SITUATION REPORT

6 – 12 August 2007

UNITED NATIONS
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Burundi
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ACTIVITIES AND UPDATES

Update on repatriation / refugees

UNHCR registered 2,048 Burundian refugees who arrived mostly from Tanzania through the entry points of Mabanda/Makamba province (553), Gisuru/Ruyigi province (694) and Kobero/Muyinga province (798). Three Burundians arrived from Ivory Coast. The current increase is expected to continue over this period (end of school year and harvest season); particularly due to the UNHCR Cash Grant incentive. Since January 2007, a total of 10,834 returnees have been recorded. So far, some 349,833 Burundians have returned to their home country under the UNHCR facilitated repatriation process which began in April 2002.

UNHCR transferred 330 Congolese refugees from Bujumbura to the Musasa/Ngozi province transit centre. From January to date, 5,522 DRC refugees have been transferred to the Gasorwe refugee camp and Musasa transit center.

Assistance to Burundians expelled from Tanzania

The government project for the reintegration of war-affected persons (PARESI) registered 647 persons (279 families) who arrived from Tanzania through the entry point of Kobero/Muyinga province (542 persons/224 families) and through Mishiha/Cankuzo province (105 persons/55 families). Since January 2007 until date, PARESI has recorded 6,134 expelled persons (3,073 families).

Protection: ongoing support to unaccompanied children

Through its project for Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) supported by UNHCR, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) assisted 45 returnee unaccompanied children upon their arrival in Burundi. They were identified at the entry points of Muyinga, Ruyigi, Makamba and Bujumbura Mairie, reunited with their families and will each receive a protection monitoring. IRC equally provided them with school material and uniforms. This service package was also given to 3 expelled children from Tanzania with the support of UNICEF. Through advocacy, community protection focal points and IRC staff continue to ensure access to schools and community involvement in the reconstructions of houses for these children. In this regard, IRC provides aluminium sheets, doors, windows and poles while the local community contributes bricks and manual labour.

Sexual Gender-based violence

In collaboration with the family development centre in Ruyigi province, IRC held a provincial seminar on sexual abuse in the school milieu. It was attended by pupils, heads of schools, NGO representatives and the media. This activity was aimed at sensitizing populations against sexual violence.

Update on food aid

In close collaboration with its implementing partners, WFP distributed 568 metric tons of food aid to 19,408 beneficiaries nationwide.

Within the framework of extending its school feeding programme in the country, WFP held several meetings with partners working in this sector. Efforts were made to sensitize schools, parents and

authorities (local, provincial and administrative) on WFP's intention to set up school canteens in more schools. Provinces which will benefit from this extension from the next school year in September include; Rutana, Makamba, Ruyigi and Muyinga. WFP continues to visit all eligible schools in order to analyze the feasibility and prevailing needs in each school. In these 4 provinces, WFP will work in collaboration with the government through the Ministry of Education, Caritas (Burundi and Belgium), International Medical Corps (IMC) and Fondation Stamm.

Food security: towards the rehabilitation of livestock

The FAO/Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordination Unit (ERCU) continued the distribution of goats to vulnerable families. During the week under review, distribution was carried out in the communes of Mabanda and Makamba/Makamba province. This scheme is aimed at facilitating the reintegration of returnees and displaced persons. All 350 targeted beneficiaries received 3 goats each out of 1,050 goats. Since the beginning of this project in 2006, 2,340 goats have been distributed.

Goats to be distributed, Mabanda/Makamba province, FAO/ERCU, August 2007

Education: NRC support to the school reintegration of returnee children

Students of the Teacher's Emergency Package (TEP) education project being run by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) sat the end of year (2006-2007) examination. This exam was taken in preparation for their formal reintegration into primary schools in September. Classes will be allocated to students according to individual results obtained. An over 50% overall success rate was registered: 777 students passed in Rutana, 651 in Makamba, 1,861 in Ruyigi, 438 in Bujumbura Mairie, 1,108 in Bujumbura Rural and 1,386 in Muyinga.

This NRC education programme is no longer available in Muyinga province due to a decrease in the number of TEP target groups. However, NRC has started similar activities in the provinces of Bubanza and Cibitoke. In the province of Bubanza, a four-week training is currently being provided by NRC trainers and pedagogical advisors to 25 newly recruited teachers who will teach in TEP schools located in Bujumbura Rural, Mairie, Bubanza and Cibitoke.

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Health/Nutrition

The 2007 World Breastfeeding Week was celebrated in Burundi under the theme 'Breastfeeding within the first hour of birth: Early initiation of breastfeeding and Exclusive breastfeeding over six months can Save One Million Babies'. All activities during his week were funded by UNICEF. With support from UNICEF, the national programme for health and reproduction (PNSR) organized a discussion forum attended by journalists and students from the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Burundi. Three main topics were discussed; Breastfeeding: a public health priority, early initiation of breastfeeding can save over 1 million babies, breastfeeding and HIV. The week was ended with a visit to traditional midwives and mothers in Kinama/Bujumbura Mairie. The first lady of Burundi equally took part in this visit.

UNICEF states that in Burundi:

- 74% of mothers breastfeed their children within the first hour of birth (82% in urban regions and 73% in rural areas);
- 44.7% of mothers practice exclusive breastfeeding for children less than six months old.

These figures reflect the urgent need to encourage mothers to initiate breastfeeding within the first hour of birth and to practice exclusive breastfeeding over the first six months.

Coordination

The OCHA monthly Contact Group meeting which was held under the chairmanship of the Humanitarian Coordinator, Mr. Youssef Mahmoud was attended by members of the humanitarian community. Two topics were on the agenda: Presentation of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (IC/GLR) by Ambassador Mulamula, Executive Secretary for the Great Lakes Region and a second presentation based on results of the agricultural season 2007B crop harvest evaluation was jointly presented by the FAO and WFP.

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