

GREAT LAKES REGION — TANZANIA: BURUNDIAN AND CONGOLESE REFUGEES

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period covered: 1 -30 September 1997

The context

With the overthrow of the Burundian Government in the summer of 1996, political instability and continued military action resulted in refugee movement across the border into Tanzania. In December 1996 the Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS) and the International Federation assumed responsibility for refugees in two camps in the Kasulu District. In Moyovosi Camp, with a population of over 28,000 TRCS/Federation are responsible for camp management and curative and preventative health care. In Mtabila, with a population of 47,342 in the main camps and extensions, TRCS/Federation cover curative and preventative health care, plus water and sanitation in the extensions.

As a result of the civil war in former Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo or DRC), there has been an influx of refugees into the Kigoma area of Tanzania since late last year. Under the auspices of UNHCR and the Tanzanian Government, TRCS/Federation were asked to set up and operate a refugee camp in Lugufu, 90 km east of Kigoma where they provide camp management, relief, health care, water and sanitation. The population at the end of August was 34,818.

Latest events

The Government took steps during the month to round up and screen all “illegal” immigrants in the Kigoma Region. Over 7,133 people were screened in Kigoma of which about 2,000 were transported to the camps. Added to this was the reception of 1,300 new refugees during the month. The influx of new Burundian refugees into Tanzania has slowed markedly.

The repatriation process for the DRC refugees started during the month. This operation went smoothly due to good co-ordination by UNHCR. Because of physical constraints of ferrying people across Lake Tanganyika to Uvira (one ferry carrying a maximum of 600 people at a time) and because registration for repatriation in Lugufu started slowly as compared to the Congolese camp at Nyarugusu, there was not a large impact on the

population in Lugufu. It is hoped that the flow will increase to more than the 1,131 refugees that were repatriated during September. The numbers registering for repatriation has lifted considerably as confidence has grown in the process — 7,000 people are now registered from Lugufu and 33,000 including Nyarugusu. On the other hand, the reportedly tense situation in Southern Kivu Province, Eastern DRC, gives grounds for concerns about future adequate conditions and safety for repatriation.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Dar es Salaam:

TRCS took steps early in the month to strengthen the management of the operation. The Secretary General assumed direct operational control of operations and deployed the TRCS Treasurer and a National Managing Committee member who established new financial, personnel and other procedures by the month's end. The 1998 budget exercise was almost completed (with major involvement of all TRCS/Federation field managers) and work begun on preparing job descriptions for all TRCS volunteers. A full staffing audit is still planned as the next step in exerting stronger management control. In the meantime, the passing of financial responsibility was postponed and TRCS asked that the Federation maintain control for the time being of certain aspects of the operation. The handover of vehicles and other assets is now ready to be undertaken and awaits the Federation having the personnel to manage the process.

Kigoma:

Support functions were maintained in spite of acute shortages of Federation delegates, including the lack of a logistics co-ordinator for the whole month. It is a compliment to the work of those in Kigoma, both TRCS and Federation, that the operation did not suffer but reinforcements are needed to relieve the heavy workload of the team.

It has been decided by TRCS that the operation should be co-ordinated on a day-to-day basis from Kigoma and not from Dar es Salaam. TRCS has appointed a Project Manager in Kigoma and the Federation will re-establish a sub-delegation.

Kasulu:

Two cycles of food distributions took place in Moyovosi during the month. A total of 26,978 beneficiaries received rations on 3-4 September and 26,588 on 17-18 September.

September: Food Distributions

| | Maize | CSB | Beans/Pulses | Oil | Salt |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|
| Distributed Kgs | 281,358 | 22,498 | 89,991 | 14,999 | 3,722 |
| Kgs per person/per day | 0.4 (grain), 0.35 (meal) | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.02 | 0.01 |

WFP has been working to build up two-month food reserves before the onset of the rainy season. No non food items were distributed in the camp during the month.

The construction of the OPD and MCH Centre in Mtabila Extension is almost complete. The roof on Mtabila 1 OPD was strengthened for the rainy season and the kitchen construction was completed.

Morbidity rates in Moyovosi were disproportionately greater in Moyovosi than Mtabila. Although smaller, Moyovosi had three times the morbidity. The reasons for this are to be ascertained by the medical staff. Malaria remains the main cause of morbidity accounting for almost 80% of the cases. Ninety per cent of malnutrition cases were in Moyovosi.

In the two camps, the main causes of morbidity were malaria (76%), Lower Respiratory Tract infections (8%), diarrhoea (4%), others (9%), and malnutrition (2%). Some 23,553 refugees were seen in the OPDs in the two camps.

Mortality statistics: 61% of deaths in Moyovosi were due to malaria and 76% in Mtabila. Three-quarters of malaria deaths were among the under fives.

Blood transfusions were started in Moyovosi to treat severe anaemia. Blood was collected from refugees and tested for HIV and Hepatitis. In 15 days, 45 transfusions were given.

Almost 12,000 children under five and 738 older children were immunised against polio. A nutritional survey showed that nutritional status is within an acceptable range. Nevertheless, supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes continue.

The construction of the water base and ancillary equipment to pump water to a higher point for gravity feed to the Mtabila Extension refugees continued through the month.

Concrete slab production for family latrines continued with over 4,300 slabs now produced and 4,100 family latrines constructed, giving a coverage of 67% of the 6,100 households in Mtabila Extension: an increase from 45% coverage at the end of August. Additionally there were vector control activities and garbage pit digging to improve sanitation.

Lugufu:

With improved distribution controls and the use of colour coded aprons, the overall safety of volunteers is enhanced and provides for better concentration on work priorities. A large number of problems associated with food distribution have consequently disappeared. Food was distributed to 36,992 refugees - a higher figure due to transfers following the screening of “illegal” immigrants and people shifted from Nyarugusu to Lugufu.

September: Food Distributions

| | Maize | CSB | Beans | Oil | Salt |
|------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Distributed Kgs | 362,521 | 31,073 | 24,293 | 20,715 | 5,247 |
| Kgs Per Person/Per Day | 0.35 | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.02 | 0.01 |

September: Non Food Distributions

| Commodity | Donor | Unit | Distribution | No. Beneficiaries |
|-------------------|------------|------|--------------|-------------------|
| Blanket | ECHO | Pcs | 84 | 210 |
| Cooking Pots | UNHCR | Pcs | 42 | 52 |
| Folding Jerry Can | FEDERATION | Pcs | 235.00 | 920.00 |
| Kitchen Sets | UNHCR | Set | 2,721 | 5,428 |
| Plastic Sheeting | ECHO | Kg | 48 | 121 |
| Soap | ECHO | Kg | 7,496 | 37,480 |
| Straw Mats | DOOO | Pcs | 169 | 172 |

Major efforts have been made to improve the flow of information to refugees. This, combined with the better organisation in the camp, has contributed to a better level of co-operation, which contributes greatly to the security of workers. This process has been enhanced by good liaison with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Significant work has been done to upgrade the living compound with the construction of solid structures. The camp distribution point has been improved and drainage work started around the rubbish halls. The non-food warehouse has been moved to the new site and a complete inventory done. The third OPD has been completed. A survey of the terrain has been completed by TRCS/Federation and the results given to UNHCR so that drainage of the camp site can be addressed.

The repatriation process has actively involved TRCS/Federation personnel. Though large numbers of refugees have not yet returned to their homes, the processing of the returnees has gone well with good co-operation with UNHCR.

During the first week of September, 12 cases of typhoid fever were reported. The Health Information Team was deployed to address this small outbreak. Staff working in the camp and in camp restaurants were screened and of 170 tested three registered positive and underwent treatment.

Also noteworthy is the health treatment now being made available to local Tanzanian villagers who present themselves at the camp OPD. Attempts are being made to explore how services might be extended to the local population and to how local communities might better benefit from the presence of Red Cross in the area, both short and long term.

Morbidity for the month was 47% — a decrease from 19,607 in August to 16,191 in September. Crude mortality was 0.93%. The most common diseases were: malaria (29.6%), Respiratory Tract Infections (13.7%), intestinal parasites (11.8%), watery diarrhoea (9.5%), scabies (4.9%), STD (1.1%), meningitis (0.05%) and typhoid (0.1%).

The Lugufu River flow slowed during the month and dried up in early October. Accordingly, work on the Malagarasi project was prioritised and significant progress made. Phase one, the intake to the water plant is completed, allowing tankering of water when the Lugufu River cannot support daily requirements. Phase two, the connection between the water plant and the camp, is 65% completed. Phase three, the ring system to reticulate water around the camp to 10 distribution points, is 70% completed. The whole system should be operational later this month.

A concern is the state of the road between the camp and the Malagarasi water plant access road as this will not support a major tankering operation. Discussions on this will be held with UNHCR.

The average amount of water delivered during the month of September was 17.4 litres per person per day.

Family latrine coverage increased by just two per cent to 33% during the month. This disappointing result was largely attributed to lack of co-operation from the refugee population. Although slabs and superstructures have been produced to provide 57% coverage, the refugees must first construct a wall around the latrine site to assure that the material is not stolen. They have been unwilling to do this. Extensive vector control spraying has been carried out within the sanitation programme.

Outstanding needs

Sufficient roadworthy vehicles remain a major problem and hinder operational efficiency. The handover of vehicles to TRCS and the upgrading of the fleet by importing 13 new vehicles is ready to take place but the resources needed from the Operations Support Unit in Nairobi to manage the process could not be made available in September. This is to be prioritised for October and will be followed by the handover of other assets.

The absence of a Federation Logistics Co-ordinator presented real challenges in terms of maintaining the efficiency of the logistics pipeline.

Work continues on upgrading living conditions for volunteers and delegates as the short rains are due to start in October.

Security plans and arrangements remain important and need regular review and updating. The Federation Security Co-ordinator is presently on mission to the Region to assess and advise.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

Relations with other agencies are good and continue to improve through frequent interagency meetings. A Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR is under negotiation.

Conclusion

The continued dry period has allowed much progress this month. The arrival of more delegates has improved the situation considerably in terms of support to the camps. What remains is the need for delegates to staff the logistics base in Kigoma - a base that will now revert to being a sub delegation.

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