

# ***UGANDA: SUPPORT TO REFUGEES, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE***

*29 December  
1999*

*appeal no. 01.13/99  
situation report no. 2  
period covered: January - September 1999*

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*With a new Secretary General now officially confirmed as well as other senior officers, the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) is in a position to face the challenges that lie ahead. The rationalisation of the refugee operation in Mbarara and the restructuring recently implemented by the URCS, with Federation support will advance the development process while ensuring that the refugees continue to receive quality assistance.*

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## ***The context***

The Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS), with support from the International Federation, has been managing a multi-sectoral programme for refugees in South Western Uganda since 1994. The refugees, most of whom originate from the Congo and Rwanda are living in two camps about 30 kms from Mbarara Town. Presently, Orukinga houses approximately 6,587 refugees primarily originating from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda, whereas Nakivale camp includes 5,154 refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, as well as from the Congo and Rwanda. The programme is managed under a tripartite agreement between the Uganda Government, Uganda Red Cross/Federation and UNHCR (who are lead agency and co-finance the programme). WFP is responsible for providing food to the refugees, and contribute towards food distribution costs from the Extended Delivery Points (EDPs). No other organisations are present in the two camps, hence the National Society (with Federation support) is responsible for the provision of all services required by the refugees, including food and non-food distribution, water and sanitation, health, education and community services, as well as logistics support and camp management.

Nakivale camp has been designated by Uganda Government as a reception camp for any major influx of refugees into the country, and the URCS and Federation were requested to manage any new influx into Uganda. A contingency plan for different influx scenarios has been updated and agreed upon between the Government, WFP, UNHCR and the URCS.

The Disaster Preparedness programme has been initiated under this Appeal in order to provide technical support to the society and concerned Government departments, with particular reference to the branches in the southwestern part of the country who may assume the brunt of any new refugee influx. The programme has been flexibly designed so that the National Society may still be able to respond with timely assistance in case of periodic small scale disasters such as floods, droughts and epidemics.

The URCS is assisted in these efforts by a Federation Delegation composed of 4 delegates and a small number of local staff. Besides the Disaster Preparedness activity, Federation support focuses on finance and administration, logistics and programme and institutional development .

## ***Latest events***

During the reporting period, the programme and personnel management sectors of the Mbarara operation were re-organised, in line with the recommendations and findings of the inter-agency review of the refugee programme carried out in the two camps in July this year. The aim of the mission was to evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of activities in each of the key sectors and the overall management of the camps, and to introduce the concept of a self-reliance strategy. The internal review process exemplified the process of inter-agency co-operation and transparency. URCS project staff have revised sectoral plans of action in conformity with the recommendations of the review report.

It is hoped that by the end of 1999, the URCS will be able to manage all sectors of the programme including finance and logistics, with significantly reduced Federation inputs. URCS programme staff continued to receive further training opportunities both locally and in the region, in particular in the technical sectors, in anticipation of a reduced Federation presence and support.

With Regional Delegation support, a logistics review was carried out in Mbarara with the aim of rationalising and exploring avenues for better management of the logistics function.

A Tripartite Agreement will be signed next year between the Uganda Red Cross, the Government, and UNHCR. The International Federation will not be party to the tripartite agreement but will seek co-financing of the operation in the year 2000. However, a separate agreement will be signed between the Uganda Red Cross and the Federation defining areas of co-operation and obligations.

In the DPP sector, the contingency plan for the southwest has been drawn up and extensively discussed with partners. Some branches in the region, in particular the branch in Kisoro (major entry point from the Kivus) have been strengthened with provision of technical support and training.

The URCS and the Government of Uganda were assisted with DPP policy development. A workshop for all Government departments involved in disaster response and management was organised, with particular emphasis on co-ordination in disaster situations. The National DPP Policy has been forwarded to the Cabinet, for endorsement by Parliament. The URCS, with Federation support, has hired a consultant to look into their own DPP policy. To this end, it is anticipated that the URCS's roles and responsibilities in disaster preparedness and response will be defined.

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

### **Relief**

The tables below provide a cumulative picture of all food and non food items distributed to the beneficiaries during the reporting period. The number of beneficiaries varies each month, depending on new arrivals and their transfer to other camps. As a matter of policy all new arrivals receive assistance, including special assistance as required, but do not figure in the refugee statistics, until their cases have been reviewed by the Government. Given the different situation in the two camps, not all refugees receive full rations. Non food items are distributed on a needs basis, in consultation with the partners. Supplementary feeding programs have been phased out. In collaboration with WFP, a set of guidelines will be developed defining eligibility criteria for admission and receiving supplemental food rations.

**Non Food Items (Kgs, pieces. or trucks - Cumulative for January - September, 1999)**

Camp	Soap	Poles for house repair	Hoe handles	Blankets	Kitchen sets	Plastic Sheets	Buckets	J/cans	Plastic sheeting	Plastic plates	Fire wood
Orukinga	10,518	3,551	460	308	312	439	543	0	0	0	41
Nakivale	2,418	1,475	0	521	345	1,298	622	114	0	0	2
New arrivals & special dist'n in both camps	981	0	60	898	828	1,104	589	346	314	500	0
Total	13,916	5,026	520	1,727	1,485	2,841	1,754	460	314	500	43

**Food****Food distributed in (Kgs) in both camps**

Camp	Maize Meal	Whole Maize	Pulses	Cooking oil	Salt	Tea	CSB	Sugar	Peas
Orukinga	160,066	379,862	52,850	25,607	0	0	0	0	24,103
Nakivale	18,526	292,019	58,466	22,431	0	1,621	2,158	0	23,876
Others	4,813	21,139	2,571	2,165	7	204	406	14	2,806
Total	183,405	693,020	113,887	50,203	7	1,825	2,564	14	50,785

**Community Services**

Significant changes currently taking place in this sector shall continue through to the year 2000. Beneficiaries are being encouraged to initiate their own income generating projects that can be self-funded through rural savings and revolving credit schemes. Greater efforts are being made to link vocational training to income generation through business skills training and education about savings and credit schemes. Some 222 refugees benefited from income generating activities during the reporting period and a similar number of refugees with special needs were assisted with different types of intervention under the community services project. Details of these are available from regular monthly reports.

**Enrolment**

Income Generating Activities	Orukinga	Nakivale	Total number of beneficiaries/trainees
Tailoring	0	18	18
Carpentry	23	16	39
Bakery	13	25	38
Animal Bank	318	368	686
Handicraft	20	0	20
Total	374	427	801

**Health**

The health services provided to the two camps, include both refugees and nationals, as Ugandans from the surrounding villages continue to visit the two centres. Malaria, Acute Respiratory Infections and worms continue to be the main causes of morbidity. It is highly recommended that a Malaria Control

Program should be developed. Activities under this project will include among others, an entomological study of vector breeding sites and control and identifying community acceptance of impregnated bed net use and pesticide sprays. There were no major outbreaks of diseases in the past nine months. Discussions with District Health Units regarding their commitment to support development of cost sharing guidelines and staffing needs have been intensified in collaboration with UNHCR.

In close consultation with UNHCR the programme now procures supplementary drugs from GTZ, who have been tasked to streamline the supplementary drugs procurement for all refugee camps in Uganda. The Ministry of Health continued to provide free health kits, under their essential drugs programme.

**Education**

Both nationals and refugees continue to benefit from the education programme both as pupils and teachers. The Federation and URCS support extends to both the curricular and extra curricular activities. Students receive school materials and uniforms, teachers training and salaries. Small adult education programme and adult literacy classes continue to be offered in the two camps.

**Primary Education**

<i>Camp</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Nationals</i>	<i>Total enrolment</i>
Orukinga	1,225	1,107	2,332
Nakivale	711	380	1,091
Total	1,936	1,487	3,423

**Teachers**

<i>Camp</i>	<i>Refugees</i>	<i>Nationals</i>	<i>Total number</i>
Orukinga	15	30	45
Nakivale	10	8	18
Total	25	38	63

**Water & Sanitation**

According to the recent inter-agency evaluation report, water availability is 17 litres per person per day whereas latrine coverage is 52% (7 persons per latrine on the average). A hydrological survey report is awaited to ascertain viable sites for sinking boreholes. It is virtually impossible to give a cumulative figure for beneficiaries in this sector, as nationals have access to the water points, but would not use them on a consistent basis. In Orukinga, an estimated 8,000 beneficiaries draw water from the project each month, with about 6,000 in Nakivale.

**Programme Management**

As the Federation expatriate presence in Mbarara completely phased out during the reporting period, the URCS managed all the sectors of the programme with significantly reduced Federation input. The inter-agency review exercise carried out in July this year provided fresh impetus with regard to the overall management of the operation. The aim of the review was to evaluate the key sectors and the overall management of the camps and introduce the concept of self-reliance strategy. This period saw the re-organisation of the operation in programme and personnel management sectors. Presently there are 51 URCS staff employed by the project in all sectors, together with 123 refugees. With the reduced staffing levels, it is envisaged that salaries will be paid out of the UNHCR budget, and staff will be compensated with greater job security by being given twelve month contracts in the year 2000.

Joint planning and budgeting exercise for the year 2000 has been completed, with priorities of the operation defined and agreed upon. The Delegation continued to manage the finances of the operation as well as the logistics.

### **Disaster Preparedness Programme**

A revised plan of action has been produced and the focus is mainly on first-aid training, public awareness campaigns on general hygiene, control and eradication of epidemics and provision of first aid kits to high risk branches. The contingency plan for a refugee influx into the southwest was updated and submitted to URCS partners. The Kisoro and Kabale branches received both technical and material support for better preparedness. A small reception centre for arriving refugees was established in Kisoro and the branch was provided with transport and communications equipment .

The URCS Mbale branch with headquarters support provided emergency assistance to some 300 persons affected by mudslides and flooding in Eastern Uganda. The URCS, with Federation support, launched a local appeal to assist the landslide victims as the government sought alternative sites for relocating the affected families. The National Society remains an active partner in the disaster preparedness and response mechanism for urban disasters.

### **Institutional Development**

The Secretary General, Fund-raising Co-ordinator, Senior Accountant and Capacity Building Co-ordinator were confirmed in their positions by the Governing Body. The Federation delegation in Kampala, with technical support from Geneva and Nairobi, continued to provide support to the restructuring process of the society, and its Institutional Development.

During the period under review, Danish Red Cross and Federation Secretariat consultants carried out a review of the National Society Health programme. The aim of the review exercise was to prioritise interventions in the health programme as well as identifying potential risks and weakness of the programme. A report of the review is awaited and it is hoped that the findings will explore ways of implementing health activities in a more cost-effective manner. The National Society's computerised accounting system as well as the vehicle pool system introduced during the reporting period is working well.

The Society was represented in the Regional BTC Training in Nairobi by their Disaster Preparedness Officer and Relief Health Co-ordinator. Both performed comparatively well and it is envisioned that they might be called upon for delegate placement in the event that suitable opportunities arise within the region.

## ***Outstanding needs***

Given that assistance to refugees from the Great Lakes Region no longer appears to be a priority of major donors, the response to this Appeal has been reasonable. The Delegation has taken measures to significantly reduce costs, but there remain areas in this Appeal that have not been covered so far. In the Disaster Preparedness component of the Appeal, the purchase and pre-positioning of contingency stocks has been defrayed, as well as the phasing out of the expatriate presence in Mbarara and reduced running costs of the delegation in Kampala. Donors are urged to continue to support the programme, in particular the Disaster Preparedness component, as the situation in the region is volatile and in spite of ongoing efforts to secure peace, an influx of refugees into Uganda from surrounding countries cannot be excluded.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

Both the URCS and the Delegation have been working closely with the various partners and relevant line ministries. Co-operation with the Office for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees, Health Ministry

has been particularly close. The delegation has had an impact in the Disaster Preparedness Policy currently before the Cabinet, as well as the forthcoming DPP legislation. It is anticipated that the role of the society will be clearly specified in the two documents. The Society also signed an MoU with the Ministry of Health earlier this year.

The delegation enjoys full diplomatic status in Uganda and in that capacity we are invited to all major co-ordinating meetings. Together with the ICRC, the Federation participates in the UN disaster management team, attending monthly meetings of donor agencies chaired by the World Bank, and meetings co-ordinated by UNHCR on refugee matters. Co-operation with partners in the refugee programme (UNHCR and WFP) have remained excellent.

## ***Contributions***

see Annex for details

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