

Situation Report

Refugee Camps in North Eastern Province Alinjgur & Dadaab Sub-Offices

17 – 31 July 2012

General overview

Operational environment in Alinjgur/Dadaab has been generally unchanged. Assistance and services to refugees continued despite new security incidents. In light of the security situation, UNHCR and partners are reviewing the Operations Continuity Plan (OCP), which is focusing on prioritizing life-saving services such as food distribution, water supply, and provision of health services and capacity building of refugees.

Security

The security situation in Dadaab operational environment remained volatile and unpredictable. On July 25, a police vehicle hit a suspected landmine in Dagahaley camp, injuring 17 people - 14 refugees and 3 policemen. As a result the police suspended escort duties to the camps for two consecutive days. Intelligence information indicated that improvised explosives devices (IEDs) had been planted in different locations in the camps.



In the night of 29 July, a devastating fire swept through the market of Dagahaley camp, destroying 80% of the market. Rescue efforts were too late to prevent a major catastrophe. UNHCR, partner agencies and the Kenyan authorities have established a working group to review fire emergency preparedness in the camps.

Monitoring and evaluation

Data on 80% of the impact and performance indicators for the period January to June 2012 have been collected and verified. These have been used to complete the required entries for the mid-year report, especially focussing on the Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs). The process of data collection and verification continues on a monthly basis. The main constraint has been limited cooperation from partner staff in the field with regard to sharing data on key indicators. This problem is being addressed through several fora including the inter-agency M&E working group. The monthly heads of agencies' meeting and a general communication to all heads of agencies in Dadaab has been disseminated to encourage partner staff to share data with UNHCR camp teams.

Registration

As of 29 July 2012, the overall refugee population stood at **473,597** persons. Some special needs trends identified during the new arrival registration exercise were updated in proGres. The daily protection screening of new arrivals (CARE/UNHCR) to capture a clearer picture of the camp population registered in June was ongoing.

Verification

The verification site in Ifo is almost complete. LAN/Network cabling is in progress to ensure that there is network connectivity between the Ifo Field Office and the two Verification sub halls. IT equipment (laptops, fingerprint scanners, webcams) for the exercise is now in Dadaab and will be configured to ensure that it is ready in time for the exercise. National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) is finalizing the perching of tents that will be used as accommodation for the verification clerks. The community communication working group has also finalized the messages that will be shared with refugees.

Protection

Over the past few weeks, there has been a slight increase in the number of reports of threats to personal security of refugees received at the protection desks in the camps. As a result, there is an increased need to relocate refugee individuals to safe areas within the camps or to Kakuma as a protection measure. Several discussions were held with protection, child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) partners on the need to revise and evaluate the outcomes, impact and limitations of the Operations Continuity Plan (OCP). Some of the challenges faced during the implementation of these critical protection activities have been the constant dilemma between the community empowerment objectives/search for alternative protection networks at camp level and the exposure of the participating individuals to risks, the reluctance of refugees to provide information to the Community Peace and Protection Team (CPPT) - although some significant improvements took place at Ifo level in the last two weeks (increase in referrals from the community to the police) – and issues of confidentiality. The reinforcement of existing linkages and joint “soft” activities by humanitarian workers, police officers and refugees are also a key priority identified by UNHCR and protection partners for the next weeks, in line with the OCP and with due regard to the latest security developments.

Education

Despite security challenges, the education programme was making progress. Currently there are 75,970 children (46,395 boys and 29,575 girls) enrolled in schools, compared to 72,209 in March and 56,079 in January. The number of children enrolled in primary schools was 54,585 (40% girls); while the number of children enrolled in secondary schools was 3,295 (23% girls).

The total number of teachers was 1,384 - 160 of them national teachers. Two teachers training programmes were ongoing, one on pedagogical and practical assessments (60 participants) and another for the formal Certificate of Primary Teacher Education (CPTe) (155 participants), conducted by Mount Kenya University. Both are one year formal training courses.

Health

Health services in the camps were affected by the prevailing insecurity, with movement of staff being restricted. Nonetheless, health and nutrition services continued in all hospitals and health posts. Meanwhile, UNHCR and health and nutrition partners were reviewing the sector's OCP following the security incidents during the reporting period, to ensure continued provision of minimum health services. Discussions were focusing on capacity building of refugees (short and long term) to be able to provide health services and strengthening the Dadaab district hospital and greater involvement of the Kenyan Ministry of Health.

Youth and livelihood

A project to increase access of secondary education learners to educational technology was launched by UNHCR in cooperation with Safaricom. The plan is to support two secondary schools and four YEP vocational learning centers with desktop computers, network connectivity and e-learning modules, and later to expand to other schools and out-of-school youth.

Host community

The Lagadera and Fafi communities still contest various decisions related to employment and contracts. The Fafi community has softened their otherwise aggressive positions and agreed that UNHCR will mediate between them and the NGOs. Bi-monthly meetings will be organized to discuss issues of common interest between host communities and UNHCR with the possibility of participation from NGOs. Discussions with the Lagadera community are continuing.

Sub-Office Alinjugur (Hagadera, Kambioos)

New developments

The Department for Refugee Affairs (DRA) has requested UNHCR to proceed with the decongestion of the Hagadera outskirts where around 20,000 refugees have settled. DRA, UNHCR and partners are now planning the relocation of refugees from the Hagadera outskirts to Kambioos with the aim of supporting the move of 6,000 individuals in 2012 and 30,000 individuals in 2013.

UNHCR and partners have faced significant challenges in mobilizing political and financial support for building the infrastructure in Kambioos. With the decisive move from the Kenyan Government on the issue of decongestion of Hagadera, UNHCR and partners now need to move ahead to ensure that adequate services are available in Kambioos and to avoid creating an emergency situation due to lack of capacity.

Protection

Nine persons were reported to be held in detention during the reporting period. Among this group, three refugees had been arrested and detained at the Hagadera police base for assaulting a CARE staff member. The matter was settled out of court, and the individuals were later released.

The Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) reported that ten persons of concern from Hagadera were arbitrarily arrested by the police and arraigned in court charged with unlawful presence. They were all carrying valid documentation and therefore denied the charges against them. Following RCK's intervention, all ten individuals were released by court order.

During a police swoop in Hagadera camp the Kenyan police arrested six refugees with a cache of weapons. The arrested individuals are allegedly part of a notorious gangster group and it is hoped that their arrest will improve security in the area, which is currently suffering from increased bandit activity.

A one day sensitization workshop was held in Alijungur Sub-Office for administration police based in the area. The workshop aimed at not only providing police officers with information on refugee rights and obligations, but also at creating a better understanding of refugee life. Using role play and simulations, police and refugees discussed issues of insecurity, lack of information on rights and services, community-based security measures and respect for Kenyan law. 26 individuals participated in the workshop.

44 children in need of protection were identified by UNHCR and partner organizations. The identified children were provided with specialized social support, including foster care. Save the Children (UK) trained 30 foster parents in positive discipline and child care. They are also doing an ongoing anti-child labor campaign at marketplaces, tap stands and the food distribution centers, where child labor is often practiced.

International Rescue Committee (IRC), UNHCR and religious leaders are setting up peace and reconciliation committees to support GBV survivors in accessing justice. During the past two weeks, UNHCR and partners received six reports of gender-based violence.

The IRC and Womankind inaugurated a women's center in Kambioos which will host activities related to empowerment, gender and the fight against GBV. In that regard, 100 individuals have already received information related to GBV-related services, such as medical assistance and counseling.

Education

Early Childhood Education (ECD) activities were being organized in the Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in Hagadera. The CFSs have hosted activities focused on strengthening literacy and numeracy skills for young children as well as vocational skills for teenagers, while at the same time providing a safe environment for children and youth.

A forum was established with participation of block leaders, religious leaders, teachers and parents in order to strengthen community management of the CFSs.

Health

Five additional office prefabs have been constructed in the Kambioos health post to ease overcrowding.

Water and sanitation

700 latrines in Hagadera, funded by UNHCR, have now been completed by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are piloting production of Interlocking Stabilized Soil Blocks (ISSB) for family latrines in Kambioos and World Vision is expected to construct latrines for the two Kambioos schools.

The current water and sanitation infrastructure will need a significant boost in order to accommodate newly settled refugees without compromising existing quality of services.

Sub-Office Dadaab (Dagahaley, Ifo, Ifo 2)

New developments

For the major security developments affecting Dagahaley, please see the general overview above.

Protection

Banditry was still a major concern in the camps. A group of six bandits has been terrorising businessmen in Dagahaley. Ifo camp experienced an increase in incidents of banditry and robbery, with two people killed. In Ifo 2, several banditry attacks were reported. One man was shot and seriously wounded. Police response has varied. In Dagahaley, police have been reluctant to go into the camp because of the prevailing insecurity, fanning a sense of general lawlessness in the camp. In Ifo and Ifo 2, police have responded to the banditry with increased patrols, also in the night. Some arrests were also made.

Cases of GBV were on the increase partly due to the recent banditry attacks. The Kenyan Red Cross (KRSC) conducted therapy sessions for the victims as well as sessions for adolescent girls on the 72 hours clinical care programme for victims of sexual assault.

In Dagahaley, a group of beneficiaries who kept missing their Refugee Status Determination interviews had to be compelled to attend the interviews by freezing their ration cards. This led to a public protest in which close to one hundred people demonstrated outside the UNHCR office in Dagahaley.

In Ifo, Lutheran World Federation (LWF) added 50 individuals to their Community Peace and Protection Team (CPPT) and they are currently undertaking 16 days of training.

In line with the OCP, LWF has established a distribution committee consisting of 20 refugee representatives from all the nationalities residing in Ifo. Their task is to identify the most vulnerable members of the community and those with specific needs and fill gaps in provision of core relief items (CRI) such as food, water and medical assistance. The committee will work hand in hand with the refugee community leaders.

Health

KRSC is investigating an outbreak of bloody diarrhoea cases in Ifo 2.

KRCS is also conducting an auxiliary nurse training course at Ifo 2 secondary school. The training is a basic course aimed at increasing the capacity of refugees to provide basic nursing care and can thus be seen as within the framework of the OCP.

Shelter

With the October rains approaching, shelter sector partners have met to address the recurring issue of replacing worn-out tents in Ifo 2 East.

Peace Winds Japan (PWJ) has completed 84 ISSB shelters in Ifo 2 and handed them over to the refugees. They are now starting the second phase with the target of 400 shelters by March 2013.

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