

# **BURUNDI, RWANDA, TANZANIA, UGANDA & ZAIRE: RWANDAN AND BURUNDIAN REFUGEES**

*4 October 1996*

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situation report no. 5  
period covered: 1 - 31 August 1996*

## ***Summary***

*During August 60,000 Rwandans went home, leading to the closure of two camps in Northern Burundi. Meanwhile the Federation and Tanzanian Red Cross made plans for a new camp to accommodate up to 50,000 refugees in Burundi as violence there escalates. The massive relief operations in the Great Lakes region went smoothly, with little or no security problems. Sanctions imposed on Burundi by its neighbours made operating conditions somewhat difficult for relief agencies, and made life even more unpleasant for ordinary people.*

## ***The context***

More than two years after the terrible events in Rwanda plunged the Great Lakes region of East/Central Africa into crisis, the Federation continues to provide essential services for over 642,000 refugees in Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire. The Federation is also assisting the Rwanda Red Cross to re-establish itself and to restore traditional support programmes to the community.

## ***Latest events***

### **Tanzania**

Ever increasing violence in Burundi continued to affect the operation in Tanzania. The number of internally displaced in the country is growing and more and more are successfully crossing the border into Tanzania. Following an assessment mission carried out in June, the UNHCR Head of Sub-Office formally asked the Federation/TRCS to assume responsibility for the preparation of a camp for 50,000 people in Nduta, south of Ngara in anticipation of a new influx of refugees. The proposal has been discussed in Dar es Salaam and at the Secretariat and a positive response seems likely.

### **Zaire**

Goma and Bukavu enjoyed another month of relative calm, as the worst incident to be reported was the loss of one Federation vehicle, hijacked at gunpoint without consequences for the two

delegates on board. On the political scene, August was marked by the a declaration by the Zairian Prime Minister to the effect that the return of the refugees to Rwanda would be effected before next year's elections. Signs of increasing tension - including an unusually strong presence of the Zairian army- were reported south from Bukavu, where the road leading to Uvira was prone to mine attacks and clashes between unidentified warring factions.

### **Burundi**

Two major events dominated the Burundian scene during August. Firstly, the economic sanctions strictly imposed by neighbouring countries took a severe toll on the life of many Burundians and on the daily work of aid agencies. Fuel shortages, rationing of electricity, food prices rocketing and a virtually complete block of aerial and terrestrial international communications were among the most evident consequences of the blockade. The second event was the massive population movement which led to the closure of all refugee camps in northern Burundi. After last month's episodes of forcible repatriation, tens of thousands of Rwandese refugees voluntarily went back to Rwanda, emptying the two remaining camps of Magara and Rukuramigabo.

### **Rwanda**

The sudden, massive return of over 60,000 refugees from Burundi to the southernmost communes of Butare prefecture was the highlight of the month in Rwanda . The returning refugees were all processed through the overcrowded Mugansa transit centre, so that at some stage the Butare stadium had to be used as a temporary shelter. Few problems was noticed during the repatriation exercise: after having been registered by the authorities, returnees were quickly transported to their communes of origin where only sporadic interrogations or arrests were reported. A certain tension developed in some areas, where families were forced to leave houses they had previously occupied.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Tanzania (Benaco camp, 161,000 refugees; Lukole camp, 20,000 refugees)**

In Benaco and Lukole camps, food distributions continued with distributions of 3,140 metric tonnes (MT) during the month. Additionally, over 60,000 blankets and 5,976 jerrycans were distributed. More than 6,200 people were treated in the out-patients departments of Lukole dispensary, 359 of whom were admitted to the in-patients department. The referral hospital admitted some 650 patients. Activities undertaken by health information teams (HITs) and traditional birth attendants during the month included over 3,500 Health Education lessons and 8,421 home visits, with 1,463 referrals.

During the month, the four mother-and-child health clinics in Benaco and Lukole handled over 12,000 consultations and provided 9,866 vaccinations; some 3.5 million litres of water were treated and distributed and maintenance carried out on 22,740 working latrines. Close to 1,000 new latrines were built bringing the ratios to 8.8 persons per hole in Benaco and 4.3 in Lukole, which is well above the minimum standards recommended by WHO for emergency conditions.

### **Zaire**

### **North Kivu (Kibumba camp, 204,000 refugees; Kahindo camp, 115,000 refugees)**

Food totalling 4,427 MT, including corn soya blend, maize, pulses, vegetable oil and salt, were distributed to the refugees during the review period. A number of non-food items were distributed as well, including 1,379 tarpaulins, 20,604 blankets and 3,144 pieces of clothing. Almost 25,000 stères of firewood (1 stère equals about 1 cubic meter) were provided through<sup>1</sup>

daily distributions at specialised sites. Kibumba hospital handled 821 consultations, 507 of which resulted in hospitalisation, and performed 240 surgical operations. The four dispensaries in Kibumba camp handled 12,106 consultations, 725 of which resulted in the admission to the dispensaries' inpatient departments.

#### **South Kivu (Kashusha camp, 38,000 refugees; Nyamirangwe camp, 21,000 refugees)**

Almost 662 MT of food were distributed in August. Soap has not been dispensed in August but a double distribution is planned for early September. Due to pipeline problems, firewood was not distributed either. A substantial part of the 18 MT of clothing donated by the Swedish Red Cross has been handed out. 10,089 patients were visited in the two dispensaries, 627 of whom were admitted to the inpatient departments.

#### **Burundi (Magara and Rukuramigabo camp, totalling 70,000 at the beginning of August and less than 1,000 at the end of the month)**

Decreasing quantities of food were distributed to the two remaining camps (252 MT) on a weekly basis, so as to adjust rations to the changing caseload. Returning refugees were given high protein biscuits and other emergency food rations, plus British Red Cross-donated blankets. Meanwhile, soap and other non-food products were distributed to the Kirundo orphanage and to a centre for handicapped in Muyinga. Support activities for street children in Ngozi continued.

#### **Rwanda**

The usual relief activities continued, including food distributions to the 13,500 refugees in Umubano camp on August 19-23. Over 300 MT of food (milk powder, sugar, beans, rice, oil and salt) were distributed by the Rwanda Red Cross to 33 secondary schools. In August, the first part of the anaesthetic project - theoretical and practical training to 12 nurses and technicians - came to an end, with a final exam showing positive results. A budget and plan of action for the second phase is in train.

#### **Uganda**

From June 26 management of Kisoro camp - approximately 200 km SW of Mbarara, where 2,500 Zairian refugees settled early in the month - was transferred from UNHCR to the Federation/Uganda Red Cross. Procedures are in place to handle camp management, relief, logistics, health (including water/sanitation) and construction. Work progressed well in the two small settlements of Orukinga and Nakigale in southern Uganda (7,300 refugees in all) with more than 107 MT of food and 1,600 bars of soap distributed over two months; relevant social and health care services were also provided.

### ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

### ***Conclusion***

Refer to format...! (Seriously, it is better if this comes from your dept as you know the operation best)

PS: Anything on natsoc development, media, co-operation with others etc?

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