

SOUTHERN AFRICA: HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

*14 December,
2000*

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

appeal no. 01.43/2000

situation report no. 6

period covered: 1 September - 10 December, 2000

Despite the fact that the Mwanze refugee camp has consistently been a model operation and that repeated efforts have been made to maintain a minimum level of funding and interest, donor support has unfortunately been inadequate, resulting in an unacceptable decrease in the delivery of basic assistance and services. Without indications of increased support, the Zambia Red Cross Society (ZRCS) and the Federation will be obliged to re-consider the commitment to the operation, including possibly withdrawing involvement by June 2001.

The context

This assistance operation dates from March 1999 when an influx of displaced people fleeing internal conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) arrived in Zambia. With the rate of influx increasing 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 Mwanze refugee camp. Since the beginning of the operation, the Red Cross has been fully involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to refugees, involving 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 Federation has been focusing on building the ZRCS's 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 situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) remains chaotic. Despite continued and increased high level peace negotiations held in Zambia, Libya and Mozambique, sporadic fighting between government troops and rebels continues, particularly in the southern provinces of the DRC.

In December, fighting intensified in southeastern Congo (Pweto) causing a new influx of refugees into Zambia (please see Zambia: DRC Refugees Information Bulletin no. 1 issued on 7 December, 2000). On 3 December 2000 for example, approximately 10,000 refugees arrived over night at the Chiengi transit center, and an estimated 30,000 - 40,000 refugees were estimated to be scattered in villages along the border area. Due to well co-ordinated contingency planning, UNHCR, with the assistance of other agencies, international organizations and NGOs, mobilized human and material resources to cope with the increased number of refugees. The Federation staff in Kaputa and Chiengi Transit Centres and Kala Camp, however, have been overwhelmed by the increased caseload which started at a time when a lack of funding had necessitated a decrease in operational budgets including a cutback in personnel, transport and administrative costs. UNHCR is providing additional support from their emergency fund to cover additional staff and transport costs until the end of the year.

The most recent information available (12 December) from the Zambia Red Cross Society and the Federation teams operating in the area between Chiengi and the border is that some 9,220 refugees have registered with the UNHCR and Government security officer. Of these, 7,300 are reported to be at the Lupiya village north of Chiengi and have expressed the desire to seek asylum and will be transferred to Kala. Some 1,300 wish to remain in the villages where they are currently located, and the remaining 600 have expressed the desire to return to Lubambashi. Several hundred combatants have also arrived, and UNHCR has reportedly requested the ICRC to deal with this group.

Although the Red Cross is attempting to provide some support to the expanded operation at transit centers and Kala, the primary concern continues to be meeting its responsibilities to maintain the current level of assistance in favour of Congolese refugees accommodated at the Mwanze camp. The lack of funds for the Mwanze refugee camp presents a critical threat to the living standards in the camp, and by extension the relief workers themselves. Whether this operation can continue without additional financial support, taking into consideration the financial crisis the operation has been experiencing for the past three months, is now a very real concern.

The Red Cross continues to monitor the situation with other agencies and has also assisted in transporting refugees from transit centres to Kala camp and has provided human resources, entirely funded by UNHCR, to Kala camp and transit centres. The Government of Zambia has sent a team to the area to tour all the villages for two weeks to try to persuade scattered refugees to relocate to Kala where food and other essentials will be supplied.

With the increased conflict in the DRC, the rate of spontaneous repatriation has dropped drastically. Meanwhile, the Government has released 1,800 hectares farming land for distribution to the refugees at Mwanze this season. Refugees have been allocated 64 hectares per section and seeds and farming

equipment were also made available. This is considered a positive step towards some degree of self reliance.

Screening for family reunification between Mwange and Kala has been completed and the first group of nine families from each side have been reunited.

In general, the security situation in and around Mwange camp remained calm. In Kaputa, however, the security situation has deteriorated with the presence of the combatants who are reported to have been terrorizing villagers. It is not clear when they will be removed from the transit center.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Overview •

Despite the critical lack of funds, the delegation continues to operate and provides advice and support to the ZRCS in their efforts to become a better functioning national society. The Federation is addressing the needs with support to resolve some of the internal problems of the national society. The ZRCS also continues with the development of a strategic plan.

Institutional Development •

In addition to the work on the strategic plan, the ZRCS is conducting 3 branch development workshops, with funding support provided by the regional delegation in Harare.

Logistics •

The logistics function of the operation received a strong boost with the hiring of 2 well qualified logistics officers who received one week of training in Federation Standard Procedures at the regional delegation in Harare. The two officers will provide logistics support to both the refugee operation as well as to the ZRCS national head quarters logistics requirements.

Mporokoso, Mwange Refugee Camp •

Beneficiary Numbers

While the Mwange camp population fluctuates due to voluntary self repatriation, new arrivals, family reunification between Kala and Mwange, deaths and births and re-cyclers, assistance during the reporting period has been provided based on the following figures:

- End September: 22,565.
- End October: 21,888.
- End November: 21,896.

Health •

Pharmacy

A new pharmacy technician has been recruited to ensure that systems run smoothly despite the limited resources. The unit had essential drugs and non-medical supplies in stock for the period up to the end of the month of November only. A December replenishment is urgently needed for drugs to treat diseases such as malaria, upper respiratory tract infections, other respiratory tract infections and infective diarrhoea. The required drugs are completely out of stock and are needed to service the beneficiaries on time and also to reduce costs related to referrals to Mporokoso Hospital.

Laboratory

The department is still being effectively run by the Congolese refugees, with assistance from the Zambian clinicians. No major problems were reported during the period under review.

In-patient Department

From 1 to 30 November, 255 patients were admitted to Mwanze Clinic compared to 350 patients admitted in the month of October and 350 for September. This decrease in numbers is primarily due to the lack of medicines for treatment at the camp clinic, and because of this, patients that normally would have been cared for at the clinic now have to be sent to Mporokoso hospital. The trend is also shown in the increase in the number of referrals to Mporokoso hospital: 86 referrals during the month of November compared to 56 cases in October and 30 in September. Most of the referred cases were chronic, surgical and maternity cases.

Out-patient Department (OPD)

3,852 new and 138 re-attendees were treated during November -- a total of 3,990 cases compared to 3,978 new cases and 242 re-attendees during October and 4,033 new cases and 225 re-attendees during September, with a decrease in the case load of about 6% in November compared to 15 % in October and 15% in September.

Overall, there is a reduction in the number of out-patient attendance each month primarily due to the increased outreach work, increased home care training, excellent sanitation in the camp, and a reduction of new arrivals to Mwanze since Kala opened. The main causes for OPD attendance were; malaria, upper respiratory tract infection, watery diarrhoea and intestinal worms.

Reproductive Health

During the month of November, 76 mothers attended the clinic for check ups, while 51 deliveries were conducted at the clinic, all live births. As for the under-five clinic, 89 new cases were registered while 3,216 children in the 0-5 age group were re-attendees. Out of the 3,216 re-attendees, 20 % were below the lower line compared to 24% last month. All attendees at the clinic received immunizations against communicable diseases, except BCG which continues to be out of stock for the second month. Vitamin A supplements were provided as a routine activity. The sector recorded a total of 299 family planning acceptors, 214 old acceptors with 85 new acceptors. Coverage on family planning is slowly increasing according to the figures extracted from the reports at the clinic. The sector has maintained a measles coverage of 92.6 %, slightly above the Sphere minimum standards of 90%.

Outreach Health

The health information team (HIT) has intensified its activities in the community through home visits. During their visits, HIT checks the patients for tuberculosis, epilepsy, diabetes, congestive cardiac failure and any other chronically ill patients including leprosy. The patient together with the family members receive health education on how they should care for the patient and themselves as a family. As for leprosy cases, emphasis is on how patients should prevent injuries. Currently, there are 67 leprosy cases on register in Mwanze camp, 5 have been discharged, while 4 have voluntarily repatriated to Lubumbashi. The situation is being monitored to check if there are any up coming cases in the camp. To up grade the general knowledge on tuberculosis, the sector has organized a two-week training session for the HIT in treatment, defaulter tracing and case management.

Other routine health education activities have continued in the community by the HITs with a view to increasing knowledge on prevention and the control of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and general hygiene promotion.

Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)

After their graduation, the group has taken a role of advising expectant mothers and women on issues of reproductive health. During November the Traditional Birth Attendants conducted 25 deliveries in the community and escorted 14 pregnant mothers to the clinic.

Water & Sanitation •

Water

Water provision has been reduced from 23.68 litres per person per day in September to 19.07 litres per person per day in October and to 16.9 litres per person per day in November mainly due to the

reduction in pumping hours to save on fuel costs. Despite the reduction, this amount remains above minimum Sphere standards for the time being. However, only three tanks are being filled because of difficulties in meeting the pumping costs and because of double pumping (from the stream into the reservoir and from the reservoir up to the distribution centre). Only 13 bore holes out of 19 are operational while 6 cannot yield water. Funds to repair hand pumps are extremely limited, and in some cases spare parts are difficult to find for India mark II hand pumps installed by Irish Aid.

Residual chlorine levels reviewed at the water collecting points indicate an average of 0.2 mg per litre. The low water pressure in some sections and rationing of water has forced the beneficiaries to obtain water from other sources such as the unprotected spring and the bore hole at the distribution centre. This situation poses a threat to the health of the refugees.

Sanitation

The sector has not yet attained a 100% coverage in family latrines as there is a balance of 856 family latrines remaining. The target could not be met during the month of November because no concrete San-plats were made during the month due to a lack of funds for labour and materials.

224 San-plats were made and distributed in October and 426 in September. The activity will resume in December, subject to availability of funds. The communal latrine coverage remains at 100 %.

Vector Control

During the month of November, 6,405 rodents were cropped, bringing the cumulative number to 86,026 since the activity was started this year. Spraying against blow flies and other insects at strategic points in the camp to reduce the fly population has continued and will be intensified during the raining season.

Hygiene Promotion

One hundred and twenty one house hold talks on several topics including malaria and tuberculosis were carried out by Health Information Teams during November.

Logistics •

Vehicles

There remains a critical shortage of heavy trucks to transport refugees from the transit centres. The current truck is being used to its maximum, transporting food and non food items (NFI) between Mporokoso, the WFP rub hall at Mwange and the Mwange distribution center. In between distributions the truck is used to transport food and NFI between Mwange and Kala and to ferry new arrivals between transit centers and Kala. Service is long overdue for this truck but with the increased demand for transport facilities due to the increased influx of refugees and the lack of funding, the service has been put on hold.

The vehicle rehabilitation scheme that was started in July has come to a halt due to the lack of funds and has caused the immediate grounding of two vehicles which in turn hampers the delivery of services.

The ambulance, brought recently from service in Lusaka, is in good shape. Monthly minor maintenance and service has been done to ensure mobility of the rest of the fleet.

Procurement

Within the minimal resources (balance of UNHCR funding for 2000), the project managed to organize the essential and most needed operational requirements such as minor quantities of fuel, lubricants, medical and non medical supplies, stationary and spare parts. Items such as tires, gearbox parts, clutch plates, regular workshop services for vehicles, cement for San-plats, gate valve spares for water systems, self closing tap heads for tap stands, protective clothing for distribution and vector control

teams, scoops for distribution, fencing for clinic, a refrigerator for laboratory and self-destructing syringes have not been bought due to the lack of funds.

Distribution of Basic Relief Assistance •

Food

During the period, fortnightly general food distributions went well following an improvement in food deliveries by WFP. During the period, WFP also started to build up buffer stocks in Mwange in anticipation of transport problems during the rainy season starting end October. The quality of pulses has, however, dropped.

There was a shortfall during the second distribution of November and a supplementary request was made to cover for the short fall in maize grain and cooking oil, which was later received and distributed. A ration for 101 new arrivals from Mpulungu transit Center was distributed for 10 days to cover their needs up to the general distribution.

Preparations for increased storage capacity has started at Mwange and Kawambwa with the intention of establishing Extended Delivery Points (EDPs) at Kawambwa for Kala camp.

Non-food items

During September, basic non food items such as blankets, cooking sets, plastic sheets and Jerry cans were distributed to 108 new arrivals and eight sections, while a population of 6,606 individuals received second hand clothes. Distribution of second hand clothes also continued well in October.

The second hand clothes distribution for November also started well for the remaining three sections but was discontinued on 13 November due to incidents of unrest provoked by youth gangs. Discussions were held with section leaders regarding security at distributions and it was agreed that the distribution of second hand clothes will resume in mid December. Soap was also distributed during November (at 250 grams per family instead of 250 grams of soap per person per month due to low stock levels at the warehouse. However, the situation has improved and beneficiaries will receive their normal monthly requirement in the next distribution).

Outstanding needs

The current financial constraints have forced the Mwange Camp management to focus on life support activities only and at a minimum level. Funds are therefore urgently required not only to continue delivering basic assistance to the beneficiaries but also to implement the operation effectively (eg. vehicles for transport, fuel and spare parts for vehicles and water pumps, spare parts for water delivery systems, protective clothing for vector control, cement and iron bars for San-plat construction, fuel and spare parts and service for vehicles, protective clothing and scoops for food distribution, fencing material for clinic, and a refrigerator for the laboratory.

In addition, the following emergency drugs are needed: injectable diazepam, atropine, chlorpromazine, promethazine, egometrine, oxytocine, digoxin, hydrocortisone, phenobabitone, syntometrine, frusemide, lignocaine, 5% dextrose, calcium bicarbonate, potassium chloride, inferon, 70% dextran, sodium bicarbonate. These drugs must be available for treatment of more serious obstetric and convulsive conditions.

45 rural health kits are also needed to cover routine medication for refugees during the months of December - February at the Mwange clinic and the Mporokoso hospital for the increased case load and for transit centers.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Federation delegation enjoys excellent relationships with ZRCS and partners such as UNHCR and WFP, other agencies such as MSF(H), MSF(F) and Care, both at Lusaka and Mporokoso levels.

The delegation was visited by representatives from the US state department, Netherlands Red Cross, Echo and the Norwegian Farris team.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

It is becoming more and more difficult to run the refugee operation due to the lack of funding. In Lusaka and in the field, delegates and ZRCS staff are improvising to uphold minimum standards. But with the total lack of funding for essential drugs at the clinic, lack of funding for pumping water to beneficiaries, lack of funding for the transport of food and refugees from transit centers, the staff and volunteers are becoming more frustrated by the day.

In addition to this situation, the new influx of refugees at Kaputa and Chiengi is placing more strain on human resources in the Mwange camp. Staff at all levels, particularly in Chiengi, Kaputa and Kala, are showing enormous commitment and efforts to cope with the new influx, working for long hours under difficult circumstances.

Practically, the Red Cross cannot cope with maintaining Mwange and/or the increased work load in Kaputa, Chiengi, Mulungu and Kala without the necessary resources. The delegation and the ZRCS are trying to do the impossible, and the funding situation must improve soon.

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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			12/14/00	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
CASH							
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF, revised -----				8,012,701		TOTAL COVERAGE 69.8%	
Balance carried forward from 1999				422,982			
Reallocation of Income				13,500			
AUSTRALIA - RC				13,500	07/01/00	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	
BRITISH - RC		25,000	GBP	64,750	27.09.00	WATER/SANITATION PROGRAMME	
BRITISH - RC		15,000	GBP	37,950	01.12.00	DISASTER PREPAREDNESS	
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		148,342	EUR	225,791	23.05.00	WATER & SANITATION PROGR.	
FINNISH - RC		64,205	EUR	99,916	29.05.00	HIV/AIDS	
FINNISH - RC		50,456	EUR	76,799	25.10.00	RD SUPPORT	
GERMAN - RC		17,000	DEM	13,940	15.12.1999	CHOLERA PROJECT, WATSAN	
ICELANDIC - RC				100,000	12/03/00	CAS S. AFRICA	
KAZAKHSTAN - PRIVATE				616	11/27/99		
NETHERLANDS - RC				256,541	10/27/99	NAMIBIA - CBMC NORTH	
NORWEGIAN - PRIVATE/RC		962,100	NOK	183,129	04/01/00	MITIGATION PROJECT FOR ZAMBIA AND ZIMBABWE	
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	
SWEDISH - RC		175,000	SEK	31,850	06.11.00	DELEGATE COSTS	
SWISS - PRIVATE				3,243	31.10.00	AIDS/HIV VIDEO	
SWISS GOVT/RC				100,000	23.11.00	NS INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
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	03/15/00	REFUGEES IN ZAMBIA	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				5,119,866	CHF	63.9%	
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							