

SOUTHERN AFRICA: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

*25 September,
2000*

Special Report on Zambia: Refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo

*appeal no. 01.43/2000
situation report no. 4
period covered: 1-31 August, 2000*

Activities are being carried out efficiently and effectively despite various constraints mainly related to logistics and a shortage of funds. Within the operation, the Zambian Red Cross staff and volunteers continue to display a high level of professionalism and commitment. The logistics sector will now receive considerable focus and support, including the recruitment of trained logisticians who can provide immediate impact in strengthening the sector.

The context

In March 1999, an influx of displaced people fleeing internal conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) arrived in Zambia. With the number of refugees arriving increased at a rate of 200-300 per day, the Government of the Republic of Zambia granted refugee status to those seeking protection and assistance. The sudden influx prompted the Zambian authorities and UNHCR to request the Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS) to help in providing basic humanitarian assistance

At the present time the ZRCS, with the support of the Federation, is engaged in the provision of general camp management services to the refugee community at both Kaputa/Nsumbu and Mpulungu transit centres and Mwange refugee camp. Since the beginning of the operation, the Red Cross has been fully involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to refugees in the following areas: reception and registration, collaborating with the Government and UNHCR to establish accurate records of refugees coming through the transit centers, distribution of food and non-food items, provision of health services, both curative and preventive, logistics and warehousing, and the provision of safe and sufficient water as well as sanitation services. At the same time the ZRCS, with the assistance of the Federation, is attempting to build managerial capacity among the middle and senior managers and the operative staff (refugees workers and volunteers), participation of the refugees in project activities and institutional capacity building of the local Red Cross branch.

Latest events

The political and security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains highly unpredictable due to the complicated conflict being fought in the country. The fighting has continued despite a peace accord signed in August 1991 by all the major parties. In recent months the violence has surged, causing the number of refugees to sour. A total number of 965 refugees was received at Mwange camp by mid-August 2000, arriving through the Kaputa, Mpulungu and Chienge transit centres, accumulating to 22,959 (including 140 new born babies for the month of July but excluding spontaneous repatriation).

During the reporting period the Zambian authorities carried out a campaign of relocating spontaneously settled refugees in villages in and around Kaputa District, resulting in an influx to Kaputa transit centre, and the subsequent increase of the population of Mwange camp, as a result putting pressure on its capacity of 25,000 and necessitating the opening of the new Kala camp on 19 August. This has further strained the limited resources of UNHCR, WFP, and the Federation and ZRCS. As of 31 August 2000, Kala camp had received a total of 1,202 refugees, the majority of whom came from Kaputa transit center. MSF-Holland is providing health services, water and sanitation, and camp infrastructure construction. UNHCR is, as usual, responsible for registration, assisted by one Red Cross staff member. So far the basic needs are being met.

Based on a request from UNHCR, the Federation and ZRCS are favorably considering taking on camp management, warehousing and distribution of food and non-food items at the new Kala camp. A decision is pending confirmation that additional vehicles (two light vehicles and two heavy trucks) and additional funds (approximately CHF 170,000) is made available.

Spontaneous repatriation from Mwange camp continues, although at a reduced pace if assessing the official repatriation figure. It is estimated that a total of 2,300 beneficiaries have repatriated but it is also believed that some have continued to leave without registering with any organization.

Land for settlement of the refugees has continued to be an outstanding issue. It is anticipated, however, that in the coming month the prospected 2,500 hectares (out of the 10,000 hectares promised) will be allocated to seventy-five families, based on a first come first served principle. The refugees are already making efforts to become less reliant on agency deliveries. So far some are engaged in food production and income generation projects, including diversifying backyard gardening, fish farming, chicken rearing and brick making and sale with support from the implementing partner responsible for community development (CARE).

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

General •

The HIV/AIDS initiative, proposed during the meeting of the Southern Africa Partnership of Red Cross Societies in Okapuka, Namibia, was followed up recently at the National Red Cross Headquarters with a gathering of more than 100 volunteers and staff. ZRCS volunteers presented dances, a sketch, and t-shirts with the "It must start with you and me!" slogan were distributed. The participants pledged to live a safer life and spread the word through peer education, persuasion, and pressure, emphasizing the idea that HIV/AIDS awareness form a central theme at any Red Cross event in the country.

Institutional Development •

The National Executive Committee of the Zambia Red Cross Society convened on 6 August to review the draft three year strategic plan of the Society. This meeting was entirely funded by ZRCS themselves. Discussions were followed up with an agreed upon plan for the way forward where a more realistic time frame as well as the present capacity of the Society is being considered. It was also agreed that HIV/AIDS, gender issues, Sphere minimum standards, and strategy 2010 would be incorporated in the plan.

In addition, the ZRCS has started its "down scaling" efforts by trimming its staff and selling off redundant vehicles, all in an effort to reduce costs with the aim of being able to cover it's own core costs.

Mporokoso

Health •

Pharmacy

The pharmacy unit carried out its planned activities without any significant problems, essential drugs were made available as usual and the unit managed to cope with the additional requirements following the opening of the In-patient Department (IPD). The central drug store located at the Farmers Training Centre will be equipped with an air-conditioning device to protect drugs from deterioration.

Laboratory

The facility continued to assist clinicians to arrive at accurate diagnosis for proper case management. All basic laboratory investigations pertaining to serious cases were carried out efficiently. The unit received RPR and Hepatitis-B test kits.

In-patient Department (IPD)

The IPD was opened on 24 July 2000, and to date a total number of 349 admissions have been recorded, out of which 307 admissions were for August with the following breakdown: 162 in the children's ward, 114 in the labour ward, 42 in the female ward, and 20 in the male ward. No deaths were recorded. The opening of the IPD in Mwanze camp has reduced the workload at the Mporokoso hospital by almost 50%.

Out-patient Department (OPD)

The OPD has continued to render quality health services to the Mwanze refugee community. No disease outbreaks were recorded during the period. Health care services were provided through all levels of Primary Health Care. Services such as diagnosing of cases, dressings, injections, ORT, emergency services, uncomplicated deliveries, reproductive health, pharmacy, health surveillance, basic hospitalization, laboratory and ongoing measles immunizations are being offered.

Referrals

Most cases were attended to at Mwanze camp clinic, and only obstetrical emergencies were referred to Mporokoso hospital. The visiting orthopaedic surgeons at Mporokoso hospital extended their services to the refugees as well and five refugee patients received medical attention, while others were given appointments for the next visit.

Reproductive Health

The unit continued to provide valuable services to the refugee community, recording the following attendance: 138 antenatals, 80 health center deliveries, 42 under-five, 77 post natal, and 103 family planning acceptors. Immunizations have been given to all children in the target group, all antigens were available except BCG.

The second round of sub-National Immunisation Days (NID's) took place from 21 to 22 August, with the Oral Polio Vaccine given to children 0 to 59 months. A coverage of 88.2% was attained in the second round, compared to 106.2% (more than planned) in the first round, giving an average coverage of 96.2%.

Vitamin A supplements were given to children in the age group between 6 to 72 months, attaining a coverage of 87.2 %. The supplements provide protection to children against various infections. Measles coverage has reached 92.6% compared to minimum standard of 90%.

The third nutrition survey indicated an adequate nutrition level for 91.62% of the camp population, moderate acute malnutrition for 6.7%, and acute malnutrition for 1.67% of those sampled. The ration continues to be based on 2,100 kcals per person per day.

Outreach Health

Routine health education in the camp was provided to the community through dissemination of information on preventive health services in the areas of nutrition, tracing defaulters (those who do not attend/follow the treatment programme although it has been recommended) and referring them to the camp clinic.

Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA's)

The group has continued to advise and assist mothers and expectant women on basic issues related to reproductive health. Eighteen TBA's will be graduating on 15 September 2000. When the 18 TBA's are deployed, the coverage will be 1 to 1,777 beneficiaries against the recommended minimum standards of 1 to 2000 beneficiaries.

Other Activities

The opening of the IPD at Mwange camp has broadened the line of operation for the health sector which now has to take the challenges both of increased workload and of more complicated cases. The referral cases to Mporokoso hospital have dropped by 40% and only serious cases are now being referred.

The prevalence of leprosy in Mwange camp is well under control and a five days' training was conducted for 20 outreach health promoters to impart knowledge in the refugee community on prevention and control.

Water & Sanitation •

Water

This sector continued to provide safe and sufficient water to the beneficiaries at the rate of 20.6 litres per person. A total of 32.7 kg's of granular chlorine has been used, giving an average of a residual of chlorine of 0.2 at the water collecting points. The water distribution network was extended to all the new sections with tap stands erected at a walking distances of not more than 350 metres between each one. There are a total of 19 hand pumps, out of which 17 are operational, yielding an average of 0.523 litres per second. The spring yield has been on an average of 10 litres per second.

Sanitation

The sanitation team focused on improved sanitation in the new sections accommodating the latest arrivals. Each of the nine new sections have 25 communal latrines constructed at distances which can be reached within 3 minutes. A total number of 47 family latrines in the new sections of the camp were constructed and are within acceptable walking distances of a maximum of 2 minutes, and 16 refuse pits

were dug in new sections at distances of 15m from dwellings. Drainage systems have been provided at all water points. Public places such as markets, clinics, agency offices, distribution centres, warehouses, and the police station have communal latrines at a walking distances of not more than 2 minutes.

Vector Control

The unit continued to focus on providing and maintaining a clean environment, free from harmful pests, insects and rodents. A total number of 12,789 rodents were caught during the period by refugees who receive a small incentive such as a note book or a pen in return. Dry baiting against blow flies was also done at vector breeding sites and spraying in family latrines in half the total number of sections within the camp. Mosquito breeding sites were destroyed and sprayed.

Hygiene Promotion

The hygiene promoters conducted their activities successfully and a total number of 247 households were visited. The team attended a five-day workshop on leprosy awareness. Empty cooking oil containers retrieved from the distribution site, have been modified into hand washing facilities and will be distributed next month as part of the ongoing hygiene promotion campaign.

Other Activities

Other activities include: construction of the water/sanitation store house and extension of the water distribution line into new camp sections. The VIP latrines at the clinic are ready and in use and the septic tank and soak-away at the clinic have also been completed.

Logistics •

While logistics constraints remain, improvements are anticipated shortly with the hiring of logistics officers (to be stationed in Lusaka and Mporokoso). The condition of vehicles within the Mwange operation is still a reason for concern even though a rehabilitation programme has been put in place. If no further funds are forthcoming, however, then this and other necessary activities will come to a halt and the successful implementation of the operation will be jeopardized.

Distribution •

Food

Basic food items (maize grain, peas, salt and cooking oil) were provided at two general distributions at Mwange camp. Unfortunately, due to delays in shipment, food was delivered directly to the distribution centre on the distribution day making it impossible to carry out sample weighing and spot-checks on quality. The same problem will occur in the coming distributions. Shortfalls in the expected quantities constantly threatens to postpone distributions.

Non-food Items

In addition to carrying out the planned distribution of non-food items, the sector staff conducted a one day workshop on distribution systems and procedures for the refugee scoopers and also sorted the remaining second hand clothes. During the period under review, each family in the camp also received one empty sack for food collection. Soap was not distributed during the month due to the lack of delivered supplies from UNHCR and WFP. Second hand clothes were given to three sections in the camp as part of the second round distribution, while new arrivals received clothes at the reception center.

The sector has managed to distribute the following non-food items: plastic sheets, jerrycans, mats, soap, blankets and kitchen sets to all new arrivals. In addition, the following distributions took place during the period:

- 21,732 beneficiaries received food items on 6 of August 2000 (general distribution).
- 22,710 beneficiaries received food items on 22 August 2000 (general distribution).
- 1,861 beneficiaries received peas as part of the ration for families with large family size (+4).
- 965 new arrivals received food and non food items on arrival.

- 1,883 beneficiaries received blankets during the period under review.
- 3,404 beneficiaries received second hand clothes.

Outstanding needs

Despite the clear need and the progress achieved, the operation remains chronically under-funded, threatening the high standards currently in place and necessitating a budget reduction. The logistics rehabilitation plans, in particular, are considered crucial to ensure that the operation can continue. Funds for the management and maintenance of the operation are urgently requested.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Mwanze operation management team maintained a cordial and very good working relationship with the Government, UNHCR and other implementing agencies throughout the month.

The Federation participation in the bi-weekly interagency meetings in Lusaka provide useful interaction between implementing agencies. The weekly interagency meetings in Mporokoso continue to provide a useful forum for information sharing and problem solving.

A direct line of communication has been established between the delegation and WFP, with regular updates being received directly on the food pipeline and shipments of food stuff.

An ECHO representative visited the Delegation and the Mwanze camp operation this month and after returning to Lusaka expressed satisfaction with the services provided by the Red Cross.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Bekele Geleta
Director
Africa Department

This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

Southern Africa						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 01.43/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED			27/09/00	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF, revised -----				8,012,701		TOTAL COVERAGE 63.5%
Balance carried forward from 1999				422,982		
Reallocation of Income				13,500		
AUSTRALIA - RC				13,500	01/07/00	DELEGATE DON ATKINSON
AUSTRALIA - RC		10,000	AUD	9,786	30.06.00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
AUSTRIAN - RC		2,350,000	ATS	268,396	17.08.00	ZIMBABWE WATER SUPPORT AND WATSAN TRAINEESHIP
BRITISH - GOVT				795,000	19.01.2000	DFID 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.3
BRITISH - RC		42,072	GBP	106,021	19.07.00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
CANADIAN - GOVT/RC		400,000	CAD	447,920	05/05/00	LISN IMPLEMENTATION
DANISH - GOVT/RC		200,000	DKK	41,720	14.06.00	20% OF DKK 1'000'000 / RD
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		24,891	EUR	38,735	23.05.00	INSTITUTIONAL DEV.
FINNISH - GOVT/RC		81,066	EUR	126,155	23.05.00	WATER & SANITATION PROGR.
FINNISH - RC		64,205	EUR	99,916	29.05.00	HIV/AIDS
GERMAN - RC		17,000	DEM	13,940	15.12.1999	CHOLERA PROJECT, WATSAN
ICELANDIC - RC				100,000	03/12/00	CAS S. AFRICA
KAZAKHSTAN - PRIVATE				616	27/11/99	
NETHERLANDS - RC				256,541	27/10/99	NAMIBIA - CBMC NORTH
NORWEGIAN - PRIVATE/RC		500,000	NOK	96,599	01/04/00	MITIGATION PROJECT
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		200,000	SEK	37,660	30.05.00	REG. HEALTH
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		300,000	SEK	56,490	30.05.00	REGIONAL DELEGATION
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		300,000	SEK	56,490	30.05.00	REG. WATER & SANITATION
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		200,000	SEK	37,660	30.05.00	INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		500,000	SEK	94,150	30.05.00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES - RC		18,400	AED	8,579	19.08.00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
UNHCR		609,743	USD	1,004,552	14.04.00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
US GOVT.- PRM		300,000	USD	472,200	15/03/00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				4,619,108	CHF	57.6%
KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
GERMANY - RC		21,000	DEM	17,220	15.12.1999	SOLAR PUMPING SYSTEM
Denmark	Delegate(s)			52,402		
Iceland	Delegate(s)			47,145		
Norway	Delegate(s)			60,123		
Sweden	Delegate(s)			60,123		
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		475,000	SEK	89,443	30.05.00	DEVELOPMENT DELEGATE
SWEDISH - RC		150,000	SEK	28,245	30.05.00	RELIEF ADMINISTRATOR, ZAMBIA
Great Britain	Delegate(s)			115,318		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				470,019	CHF	5.9%
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PZA004, PZA510, P63002, P63160, P63900, P63902, P63904, P63905, PZM510						