

**Refugee Statistics:
*Political and Practical Constraints to
Accurate Enumeration***

It is almost impossible to think or write about refugees without some reference to statistics. And yet researchers working in this area have been remarkably inattentive to the issue of quantitative data. While all of the standard works on refugees are replete with numbers, few authors even begin to question the source or accuracy of those statistics. Scholars have generally been content to rely on figures offered by the two leading producers of refugee statistics - UNHCR and the US Committee for Refugees (USCR) - despite the fact that the figures presented by the two organisations very often differ! The existing literature on refugee statistics is itself extremely meagre, much of it focusing on the technical and methodological dimensions of the issue.¹ To the best of the author's knowledge, no substantive article has ever been published on the politics of refugee numbers.

Constraints on Accuracy and Consistency

It has long been recognized that the collection of accurate data on displaced populations is confronted with some formidable obstacles. Writing in 1985, for example, Gaim Kibreab pointed out that "there is a cloud of uncertainty and unreliability surrounding African refugee statistics."² Six years later, a report issued by the US State Department's Bureau for Refugee Programs noted that "counting refugees is at best an approximate science."³ And a recently-published International Labour Office volume on the collection of international migration statistics observes that "much of the information available on refugees and persons in need of protection is tentative at best."⁴

Why exactly is it so difficult for UNHCR and other elements of the international refugee regime to produce accurate and consistent figures in relation to displaced populations? This section begins to answer that question by focusing on the definitional and operational obstacles to

effective enumeration, while the following section looks at the way in which political considerations impinge upon refugee statistics.

Definitional Problems

Any form of enumeration exercise must be based upon a clearly defined unit of measurement if it is to produce reliable, usable and comparable data. In the case of refugee statistics, however, such clarity does not always exist.

The word ‘refugee’ is itself subject to quite different definitions and interpretations. Under the terms of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the refugee concept is used to describe those people who are outside of their own country and unable to return to it because they have a “well-founded fear of persecution” there. That continues to be the definition used by the industrialised states. In less-developed regions such as Africa, Central and South America, however, the concept has been formally broadened (through the Organisation of African Unity Refugee Convention and the Cartagena Declaration) to include people who have sought refuge in other countries as a result of aggression, occupation, generalised violence and events seriously disturbing public order. As a result of these different approaches, an individual who would be counted as a refugee in one part of the world might not qualify for that status in another.

The USCR, which publishes an influential annual survey of refugee affairs, employs yet another approach, counting those refugees and asylum seekers who are deemed to be “in need of protection and/or assistance.” The distinguishing characteristic of such refugees, the USCR has explained, is “their inability to repatriate due to continued fear of persecution in their homelands and the absence of permanent settlement opportunities in their countries of asylum or elsewhere.”⁵ The result of this approach (which has been subject to some criticism by UNHCR’s senior statistician) is to exclude some sizeable groups of refugees who have settled in regions such as Western Europe, North America and Australasia.⁶

Conversely, while the USCR includes in its global refugee statistics the three million Palestinians who are

registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), UNHCR does not include this group of refugees as they fall outside of the agency's mandate. Scholars and journalists who make use of the USCR and UNHCR figures almost invariably fail to recognise these important definitional differences.

The general level of confusion surrounding the issue of refugee statistics is compounded by the fact that many commentators on international affairs (especially those in the popular press) use the refugee concept to denote anyone who has been forced to leave their usual place of residence, whether or not they have crossed an international border. Media reports about Afghanistan, Angola, Somalia and Sudan, for example, frequently refer to the large number of 'refugees' living in those countries, when they are actually referring to internally displaced people (IDPs).

Operational Problems

According to a recent paper presented to UNHCR's Executive Committee, the world's most affluent states, with all of their resources and technological sophistication, "have great difficulty in answering or are not able to provide an answer to the simple question, 'how many refugees are living in the country'." "Similarly," the paper continues, "information is generally lacking on essential characteristics of the refugee population, for example, country of origin and sex."⁷

If it has proved so difficult for the industrialised states to provide a comprehensive statistical picture of the refugees on their territory, then it should come as no surprise to discover that refugee statistics in developing regions of the world are also lacking in detail and reliability. The only real exception to this rule is to be found in South-East Asia, where the majority of Vietnamese boat people were kept in closed camps and carefully counted from the day of their arrival to the day of their resettlement or repatriation.

Many of the world's largest refugee and returnee populations are now to be found in poor and unstable states such as Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zaire. In such societies, the authorities simply do not have the capacity to

collect high-quality refugee statistics. And while UNHCR has sought to fill this gap, the organisation is poorly equipped and inadequately resourced for this task, especially in emergency situations.

In several recent refugee crises, very limited numbers of UNHCR field staff have been confronted with movements of half a million refugees or more, across large geographical areas and in some of the most remote, weakly administered and environmentally hostile territories on earth. In such circumstances, the obstacles to effective enumeration are legion. Refugees may enter a country of asylum at numerous different points along a border. They may arrive in such large numbers that they can scarcely be counted. The influx may take place in an area where UNHCR has no access, due to insecurity or governmental obstruction. Some refugees may prefer not to be identified or counted. And UNHCR and its partners may well consider that their limited resources are best spent on the provision of life-saving assistance, rather than on counting the potential beneficiaries.

As a refugee influx levels off and relief operations become more organised, the potential for the collection of accurate statistical data evidently improves. Once refugees are concentrated in specific locations and assistance programmes have been established to provide them with food, water, shelter and medical services, then reliable demographic data begins to come on-stream. At the same time, however, the establishment of such programmes provides local residents with greater incentives to register as refugees, thereby distorting the accuracy of any statistics collected.

The operational constraints on effective enumeration do not end there. In order to survive and to prepare for their eventual repatriation, refugees have to be mobile. To an extent that is often neglected, refugees come and go across international borders and move around within their countries of asylum. They may go in and out of a camp to take advantage of seasonal agricultural opportunities or move to a town to trade or look for work. In many situations, some family members will remain in the country of asylum and continue to receive assistance, while others visit their country of origin in order to tend their farm or to assess the prospects for a longer-term return.

An additional operational constraint to effective enumeration derives from the fact that refugee populations, like any other population, are dynamic social entities. Refugees die, get married and give birth. Refugee households may split up or regroup. However accurate they may have been at the time of their collection, statistical data about the size and composition of a refugee population can quickly become outdated. Updating this information is not a straightforward exercise either, especially when the refugee population or host country concerned records births, deaths, ages and family relationships in ways that do not correspond with standard demographic practice.

The most obvious way of dealing with some of the difficulties identified above - namely for UNHCR to conduct periodic registrations or revalidations of refugee populations - is easier said than done. Such exercises are expensive - around a dollar per head in Africa, a sum that excludes indirect costs such as staff time and travel costs.⁸ Registrations and revalidations are logistically complex and can only be undertaken if the necessary skills and experience are available. Such exercises can lead to discomfort and even danger for the refugees concerned, especially when they require large numbers of people to gather in a single location or to queue up for long periods in exposed areas.⁹ Finally, experience has demonstrated that registration exercises may be actively resisted by the host government, by the refugees themselves, and even by UNHCR's operational partners.

The Politics of Refugee Numbers

How does politics impinge upon the collection of comprehensive, reliable and up-to-date statistical data on refugees and other groups of displaced people? The simple answer to this question is: in many different ways and at many different levels of the international refugee regime. Before substantiating that assertion, it should be made clear that this paper uses the notion of 'politics' in its broadest sense, to denote the efforts of individuals and institutions to pursue their own interests and to influence the behaviour of others. In the context of refugee situations, those actors fall into a number of conventional categories: countries of origin;

countries of asylum; donor states; refugee populations and humanitarian organisations.

Countries of Origin: The Horn of Africa and Uganda

Refugee movements are in many senses a symbol of political failure. Few states like to acknowledge that their citizens have been obliged 'vote with their own feet' by leaving their country of origin, even if that state has deliberately engineered their departure. In some situations, governments address this issue by claiming that the 'refugees' who have left the country are not refugees at all, or that they are not even citizens of that state. The Bhutanese government's explanation of the ethnic Nepali exodus in 1991-92 and the Burmese government's interpretation of the Rohingya refugee movement of the same period both conform to this general model, as does (to a lesser extent) the Vietnamese explanation of the boat people's departure in the 1970s and 1980s.

It is also common practice for countries of origin to suggest that their citizens have departed at the behest of opposition movements and with the specific intention of conducting military activities against them. In a considerable number of cases, moreover - the movement of Namibian refugees into Angola and Zambia, the Afghan exodus into Pakistan, and the more recent 'evacuation' of Rwanda's Hutu population to Zaire and Tanzania - such suggestions have some validity.

Another common tactic pursued by countries of origin (and one that is more directly germane to the subject of this paper) is to challenge the refugee statistics reported from the country of asylum, and to suggest that those figures have been deliberately inflated by the government of that state. Such was the case in the Horn of Africa throughout the 1980s, when Ethiopia and Somalia were involved in a constant wrangle concerning the respective number of Somali and Ethiopian refugees they had admitted. In situations such as this, where refugees cross an international border in both directions, it can be very difficult for UNHCR to place any statistics in the public domain without offending at least one of the states involved.

Countries of origin encounter some evident credibility problems when it comes to making pronouncements about the number of their citizens who have fled to another state. Without actually being present on the other side of the border, how can they pretend to be in possession of more accurate data than UNHCR or the country of asylum? When it comes to repatriation movements, however, the boot is very much on the other foot.

Unlike refugees, returnees are a symbol of political success. When people decide to go back to their country of origin, the leaders of that state can claim that its citizens are expressing some kind of confidence in its government. At the same time, large-scale repatriation movements enable countries of origin to seek large-scale international assistance, both in the form of short-term relief and for longer-term reintegration and rehabilitation activities. In these circumstances, it is not surprising to find that refugee-producing countries are inclined to exaggerate returnee numbers.

A particularly blatant act of this kind took place in 1984, when the government of Milton Obote claimed that between 300,000 and 400,000 Ugandan refugees had repatriated from Sudan and Zaire, while UNHCR's statistics indicated that the Ugandan refugee population in those countries was actually increasing. Despite this evidence, UNHCR and UNDP endorsed the government's claim, included the figure of 300,000 returnees in a report submitted to the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa (ICARA 2), and invited donor states to contribute \$17.1 million dollars towards the social and economic reintegration of the non-existent returnee population.¹⁰ The Sudanese and Zairean submissions to ICARA 2 requested donor funding to assist exactly the same group of people in their countries of asylum!

Countries of Asylum: An African Perspective

Within the humanitarian community, discussions of the 'politics of numbers' almost invariably turn to the way in which countries of asylum in developing regions make exaggerated claims about the number of refugees present on their territory. According to the conventional wisdom, they

do this for a number of reprehensible reasons: to embarrass the government of the country of asylum and to besmirch its human rights record; to attract large amounts of humanitarian assistance into the country, which can then be siphoned off to members of the political, military and business elite; to provide employment to large numbers of bureaucrats and refugee camp workers, many of whom would otherwise be without work or an income; to ensure a generous supply of food and other relief items to exiled groups which are engaged in political and military campaigns against their country of origin; to maximise the amount of foreign exchange brought into the country by humanitarian agencies, which can subsequently be converted at rates favourable to the government; and to cast the most favourable light possible on the country's commitment to humanitarian norms, thereby bolstering its international reputation and external support.

While the truth of such allegations may be beyond dispute in certain cases, the notion that 'host countries always cheat with the figures' is a crude and, given its prevalence in expatriate circles, perhaps even a racist one. Rather than simply repeating the well-worn stories of exaggeration, corruption and statistical sleight of hand (the most lurid of which almost invariably relate to Somalia and other countries in North-East Africa) this section of the paper considers the role of the asylum country in a different, and to some extent more positive perspective.

While much attention has been given to those countries in which refugee statistics appear to have been inflated, far less attention has been devoted to those situations in which the 'politics of numbers' leads host country governments to report artificially low refugee statistics. As Yash Tandon pointed out in an article 15 years ago, according to official statistics, there were some 2,000 Ugandan refugees living in Kenya in October 1983. But, he continues, "any Ugandan in Kenya would argue that there are at least five times that number." Reflecting upon this glaring discrepancy, Tandon observes that "in a situation where two countries are reasonably friendly, or wish to avoid antagonising each other, it is in the interests of both to play down the numbers... This is the case with Uganda and Kenya. Official figures have to take into account these niceties of diplomacy."¹¹

Similar arrangements were reported in the 1980s with respect to Somali refugees in Djibouti and refugees in Gabon from several states in Central Africa. During the same period, a number of the front-line states are known to have under-reported the number of South African exiles on their territory, for the eminently reasonable reason of discouraging military reprisals from the country of origin.¹²

Even if African officials and governments have reported refugee statistics which appear to be inflated, their reasons for doing so might in some situations not be so reprehensible as they appear to the external observer. First, as noted in an earlier section of the paper, the constraints to effective registration are such that considerable numbers of legitimate beneficiaries may actually be excluded from the statistics collected by UNHCR and other humanitarian organisations. Such was the case in the Ethiopian camp of Hartisheik in 1990, when a hard-hitting television documentary revealed that refugees from Somalia had been denied the assistance to which they were entitled because of a long delay in the implementation of a UNHCR re-registration exercise.¹³

Second, the criticisms made of African governments are often based on the false assumption that the international community provides a full and timely supply of food for the total number of refugees reported by UNHCR. In fact, this is rarely the case. In Somalia, for example, much has been made of the fact that in the mid-1980s, after lengthy negotiations, UNHCR agreed to a 'planning figure' of 700,000 Ethiopian refugees - even though the agency and the World Food Programme (WFP) believed the real figure to be in the region of 450,000. But as Waldron and Hasci have revealed, the amount of food delivered after the planning figure had been agreed "was only 59 per cent of that required to feed 700,000 persons."¹⁴

A UNHCR report on refugee enumeration confirms that the tendency of governments to report inflated refugee statistics is linked to the unreliability of the food aid pipeline. The relevant passage of the report deserves to be quoted in full, explaining as it does the humanitarian rationale for a certain degree of numerical manipulation:

"As the initial burden of administration falls on local government officials, they may suddenly

be called upon to cope with an impossible situation. Officials in three countries, who had experienced a mass refugee influx, have described in almost the same words the uncoordinated flow of information from police, army and other sources, hopeless understaffing and pressing requirement for food and water for refugees. In such a situation, estimates of total daily arrivals are quoted as, for example, 2000 to 3000, on the basis of a visual examination of a crowd gathered at one place. And officials unanimous in declaring that they would ‘not dare’ to base emergency relief requests on the lower guess, because it might result in a fatal insufficiency of relief.”

“The belief of *all* staff and officials involved, that emergency relief shipments, at least of bulk commodities such as wheat, are likely to take weeks rather than days, leads officials to further generous overestimates of numbers. For example, one official declared that he usually doubled the figures that he had estimated, in the knowledge that by the time deliveries were made, there might well be a shortfall in quantities delivered and a significant increase in the grand total seeking relief as inaccurately assessed numbers of daily arrivals continued to accumulate. In a sense, this may be described as contingency planning...”¹⁵

A final explanation - and to some extent a justification - for the inflation of refugee statistics in developing countries is to be found in the functioning of the international refugee regime. It is well known that in many emergency situations, the initial assistance provided to the refugees comes not from UNHCR or WFP, but from the local population and authorities. It has also been established (although more research remains to be done on this matter) that the local population, particularly its poorer members, may be adversely affected by the sudden arrival and continued presence of a large-scale refugee population. And yet the needs of local residents are frequently neglected or accorded a relatively

low priority in the design and implementation of refugee assistance programmes.

Donor states: Western Europe, Eastern Zaire and Post-Dayton Bosnia

As suggested in the preceding section, asylum countries in the developing world have traditionally come off worst in discussions of the politics of refugee numbers. It is therefore of some importance to identify some of the ways in which the donor states bring their own interests to bear on the production and use of refugee statistics.

First, when it comes to their own refugee and asylum statistics, governments and politicians in the industrialised states have a tendency to be very selective in their presentation of statistical data. An administration which is seeking to justify the introduction of a more restrictive asylum policy, for example, may refer to statistics which demonstrate a sharp increase in the number of people submitting requests for refugee status. But it may neglect to point out what proportion of the total have been recognised as refugees or offered some other form of protection.

Second, the industrialised states have a self-evident political interest in playing down the number of refugees who have fled from countries which are considered to be useful friends and allies, and in playing up the number who have escaped from hostile states. This was particularly the case during the Cold War years, when the exodus of refugees and asylum seekers from communist countries such as Afghanistan, Cuba, Ethiopia, Viet Nam and the Soviet Union itself provided the western bloc with a valuable form of propaganda. At the same time, by establishing generously-funded assistance programmes for such refugee populations, the main donor states could also provide active support to exiled opposition movements which were struggling to oust or destabilise Soviet-backed regimes.

The end of the Cold War has in certain respects facilitated the collection and dissemination of accurate refugee statistics, relieving UNHCR of some of the political pressures to which it was subjected during that period. Even so, events in eastern Zaire in 1996 seemed to demonstrate that

the geopolitical interests of the USA and its allies can still impinge very directly upon the question of refugee numbers.

In November 1996, after more than two years in exile, around half a million Rwandans trekked out of eastern Zaire and returned to their country of origin. Within a matter of days, the mass repatriation was over, encouraging some commentators (including representatives of the US government and the Rwandan authorities) to declare that the refugee crisis in the Great Lakes region of Africa had effectively been resolved.

It soon became clear, however, that the story of the repatriation was less straightforward - and a great deal more tragic - than it first appeared. Contrary to the claim that all of the Rwandans had gone home, there was evidence to suggest that between 500,000 and 700,000 remained in eastern Zaire, where they were being hunted down and killed by the rebel forces linked to the government in Kigali.

At a press conference in Kigali on 23 November 1996, the US military dismissed such suggestions, claiming that their satellite photos had located only one significant cluster of Rwandans in eastern Zaire. That group, moreover, consisted not of *bona fide* refugees, but of soldiers and militia members who had been responsible for the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The political advisor to the Rwandan president adopted a similar position, stating, "we challenge the UNHCR to give us proof of where those refugees are. Nowhere do the American satellite photographs show up any significant refugee concentrations."¹⁶

These statements were in turn refuted by a senior official from Oxfam UK, who stated that on 20 November 1996 - three days *before* the press conference took place - his staff had been shown the US military's satellite and aerial photos, which "confirmed, in considerable detail, the existence of over 500,000 people, distributed in three major and numerous minor agglomerations." "On the basis of the quality and authority of the information received by Oxfam on 20 November," he concluded, "we feel bound to conclude that as many as 400,000 refugees and unknown numbers of Zairean displaced persons have, in effect, been air-brushed from history." A UNHCR statement which was consistent with the Oxfam position was angrily rejected by the Rwandan

authorities. According to one commentator, “Kigali officials retorted that UNHCR had a habit of exaggerating its figures, so why would anyone want to believe them this time round.”¹⁷

Third, the interest of donor states in refugee statistics can be strongly conditioned by the desire to limit their expenditure on refugee assistance programmes and to bring an early halt to longstanding humanitarian operations which have outlived their political usefulness. That was clearly the situation in Bosnia in 1996, shortly after the conclusion of the war. As a WFP/UNHCR report on the Bosnian food distribution programme concluded:

“Intensifying efforts to target more precisely became an issue almost immediately after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord. The overriding factor was donor pressure, which was inspired by a strong desire to reduce rations. The simple logic was that peace should bring stability and economic recovery, and that people would return to their places of origin, and hence large reductions in food aid would be both possible and necessary. Further justifications for reductions of humanitarian assistance were offered, including the usual arguments about avoiding the creation of food aid dependency and disincentives to agricultural production. In any case, what seemed clear was that a policy decision was made, calling for a reduction in the quantities of food aid to be delivered, and hence the need for a reduction in the number of beneficiaries to be assisted.”¹⁸

UNHCR and the Professionalisation of Refugee Statistics

Prior to the 1990s, UNHCR’s capacity and commitment in the area of refugee statistics was by any standard weak. Statistics were collected at the country level, but this function was undertaken in an unsystematic manner and with little supervision from headquarters. While statistics had to be presented to the organisation's Executive Committee on an annual basis, the figures were prepared on a desk-by-desk

basis, and did not conform to a standard format. The Public Information Service published an annual refugee map and statistical table, but this simply contained a single figure for each host country in the world, without any explanatory notes or any indication as to the national origins of those refugees.

In recent years several initiatives have been taken to professionalise the statistical function within UNHCR. First, 1993 witnessed the recruitment of the agency's first professional statistician, an expert in population and migration statistics with previous UN experience. The post has since been upgraded to the title of Senior Statistician and has been given 'specialist' status, allowing the staff member concerned to remain in post in Geneva - an arrangement which, according to the incumbent, provides the function with a valuable degree of authority and independence.

Second, since 1994, UNHCR has published an annual statistical overview of 'refugees and others of concern to UNHCR'. As well as an introductory essay which discusses concepts, definitions, sources and major trends, the review provides an increasingly broad and detailed set of statistical tables, including a number on the demographic structure of refugee populations. Recognising the fluidity of many refugee situations and the constant need for up-to-date figures, efforts are now being made to collect refugee statistics on a quarterly, rather than an annual basis.

Third, a variety of different steps have been taken over the past five years to enhance UNHCR's capacity in the area of refugee registration. In 1994, the organisation's *Registration Guidelines* were published. As well as pooling much of the experience gained by UNHCR, the guidelines (which are periodically updated and refined) provide field staff and operational partners with a variety of different registration tools and approaches which can be adapted to the situation at hand.

These measures have been taken in parallel with a number of other measures: the establishment of an expanded registration training programme for UNHCR, WFP, NGO and government staff; the stockpiling of registration kits, including items such as registration cards and forms, wristbands, tokens, computer software and the registration guidelines themselves; the appointment of two regional

registration officers in Africa, responsible for providing UNHCR offices with technical expertise and coordination; and the establishment of a roster of UNHCR staff who have proven skills and experience in the area of registration. In accordance with its Statute, UNHCR continues to undertake the function of “obtaining from governments information concerning the number and conditions of refugees in their territories.” And in support of that function, the organisation also undertakes periodic registration exercises in all field operations where refugees are provided with material assistance.

Conclusion

As this paper has attempted to demonstrate, the collection of accurate and consistent refugee statistics is an extremely difficult task. A wide range of practical obstacles stand in the way of effective registration and enumeration. At the same time, because of the way they impinge upon the interests of host countries, countries of origin, humanitarian agencies and other actors, refugee statistics will always be a source of controversy and dispute. Recognising these realities, UNHCR has not sought to depoliticise the issue of refugee statistics, but it has attempted to professionalise its approach to this important function.

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Notes & References:

- ¹ Some limited discussion of the politics of refugee numbers can be found in the following works: G. Kibreab, *The State of the Art Literature Review on Refugee Studies in Africa*, Uppsala University, Uppsala, 1991, pp. 8-15; R. Gorman, *Mitigating Misery: an Enquiry Into the Political and Humanitarian Aspects of US and Global Refugee Policy*, University Press of America, Lanham MD, 1993, pp. 143-5; *The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solutions*, UNHCR and Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, pp. 244-6; H. Reed, J. Haaga and C. Keely (eds), *The Demography of Forced Migration: Summary of a Workshop*, National Academy Press, Washington DC, 1998, pp. 9-12.
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- ⁴ R. Bilborrow *et al*, *International Migration Statistics: Guidelines for Improving Data Collection Systems*, ILO, Geneva, 1997, p. 227.
- ⁵ United States Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey*, Washington DC, 1995, p. 41.
- ⁶ B. Hovy, 'The demography of refugees: discussant notes', comments presented at the Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Washington DC, March 1997; 'The state of the world's refugee statistics', paper presented at the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, November 1997. My thanks to Bela Hovy for making these papers available to me.
- ⁷ 'Refugee registration and statistics', UNHCR Executive Committee paper, EC/48/SC/CRP.35, August 1998.
- ⁸ J. Telford, *op cit*, p. 57.
- ⁹ For a first-hand account, see B. Whitaker, 'Faces in the crowd: counting heads and deciding fates in a camp for Rwandan refugees', *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, October 23, 1996.
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- ¹³ J. Telford, *op cit*, p. 26.
- ¹⁴ S. Waldron and N. Hasci, *Somali Refugees in the Horn of Africa: State of the Art Literature Review*, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, 1995, p. 26.
- ¹⁵ P. Romanovsky and R. Stephenson, *op cit*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁶ J. Pottier, 'The 'self' in self-repatriation: closing down Mugunga camp, eastern Zaire', in R. Black and K. Khoser, *The End of the Refugee Cycle: Refugee Repatriation and Reconstruction*, Berghahn Books, Oxford, 1999, p. 148. See also S. Massey, 'Operation Assurance: the greatest intervention that never was', *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, <<http://www-jha.sps.cam.ac.uk>>, posted 15 February 1998.

¹⁷ J. Pottier, *op cit*, p. 149. At the end of 1997, UNHCR reported that "some 173,000 Rwandans remain unaccounted for." *Refugees and Others of Concern to UNHCR, op cit*, p. 13.

¹⁸ 'WFP/UNHCR joint evaluation mission: emergency food assistance to returnees, refugees, displaced persons and other war-affected populations in Bosnia-Herzegovina', WFP/UNHCR, Rome, 1997, p. 23.