection, particularly with regard to unaccompanied minors and separated children, including by establishing a Best Interest Determination (BID) panel.
- A study comparing current nationality legislation with the Statelessness Conventions helped renew dialogue on potential accession. A draft law to simplify legalization and naturalization proceedings was still to be approved by Parliament. However, the Government's pledges, at the

intergovernmental event of December 2011 in Geneva, supported the facilitation of access to citizenship.

##### Fair protection processes

- Measures to facilitate access to asylum procedures have benefited some 80 per cent of persons of concern to UNHCR.
- The strengthening of cooperation between legal practitioners and UNHCR resulted in improved support for people of concern. The enhanced legal network included more than 100 lawyers, who provided legal aid in various forms in about 20,000 cases.
- UNHCR continued to advocate directly as well as through partners for an end to the arbitrary detention of persons of concern. Significant progress has been made in the observance of terms of detention of applicants under extradition procedures. No violations of the law imposing an 18-month maximum term on pre-trial detention have been reported.
- The harmonization of asylum processes with the Border Guards Service and the establishment of protection-sensitive airport procedures continued to be promoted.

##### Security from violence and exploitation

- UNHCR established useful working relationships with the Human Rights Ombudsman's offices across the country, raising awareness of refugee issues among the competent authorities, and seeking to influence the attitudes and practices of law-enforcement officials.
- Seven legal counselling centres in Chechnya and Ingushetia benefited from UNHCR's funding of 21 qualified lawyers to ensure access to legal remedies. About 9,000 legal aid consultations were provided, covering issues ranging from social welfare and housing to labour relations and family law.
- As chair of the UN country team (UNCT) thematic group on gender, UNHCR worked with a broad range of partners on the prevention of violence against women. It also reviewed its standard operating procedures for preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases, in order to expand current partnerships and establish links with governmental partners. The situation of women at risk was monitored and followed up, and recommendations for appropriate durable solutions were made, such as resettlement. UNHCR continued to support the anti-trafficking hotline operated by the Russian Red Cross.

##### Basic needs and services

- UNHCR continued to provide medical assistance to people of concern. Towards the end of the year, the authorities opened access to the state medical insurance programme for persons with temporary asylum status.
- Since 2000, UNHCR has rehabilitated or built housing for some 9,720 IDP households in Chechnya and 340 families in Ingushetia, while gradually reducing its involvement in this sector. It was expected that federal funds would be made available to address remaining needs.



Professional legal support helps to protect applicants during the asylum procedure in the Russian Federation.



UNHCR / O. SAMARSKAYA

- Some 240 vulnerable individuals in Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan received one-time assistance packages of clothes, non-food items (NFIs) and school materials.

### Community participation and self-management

- Participatory assessments were conducted throughout 2011 in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other locations. Focus-group discussions revealed details of the protection risks faced by refugees in urban settings. Regular meetings with people of concern made it possible to articulate needs and aspirations in a more inclusive manner.
- Networks of community-based organizations helped implement UNHCR's programmes for urban refugees. These networks indicated that the primary concerns of urban refugees were access to education and employment, prompting UNHCR to search for new opportunities through professional training and/or income-generating microprojects.

### Durable solutions

- UNHCR developed and implemented a comprehensive solutions strategy with regard to long-staying asylum-seekers, including the strategic use of resettlement. Consultations with the Government opened new possibilities for the regularization of the status of many in this group, which will be pursued in 2012.
- UNHCR participated in the process of amending migration legislation to simplify procedures for acquiring

nationality. Timely and qualified legal assistance by UNHCR helped regularize the legal status of its persons of concern in a number of situations. UNHCR also helped to raise awareness of gaps in legislation and administrative practice.

- The return of refugees to Chechnya and the conditions they faced continued to be monitored by UNHCR. Protection and assistance were given as needed. UNHCR also monitored a small number of facilitated returns from the CIS and other countries.

### Constraints

A number of obstacles have limited access to asylum procedures in border/transit zones in airports, readmission and detention centres. Persons of concern to UNHCR were not allowed to follow the appeals procedure, and were subject to deportation before the final decisions on their claims were reached by competent authorities.

Progress on accession to the international statelessness instruments has not gained momentum, preventing UNHCR from fully addressing statelessness concerns.

UNHCR remained concerned about the lack of access to state-run medical care, social benefits and legal employment for asylum-seekers and refugees, especially where registration was denied. Xenophobia, especially in some urban environments, also demanded more vigorous responses.

The security environment in the North Caucasus remained volatile.

## Financial information

Budgetary requirements of USD 24.7 million for 2011 were lower than those provided for in the 2010-2011 biennium, based on funding expectations and assessments of the implementing capacity of the Government and other national partners.

Legal assistance and protection activities accounted for nearly half the 2011 budget. The most pressing and costly unmet needs were for individual assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees, and shelter for people still displaced in the North Caucasus.

## Organization and implementation

### UNHCR's presence in 2011

□ Number of offices	2
□ Total staff	71
International	10
National	47
JPOs	0
UNVs	3
Others	11

## Working with others

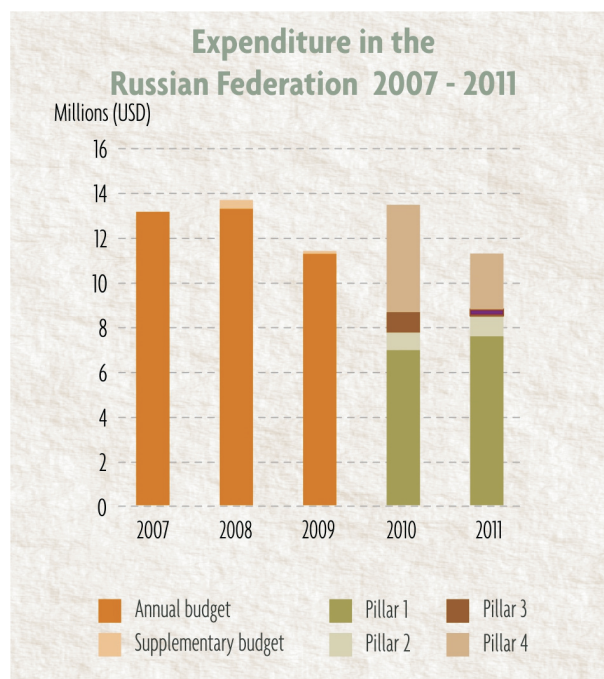
UNHCR has been able to build protection partnerships with the Government, NGOs and donors, in support of its IDP programme in the North Caucasus. Continuous efforts were made to mobilize governmental and external funding to alleviate the consequences of UNHCR's disengagement from direct assistance in this region.

Cooperation with the Government focused on improving the quality of the asylum system and its impact on the management of the asylum-migration nexus. UNHCR's counterparts included the FMS, offices of the Human Rights Ombudsman, the relevant Parliamentary Committee, the judiciary, legislators, law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders involved in protection issues. Links with the city governments of Moscow and St. Petersburg were also maintained.

The Social Issues Working Group on matters related to age, gender and diversity mainstreaming achieved better understanding of complementary approaches to social care for refugee children and survivors of SGBV. Similarly, UNHCR's chairmanship of the UNCT Theme Group on Gender served to promote partnerships between State and non-State actors for the benefit of persons of concern.

Partnerships were fostered to fight xenophobia in the Russian Federation. In other sectors, new partners include the municipalities who invited UNHCR to participate in their initiatives. Collaboration with the FMS and the Ombudsman structures, as well as with a nation-wide network of NGOs, helped to raise public awareness about the rights of persons of concern.

Cross-border contacts with partners such as the Russian Red Cross/IFRC, IOM, European NGO consortiums, OSCE and the Council of Europe provided useful opportunities for a non-political, protection-focused dialogue on migration and exchange of best practices on asylum and durable solutions.



## Overall assessment

UNHCR's disengagement from its IDP operation in the Russian Federation after more than 15 years marked a major change of direction. The Government, which had invested in conflict-affected areas to address developmental imbalances, acknowledged the contributions of humanitarian partners, and identified remaining challenges that it expects to address. It also confirmed its expectation that UNHCR would continue its work in mandated areas, such as in building an asylum system and preventing and reducing statelessness.

Both national and regional partnerships with the Russian Federation on asylum and statelessness issues have been strengthened, contributing to the renewal and updating of the country's legislative instruments and processes.

Partners
<b>Implementing partners</b>
<b>NGOs:</b> Association of Media Managers of Russia "ARS-Press", Children's Fund of North Ossetia, Civic Assistance, Danish Refugee Council, Faith, Hope and Love, Guild of Russian Filmmakers, Institute of Human Rights, Magee Woman Care International, Memorial Human Rights Centre, Nizam Foundation, St. Petersburg Centre for International Cooperation, St. Petersburg Red Cross, Stichting Russian Justice Initiative, Vesta
<b>Others:</b> IOM, UNV
<b>Operational partners</b>
<b>Government agencies:</b> Border Guards Service, Federal Migration Service, Federal Security Bureau, Ministry for Emergencies and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters, Ministry of Economy of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, Ministry of External Affairs, National Politics, Press and Information of the Republic of Chechnya, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Chechnya, Ministry of Public and External Relations of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania, Ministry of Public and Inter-ethnic Relations of the Republic of Ingushetia, Office of the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation and its regional representations, Prosecutor's Office, Supreme Court
<b>NGOs:</b> Ethnosfera, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, Moscow Protestant Chaplaincy, Shelter of the Childhood
<b>Others:</b> European Union, ICRC, IFRC, IOM, UNDSS, UNICEF

## Budget, income and expenditure in Russian Federation | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
FINAL BUDGET	8,567,841	1,220,242	1,281,808	13,675,359	24,745,250
Income from contributions	333,333	0	102,616	1,290,948	1,726,897
Other funds available	7,256,879	921,569	178,408	1,225,732	9,582,588
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	7,590,212	921,569	281,024	2,516,680	11,309,485
EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN					
<i>Favourable protection environment</i>					
International and regional instruments	0	42,591	0	0	42,591
National legal framework	80,823	42,591	0	0	123,414
National administrative framework	63,494	0	0	0	63,494
National and regional migration policy	64,071	0	0	0	64,071
Prevention of displacement	347,475	0	0	308,867	656,342
Prevention of statelessness	0	183,670	0	0	183,670
Access to territory	63,494	0	0	0	63,494
Non-refoulement	124,861	0	0	0	124,861
Subtotal	744,218	268,852	0	308,867	1,321,937
<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>					
Reception conditions	761,956	0	0	0	761,956
Registration and profiling	63,800	0	0	265,364	329,164
Access to asylum procedures	575,484	0	0	0	575,484
Refugee and stateless definitions	85,650	0	0	0	85,650
Fair and efficient status determination	69,772	0	0	0	69,772
Family reunification	37,904	0	0	0	37,904
Individual documentation	37,904	118,698	0	0	156,602
Civil status documentation	37,904	0	0	0	37,904
Subtotal	1,670,374	118,698	0	265,364	2,054,436
<i>Security from violence and exploitation</i>					
Impact on host communities	34,985	0	0	0	34,985
Law enforcement	34,985	0	0	0	34,985
Gender-based violence	34,985	0	0	118,391	153,376
Protection of children	34,985	0	0	0	34,985
Freedom of movement	34,985	0	0	0	34,985
Non-arbitrary detention	34,985	0	0	0	34,985
Access to legal remedies	405,255	117,259	0	263,319	785,833
Subtotal	615,165	117,259	0	381,710	1,114,134
<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>					
Shelter and other infrastructure	256,414	0	0	653,262	909,676
Basic domestic and hygiene items	82,152	0	0	123,634	205,786
Primary health care	708,308	0	0	0	708,308
HIV and AIDS	40,954	0	0	0	40,954
Education	40,955	0	0	0	40,955
Services for groups with specific needs	302,512	0	0	0	302,512
Subtotal	1,431,295	0	0	776,896	2,208,191



# Russian Federation

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	PILLAR 2 Stateless programme	PILLAR 3 Reintegration projects	PILLAR 4 IDP projects	Total
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>					
Participatory assessment	69,374	0	0	0	69,374
Community self-management	84,667	0	0	0	84,667
Self-reliance and livelihoods	107,297	0	0	0	107,297
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>261,338</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>261,338</b>
<i>Durable solutions</i>					
Durable solutions strategy	65,783	0	0	0	65,783
Voluntary return	68,952	0	0	0	68,952
Rehabilitation and reintegration	0	0	199,344	0	199,344
Resettlement	100,304	0	0	0	100,304
Local integration	142,021	60,659	0	0	202,680
Reduction of statelessness	0	60,659	0	0	60,659
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>377,060</b>	<b>121,318</b>	<b>199,344</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>697,722</b>
<i>External relations</i>					
Donor relations	69,594	0	0	0	69,594
Resource mobilisation	69,374	0	0	0	69,374
Partnership	122,051	61,858	0	0	183,909
Public information	276,004	62,377	0	0	338,381
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>537,023</b>	<b>124,235</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>661,258</b>
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>					
Supply chain and logistics	142,249	0	0	0	142,249
Programme management and coordination	828,124	126,988	81,680	198,093	1,234,885
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>970,373</b>	<b>126,988</b>	<b>81,680</b>	<b>198,093</b>	<b>1,377,134</b>
Balance of instalments with implementing partners	983,364	44,219	0	585,750	1,613,333
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,590,210</b>	<b>921,569</b>	<b>281,024</b>	<b>2,516,680</b>	<b>11,309,483</b>