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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS:
REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND
BUDGET FOR 1995

PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 4 - China

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

II.4 CHINA

Country Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

1. The total number of Indo-Chinese refugees in the People's Republic of China at 31 December 1993 stood at 288,100. The refugees were settled on 194 state farms and production sites in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and in the provinces of Guangdong, Yunnan, Fujian, Hainan and Jiangxi. Of the Indo-Chinese refugees, some 110,700 persons, or 38 per cent, were under 18 years of age and some 140,300 persons, or 49 per cent, of the entire population were female.
2. At the end of 1993, there were 42 non-Indo-Chinese refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Somalia. This small urban refugee population resides mainly in Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai. Pending either third country resettlement or voluntary repatriation, this group continued to receive assistance.

Major developments (1993 and first quarter of 1994)

3. On the basis of recommendations made during the programme review in March 1993, a socio-economic survey, the establishment of a field data base for programme planning and monitoring and a feasibility study for a credit scheme, were completed in 1993. To implement these additional activities, the original 1993 allocation for the local settlement programme of \$ 2,200,000 was increased to \$ 2,286,000.
4. An amount of \$ 130,000 was also made available to cover initial reception costs and internal transportation for the orderly return of 2,300 Vietnamese refugees who had illegally departed from China to Hong Kong. These refugees were part of a larger group of some 12,000 individuals who had been evicted from their squatter settlements in the Beihai and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.
5. The second Tripartite Meeting between the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and UNHCR was held on 24 January 1994 in Kunming, to assess the repatriation programme for Lao refugees from China to the Lao People's Democratic Republic. The three parties expressed their satisfaction with the progress that had been achieved and pledged to continue to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of a limited number of Lao refugees still remaining in China.

Programme objectives and priorities

6. UNHCR's country programme objectives for both 1994 and 1995 are to facilitate local settlement of Indo-Chinese refugees by promoting self-sufficiency and to re-orientate programmes towards self-sustainability. National procedures for refugee status determination for individual non-Indo-Chinese asylum-seekers are to be established. The UNHCR assistance programme for Jiangxi province will be completely phased out in 1994 once a special one-time assistance programme towards the rehabilitation of three frost-stricken settlements has been implemented.

7. The scope and duration of the local settlement programme for 1995 depend on the outcome of negotiations between the authorities and UNHCR on phasing out direct assistance to refugee settlements in the Fujian and Guangdong provinces. In addition to launching a credit scheme in selected provinces under the 1995 programme, it is envisaged to scale down UNHCR direct assistance activities in stages in certain provinces as well as to reduce the number of farms and settlements which will be in receipt of further assistance. Over 194 settlements have been assisted by UNHCR since 1978; the priority target group are the poorest farms are in 40 to 60 farms, which represents 20 to 30 per cent of the original total. Emphasis in future assistance will also be placed on market-oriented vocational training to secure more effective job placements.

8. For non-Indo-Chinese refugees, the main objective for 1994 and 1995 will be the promotion of international protection. Pending the identification of a durable solution, basic care and maintenance will be provided.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

9. The Ministry of Civil Affairs Office for the Reception and Settlement of Indo-Chinese refugees continues to be UNHCR's implementing partner for local settlement and voluntary repatriation. This Office maintains branches in each province hosting refugees and is responsible for the overall implementation of projects and supervises implementation by state farms or local communities.

10. The Chinese Government has funded most of the infrastructural development, housing, recurrent costs and living subsidies for refugees. As of the end of 1993, the Chinese Government estimated that it had spent over \$ 730 million on Indo-Chinese refugees since their arrival in China in the late 1970s.

General Programmes

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

11. The UNHCR programme of assistance to Indo-Chinese refugees continued to cover income generation projects, aimed primarily at creating employment opportunities. Preparations were underway to establish a revolving credit fund. These activities included a socio-economic survey of refugee settlements and production units. A centralized computer data base for programme planning and monitoring was established. Furthermore, a feasibility study of the proposed credit scheme was also carried out by an international consultant. Of the allocation, 72 per cent was spent on 17 income generation projects. The balance was allocated for education and the improvement of basic infrastructure.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

12. The 1994 local settlement programme for Indo-Chinese refugees will identify the poorest settlements to benefit from direct UNHCR assistance. The programme will be re-oriented in selected provinces in order to facilitate the introduction of the proposed revolving fund scheme which will allow UNHCR to phase out assistance gradually.

13. Assistance aimed directly at job creation, either through income generation activities or crop production, will amount to some 75 per cent of the total appropriation for local settlement, with the balance allocated to education and infrastructural improvements.

14. For non-Indo-Chinese, activities will concentrate on the promotion of international refugee law, in addition to care and maintenance assistance activities.

(c) 1995 programme proposals

Care and maintenance

15. It is estimated that some 45 individuals, comprising 16 Somali and 29 other non-Indo-Chinese will be provided with care and maintenance assistance, pending the identification of durable solutions.

Local settlement

16. Local settlement activities for Indo-Chinese refugees will concentrate mainly on income-generation and vocational training activities, as recommended by the UNHCR programme review mission and the consultant's report on the credit scheme. However, the programme may be modified as a result of a joint programme review by Government authorities and UNHCR in June 1994.

Special Programmes

Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees (CPA)

17. In compliance with the bilateral agreement signed in April 1991 between the People's Republic of China and the Lao People's Democratic Republic in relation to the repatriation of Lao refugees from China, a total of 2,609 Lao refugees repatriated voluntarily in 1993. The voluntary repatriation programme came to a successful conclusion with the return of 308 persons in January 1994.

Other Trust Funds

18. Special assistance towards the rehabilitation of three rural settlements in Jiangxi province was established on a one-time basis under a trust fund project. The project aimed at addressing the problems of low income and unemployment amongst refugees following a severe frost which severely damaged plantations. An allocation of \$ 300,000 was made available from the Japan Committee for Refugee Relief.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) Variations in planned activities in 1993

19. In 1993, staffing levels remained the same as originally foreseen, with four international posts and four support staff, hired locally from the Government's Diplomatic Service Bureau (DSB). There were no major variations in activities, except for expenditure under local travel, which was higher than expected.

(b) 1994 planned implementation

20. In 1994, one post of Protection Officer at the National Officer level was created, effective 1 September 1994. No other staffing changes are foreseen. The total 1994 revised requirement is however slightly lower than the initial 1994 budget, due to the application of a favourable rate of exchange for the calculation of salaries and service costs of the four local employees provided by the DSB and the cessation of issuance of Foreign Exchange Certificates (FECs), which had previously led to an increase in prices, both for the Government and commercial services. It is envisaged that there will be more local travel with the creation of the post of a National Officer and thus costs under local travel have increased in 1994. Needs under general operating expenses are lower, while costs for office supplies and materials remain at the initial level. The original provision for the purchase of furniture and equipment has also been revised downwards, as furniture items previously foreseen are no longer considered necessary.

(c) 1995 programme proposals

21. The posts of Associate Protection Officer (JPO) and Associate Durable Solutions Officer (JPO) were extended through 1995 into 1996. No other changes in staffing levels or administrative activities are envisaged in 1995. The 1995 initial estimates under salaries and common staff costs, non-staff costs, general operating expenses and office supplies and materials have therefore been estimated to remain at levels similar to the 1994 revised requirements. Costs under salaries and common staff costs may be affected and have to be revised upwards at a later stage, if the Government agrees to the direct recruitment of local support staff by United Nations agencies.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN CHINA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
122.2 a/	48.0	177.1	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	158.5
130.9 b/	-	-	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	-
2,286.0	1,700.0	2,044.8	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	2,061.0
5.4 c/	-	-	RESETTLEMENT	-
-	-	167.2	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	167.4
2,544.5	1,748.0	2,389.1	SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	2,386.9
282.3	291.6	133.8	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	133.5
2,826.8	2,039.6	2,522.9	TOTAL (1)	2,520.4
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
5.1	-	-	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	-
123.0	-	-	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION	-
300.0	-	-	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	-
120.4	105.1	86.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer	86.0
548.5	105.1	86.0	TOTAL (2)	86.0
3,375.3	2,144.7	2,608.9	GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	2,606.4

a/ of which US\$ 12,938 incurred against Overall Allocation

b/ obligation incurred against the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation

c/ obligation incurred against Overall Allocation