

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives,
changing minds.

DREF operation update

Uganda: Refugees from the D.R. Congo

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF operation n° MDRUG027
GLIDE n° OT-2012-000094-UGA
DREF operation update n° 1
13 July 2012

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update: 19 June to 10 July 2012.

Summary: CHF 269,527 was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 19 June 2012 to support the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) in delivering immediate assistance to some 15,700 beneficiaries (2,617 households) over three months.

An upsurge of refugees' population in Uganda was observed in April and May 2012. This is due to intensified fighting in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) between the government and rebel factions within Eastern DRC. It was reported that the number of refugees into Uganda is most likely to rise over the next few weeks.



Congolese refugees line up to receive food at Nyakabande transit camp. Photo, URCS

The URCS has been supporting the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in refugee registration, providing hygiene promotion, conducting tracing and restoring family links, conducting distributions of the World Food Programme (WFP) food and supporting the distribution of UNHCR non food items (NFIs).

The major challenge in URCS response is the increasing number of refugees that has not been matched with an increasing in the funding. Through this DREF Update, the National Society announces that it is in the process of discussing the next steps in order to complement the efforts of the Government and adequately respond to the needs of the refugees. Some of the operations that need to be scaled up include shelter, water and sanitation, tracing services, psychosocial trainings, and refresher trainings for Red Cross Action Teams (RCATS) in the border branches of Kasese, Kanungu, Rungugiri and Bundibugyo.

This DREF has been fully replenished (100%) by DG ECHO (CHF 151,474), Belgian Red Cross/Government (CHF 70,000) and the Netherlands Red Cross/Government (CHF 48,042). Details of all donors can be found on <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

[<click here to view contact details>](#)

The situation

An increase in conflict in north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has caused unrest and instability, provoking an upsurge of refugees crossing the border to Uganda over the last two months in search of protection and assistance. Incoming refugees interviewed by the URCS during registration have indicated that the number of refugees fleeing the DRC is most likely to rise over the next few weeks. A number of pygmies are reportedly among the refugees, and there are indications of discrimination and a need for special protection needs.

On entering the country, most refugees have been opting to stay at Bunagana because of the proximity to their villages but are being persuaded by the Government of Uganda to leave the area for the transit camp in Kisoro (13km away) at Nyakabande from where they will later be transferred to a permanent refugee settlement camp in Rwamwanja; so that they can receive proper assistance. UNHCR has been providing support in transferring the refugees to Nyakabande transit camp.

Latest developments:

On Friday, 6 July 2012, rebels seized Bunagana, a key-trading town on the border with Uganda, before forcing their way deeper into North Kivu Province at the weekend. The rebels have since occupied several small villages and taken control of the town of Rutshuru, a major town, and Rumangabo, about 40km north of Goma. This latest fighting has created yet another wave of refugees entering Uganda through the border points of Bunagana and spreading to Kanungu-Ishasha, Pondwe in Kasese and a few others through Bundibugyo. These refugees are fleeing renewed fighting in the mineral rich Northern Kivu area that is reportedly under rebel's control. They are however willing to talk to government and have promised to move from all the captured towns

At the moment, it is not known how many of the recently affected people fleeing will end up in Uganda; however, the ongoing violence has displaced more than 200,000 people and driven more than 20,000 refugees into Rwanda and Uganda. In Kasese, URCS has deployed 10 volunteers to the border post to monitor the situation. The regions have been alerted on a possible deployment of further support. In Bundibugyo, URCS branch has deployed 10 volunteers to verify the reports of refugee influx and share update in the coming days.

Table 1: Refugee load by area/district as of 8 July 2012

| District | Centre | Numbers |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Kisoro | Nyakabande transit centre | 16,270 refugees |
| Kanungu | Kanungu border | 300 families |
| Kamwenge | Rwamwanja refugee settlement | 12,130 refugees |

The refugee influx situation has put a lot of strain on the social services in Kisoro and now Kasese. There are growing fears that more refugees are to cross into Uganda as fighting intensifies in Congo. The pressing needs of the refugees at Bunagana border include protection, food, water and general hygiene. Needs at Nyakabande include shelter, health needs including reproductive health care, first aid and psychosocial support, tracing and family reunion, maintaining regular, consistent and accurate data as well as identification of vulnerable groups for special care and support.

The government has increased security in the area and has beefed up troops at the border. In addition, the government and UNHCR are calling for more assistance from partners, as the contingency plan for 30,000 refugees is not adequate. The contingency plan has been updated to cater for 50,000 refugees that are likely to enter Uganda in the coming months.

Coordination and partnerships

The URCS headquarters in Kampala is working closely with the Office of the Prime Minister(OPM) particularly the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness and Response as well as other stakeholders in monitoring population movements into the country.

The National Society has been involved in meetings with the Office of the Prime Minister, UNCHR, ICRC, Kisoro District authorities and other stakeholders to analyze the situation, agree on actions to be undertaken

in response to the emerging needs as well as to discuss roles and responsibilities. URCS is already gathering and sharing information on the influx with Office of the Prime Minister and other partners.

URCS continues attending various technical meetings called by OPM and the District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) in Kisoro. ICRC has stepped up support to strengthen the restoration of family links services (tracing) being offered in both areas where there is now an increased awareness and usage of the services by the refugees with both an increase in the human resources as well as financial resources towards this end.

Uganda Red Cross signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNHCR, which has been expanded into a tripartite agreement to include the Office of the Prime Minister. Under the terms of that agreement, URCS has been assigned responsibilities within the operation to be responsible among others for the distribution of WFP-provided food and UNHCR-provided non-food items, registration of refugees in collaboration with UNHCR and OPM, sanitation and hygiene promotion, social services that include psychosocial support, tracing as well as mobilization for social awareness in coordination with UNHCR. The role of Uganda RC in the operation is clearly to cover gaps and not duplicate what other actors are already doing.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Uganda Red Cross Society in Kisoro has been at the forefront of response activities for the Congolese Refugee Influx. The Kisoro Branch has provided volunteers who support camp management activities in Nyakabande Transit Camp and at the border in Bunagana. Tracing services and reception of the arriving refugees are all being provided by and managed by URCS in both Bunagana and Nyakabande in Kisoro.

Progress towards outcomes

Overview

The URCS Branch in Kisoro has continued to be the centre of operations and has now doubled the number of volunteers deployed for this operation from 24 to 48 in both Bunagana and Nyakabande. The branch manager, focal person and the regional team support these.

| Relief distributions (basic food and non-food items) | |
|--|--|
| Outcome: Enhanced living conditions for an estimated 3,000 beneficiaries (500 households) in Bunagana, 10,000 beneficiaries in Nyakabande (1,667 households) and 2,000 beneficiaries (334 households) in Rwamwanja | |
| Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> URCS have accurate information to enable them to respond to the needs of the community Essential food (high energy biscuits) is provided to targeted population. Non food items (NFIs) are provided to 1,000 families with members who have special needs URCS has the necessary knowledge and capacity to enable them to respond to the needs of the targeted households | Planned Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct rapid emergency needs and capacity assessments at Bunagana border post, at Nyakabande Transit Centre and at Rwamwanja Refugee settlement. Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in Nyakabande Transit Centre and in Rwamwanja Refugee settlement. Procure and distribute non-food items (blankets, tarpaulins, tents, mosquito nets, jerry cans, kitchen sets, soap) from point of dispatch to end-user, to cover any gaps left by UNHCR general distributions for Nyakabande Transit Centre (700 kits) and Rwamwanja Refugee settlement (300 kits). The above supplementary NFI kits are for special needs only (pregnant women, unaccompanied children, pregnant mothers, the elderly, pygmies) Manage the communal kitchen in Nyakabande for new arrivals Procure and distribute high-protein biscuits to the most vulnerable refugees on arrival in Bunagana Procure and distribute energy-efficient stoves for Nyakabande Transit Centre Procure and use First Aid kits in Bunagana, Nyakabande and Rwamwanja Train volunteers and staff in relief distribution and camp management Train volunteers and staff in psychosocial support and first aid Support staff and volunteers in conducting first aid and |

| | |
|--|--|
| | psychosocial support in Bunagana, Nyakabande and Rwamwanja <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions. |
|--|--|

Progress:

In *Bunagana and Nyakabande*, URCS has continued with the registration of new arrivals and restoration of family links (tracing). URCS has introduced telephone service in camps and so far, many refugees are using the service for tracing unaccompanied minors. The NS has also been offering first aid services and hospital referrals, providing community services such as allocation of shelters and assisting in their construction and rehabilitation, coordination and guidance, mobilization, identification of special groups, distribution and division of labour as well as group formation and store management.

700 kits of non food items have been procured and delivered to the URCS warehouse in Kisoro. They are currently being distributed to the refugees. All incoming refugees at the border are benefiting from the provision of high-energy biscuits that are served together with some water as they await transportation to Nyakabande transit. Volunteers are now undergoing the training in first aid and psychosocial support, which is being facilitated by ICRC.

In *Rwamwanja refugee settlement*, URCS Branch in Kabarole has deployed 18 volunteers who are supported by the regional and branch managers as well as the focal person for this operation. The volunteers are in charge of the day-to-day operations in the settlement and specifically carrying out the following:

- Receiving of new arrivals from Nyakabande transit centre.
- Administering first aid services and hospital referrals.
- Allocating shelters, coordination and guidance, mobilization and identification of special groups
- Restoration of family links (tracing).

Water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Outcome: Improved access to safe water and adequate sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion for 2,000 refugees (334 households) in Bunagana, 1,700 of the most vulnerable members of the host communities (284 households), 10,000 beneficiaries (1,667 households) in Nyakabande and 2,000 beneficiaries (334 households) in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement</p> | |
| <p>Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate safe drinking water is provided to targeted refugees and host communities • Improved sanitation facilities are provided to targeted refugees and host communities • Increased knowledge on good hygiene practice and maintaining a clean and healthy environment in the camps and in the hosting communities • | <p>Planned activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support existing water supply systems in Bunagana, with the aim of increasing water output to serve 3,700 additional beneficiaries • Provision of 3 storage tanks at key strategic points • Installation of water points at key strategic points to serve arriving refugees • Train staff and volunteers in the PHAST approach • Provide hygiene promotion and sanitation services using PHAST in Bunagana, Nyakabande and Rwamwanja • Provision of 15 mobile toilets in Bunagana for use by the refugee population and pit latrines for the most vulnerable members of the local community (not possible to stick to SPHERE standards since the number of arriving refugees is not constant, the refugees are only transiting and are arriving in groups) |

Progress:

URCS volunteers in *Bunagana, Nyakabande and Rwamwanja refugee settlements* have been providing community services such as promotion of hygiene and sanitation. Training in PHAST has been completed and, URCS WatSan staff and volunteers have already been assembled at the border in Bunagana. They are currently assisting in erection of structures for latrines and water supplies. All the items (mobilets, soap and water pipes) have been procured and delivered in the area.

Environmental restoration

| |
|---|
| <p>Outcome: Improved environmental conditions through planting of tree seedlings aimed at replacing the trees that refugees have been cutting down and using for firewood (the following is also an effort to reduce tensions between the host communities and the refugees)</p> |
|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The host communities and refugees participate in environmental protection activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising and promotion of environmental protection and on importance of trees in conjunction with local communities, refugees, local authorities, and other key stakeholders Procure and distribute tree seedlings and tools. |
|--|---|

Progress:

Kisoro Branch has received trees for planting in the area and the volunteers have already mobilized local communities, refugees, local authorities and other key stakeholders to assist in this initiative. This activity is closely coordinated with the district environment office which is offering both technical and advisory services.

Logistics

| | |
|---|---|
| Outcome: Efficient and effective logistical support of non-food relief and stock relief items in warehouses in the field | |
| Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated delivery of food and NFIs to the operational areas, ensuring proper transport and storage of relief items; Effective fleet management is maintained during the operation | Planned activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispatch food and non-food items to the final distribution point. Provide transportation for staff and volunteers during the operation |

Progress:

To be provided in the subsequent updates

Communications

| | |
|---|--|
| Outcome: A steady flow of timely and accurate information between the field and other major stakeholders that enhances fundraising, advocacy and maintaining profile of the DREF operations | |
| Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A steady flow of timely and accurate information between relevant stakeholders on the population movement situation as well as URCS and other partners response is shared | Planned activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce press releases, news stories and beneficiary case studies Proactive engage with media to highlight the needs of the DREF and to profile the response of the Uganda RCS Use established Uganda RCS and IFRC social media tools to enhance profile of activities Develop media packages, including facts and figures, questions and answers, key messages and audio visual products for distribution to partner national societies and media Supporting field visits by communications colleagues, media, PNS's and donor agencies Supporting programme teams to ensure consistent and two-way engagement with beneficiaries as part of the Uganda RCS's and IFRC's commitment to greater accountability to affected communities. |

Progress: To be provided in the subsequent updates

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In Uganda:** Michael Nataka, Secretary General, Uganda Red Cross Society, Kampala, Uganda; Phone: +256 41 258 701 Email: natakam@redcrossug.org;
- In Kenya:** East Africa Regional Office; Maxine Clayton, Ag Regional Representative, East Africa, Nairobi, phone: +254.20.283.5163; fax: 254.20.271.27.77; email: maxine.clayton@ifrc.org
- IFRC Zone:** Daniel Bolanos, Disaster Management Coordinator, Africa; , Phone: +27 (0)11 303 9735, mobile: +27 (0)835566911; email: daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org

- **In Geneva:** Pablo Medina, Operations Coordinator for Eastern Africa; Phone: +41.22.730.43.81; Email: pablo.medina@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Regional Logistics Unit (RLU):** Ari Mantyvaara Logistics Coordinator, Dubai; phone +971 50 4584872, Fax +971.4.883.22.12, email: ari.mantyvaara@ifrc.org

For Resource Mobilization and Pledges:

- **IFRC Regional Representation:** Douglas Masika, Senior Resource Mobilization Officer; phone: +254 20 283 5000; email: douglas.masika@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting)

- In IFRC Africa Zone: Robert Ondrusek, PMER/QA Delegate, Johannesburg; Phone: +27.11.303.9700; Email: robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org

DREF history:

- This DREF was initially allocated on xx Month Year for CHF 286,664 for 3 months to assist 15,700 beneficiaries (2,617 households).

↘Click [here](#) to return to the title page

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
-