



Burundi Weekly Humanitarian News

27 OCT – 02 NOVEMBER 2008

Activities and Updates

Coordination

As a follow up to the humanitarian reform workshop held on 23 September 2008, WFP as lead-agency for the logistics cluster (should the cluster approach be activated in Burundi) is carrying out an interagency Logistics Capacity Assessment to gather information pertaining to capacities and needs of government bodies, UN agencies & other humanitarian organisations.

Update on food aid distribution

WFP distributed 611 tons of food assistance to a total of 125,382 beneficiaries. The most important quantities of food (72%) was supplied to food insecure persons in Cankuzo, Karuzi and Kirundo provinces.

The food export ban imposed by Tanzania constitutes a major impediment to WFP operations, due to heavy reliance on purchases from Tanzania. Consequently, the Country Office may experience pipeline shortfalls in almost all commodities starting with cereals and pulses in December 2008. The Country Office is closely monitoring the situation to avert a possible pipeline disruption. Such disruption may lead to temporary suspension of targeted food distributions and interruption of FFW distributions. In parallel, WFP regional Office is assisting in negotiating export bans alleviations.

Human rights

This week, additional cases of harassment against *UPD-Zigamibanga* party members were reported. In Ngozi and Makamba provinces, assistant prosecutors ordered on [27 Oct.] the release of two *UPD-Zigamibanga* members arrested on [25 Oct.], as there were no charges filed against them. One of them was in possession of party documents while the other, a school director and unionist, was participating in a peaceful demonstration organised by teachers in Makamba.

During the reporting period, police officials arrested several individuals in connection with a series of demonstrations and rallies initiated by Palipehutu-FNL members or sympathizers. Eleven such persons were detained in Police holding cells, in Muyinga and Bururi provinces, for allegedly distributing leaflets and holding placards during pro-Palipehutu-FNL demonstrations. Police are investigating these cases.

The prisons' rehabilitation program underway has negatively impacted the living conditions of detainees in Gitega and Bururi provinces prisons where numerous inmates were transferred. A female inmate sustained a bullet injury as a result of a brawl in Rumonge central Prison.

Within the framework of the magistrates and other judicial personnel's capacity reinforcement, the HR&JD concluded a five-day training workshop in Gitega Commune and Province. Organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the Supreme Court, the training aimed at underlining the causes and consequences of malfunction in the judiciary and their impact on both the administration of justice and the respect of human rights.

With regard to the integrated strategy to fight sexual violence against women and children, the HR&JD organised a five-day workshop in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence in Makamba Commune and Province. Thirty FDN officers from the fifth military region (Makamba, Bururi and Rutana) were in attendance and the training aimed at raising their awareness on sexual violence and strengthening their capacity to promote and protect women and children's fundamental rights, and human rights in general. Meanwhile, HR&JOs held seven awareness raising sessions in six different provinces for a total of 333 participants including 184 men.

Repatriation and Reintegration of Burundian Refugees

During the reporting period, 1,667 (534 from 1993 group and 1,133 from 1972 group) returnees arrived in Burundi from Tanzania. 139 entered through Ruyigi, including 114 from Ulyankulu Old Settlement and 25 from Nduta. Further 1,528 returnees entered through Makamba, including 505 from Mtabila refugee camp, 1,015 from Katumba Old Settlement, and 11 who arrived spontaneously from Katumba, Kigoma and Muyovosi.

The planning figure for 2008 of 90,000 (up from originally 45,000) is likely to be reached. Since the beginning of this year, a total of 84,837 Burundian refugees have returned: 435 in January, 1,991 in February, 8,377 in March, 6,675 in April, 5,272 in May, 19,635 in June, 17,508 in July, 9,642 in August, and 8,439 in September, and 6,863 in October. This figure includes the return of 23,753 refugees from 1972, including 36 from villages in Kigoma region.

Protection and community reintegration of returnees

The Legal Aid Clinic Project of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) successfully mediated in 2 disputes Nyanza-Lac commune/Makamba province. These disputes were related to land. In addition, ACCORD conducted 2 conflict management trainings in the communes of Itaba and Nyanza-Lac for 50 local community leaders. Finally, 7 people received legal advice from ACCORD and were after referred to either Avocats sans Frontières (ASF) or to relevant judiciary institutions. These initiatives assisted towards the reintegration of returnees into communities, the promotion of reconciliation and the protection of returnees.

Assistance to Burundians expelled from Tanzania

The Government project for the reintegration of war-affected persons (PARESI) registered 135 Burundians (45 families) expelled from Tanzania who arrived through the entry points of Gisuru / Ruyigi Province 72 persons (21 families), Mishiha / Cankuzo Province 26 persons (9 families), Mabanda / Makamba Province 37 persons (15 families).

Food Security

The distribution of agricultural inputs to vulnerable households for the season 2009A went on during

the period from mid-September to mid-October in all the country. FAO used two approaches to reach as many beneficiaries as possible: direct distributions which covered more than 150,000 households and the seeds fairs for more than 20,000 households. The kits distributed directly were composed of 10kg of bean seeds, 10 to 20gr of vegetable seeds and a hoe. In the case of the fairs with the seeds, a beneficiary household was entitled to a hoe, 10 to 20 gr. of vegetable seeds and a coupon of a value of 10,000Fbu, exchangeable with a various variety of seeds according to individual speculations. The majority of recipients of the coupons chose bean seed, while a number very limited opted for corn seeds and soya.

The seeds were made available in time for the planting season so it is hoped that most seeds were planted, in addition, regular rains augur well for a successful 2009A season.

FAO also carried out monitoring visits to the marshlands of Bigina, Makamba province, which it rehabilitated in May 2008. The visit showed that farmers in the rehabilitated marshes are likely to have a successful 2008C season.



Before the intervention of the FAO/ERCU, the marsh was populated by a savanna of reeds

The 90Ha of marshlands were previously unused and were filled wild reeds and cattle in transhumance would occasionally feed there. FAO has helped recover area of 80Ha and made it available to some 6,000 households.



The marshlands after rehabilitation

Works are under way to enable the marshland users to produce rice next year.