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Emergency plan of action operations update

Rwanda: Burundi Refugees

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

DREF	Operation n° : MDRRW012
Date of issue: 1 September, 2015	Date of disaster: 3 April, 2015
Operations update n° 2	Period covered by this update: 8 May to 8 August 2015.
Operation start date: 8 May, 2015	Timeframe: 4 months (New end date: 15 September, 2015).
Operation manager: Vinay Sadavarte, IFRC Operations Coordinator (Acting)	Point of contact: Angelique Murungi, Head of Disaster Management, Rwanda Red Cross Society.
Overall operation budget: CHF 244,580	
N° of people being assisted: 7,500 people (1,500 households)	
Host National Society presence (n° of volunteers, staff, branches): 70 volunteers, six staff, four National Disaster Response Team members.	
Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation: Belgian Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, IFRC and ICRC.	
Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation: ADRA, Africa Humanitarian Action, American Refugee Committee, Care International, Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugees Affairs (MIDIMAR), Ministry of Health, PAJER, Plan Rwanda, Save the Children, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Population Fund, World Food Programme, World Health Organization and World Vision	

Request to extend timeframe by two weeks (New end date: 15 September 2015) to facilitate the transition from a DREF to an Emergency Appeal.

A. Situational Analysis

Description of the disaster

Since early April 2015, over 24,000 Burundi nationals have sought refuge in Rwanda due to pre-election tension and violence. On 25 April, Burundi's current President announced he would run for a third term in the upcoming presidential elections (that were planned for 26 June 2015), which has sparked widespread protests in the capital, Bujumbura, and intensified the pre-election tension across the country. Bujumbura currently remains particularly unstable, and refugees are crossing into Rwanda through 25 border entry points across 10 districts along the Burundi-Rwanda border, in the south east of the country.

According to the Rwanda Red Cross Society (RRCS), the borders that have the largest influx of refugees are Gasenyi and Kamabuye in Bugesera district, and Kanyaru in Gisagara district whereby approximately 3,200 new arrivals are received per day. Many refugees said they had fled due to verbal abuse within their neighborhoods, and due to fear of militia groups. New arrivals typically spend two to three days at the entry points before being transferred to three transit camps (Bugesera-Gashora, Nyanza-Muyira and Ruzizi-Nyagatare), where they spend one to three weeks, and are then later transported to the main/permanent camp of Kirehe-Mahama in Eastern Province. As of 4 May 2015, the number of refugees registered by RRCS and MIDIMAR (Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs) at entry points had reached 24,635 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which comprises people that have been transferred to the camps, as well as those being accommodated in communities, including some Burundian politicians.

During the monitoring visits at Mahama camp and transit camps it was noted that there were lot of new arrivals accompanied by many children. The influx has been growing every day since the Burundian Presidential elections

were postponed from the 15 July to 21 July 2015. The challenge now is lack of shelter especially at Mahama camp which has led to the transit camp and the temporary shelter being crowded. This is because people are staying more days to months now rather than the plan that was proposed for accommodating people for a week. The National society has increased the number of volunteers by 20 at Mahama following the refugee influx. Initially there were 30 volunteers; the additional volunteers will reinforce the response at Mahama camp.

From May through August 2015, the RRCS achieved the following with DREF funding:

- Trained 20 volunteers on mobile cinemas delivery
- Trained 35 volunteers on First Aid
- Provided psycho-social support to the refugee population in Mahama main camp and the transit camps of Nyanza and Gashora
- Distributed NFIs and other hygiene and sanitation items such as soap at main and transit camps, and entry points reaching at least 7500 were distributed.
- Trained 55 volunteers on disaster preparedness and camp management
- Prepositioned relief stocks at headquarter and provincial offices
- Conducted 30 sessions of mobile cinema reaching 66 904 in 2 months, sensitising the refugee population on proper use of available water and sanitation facilities as a crucial area for preventing waterborne diseases like Cholera.

The water crisis is still a major problem in Mahama camp. It was reported that there was no water in the camp which continues to make life of the refugees so difficult as the area temperatures are very high. The village of Mahama is experiencing difficulties in accessing water. It is alleged that water being trucked from the community water source has resulted in shortages in the village. This has caused the community in the neighboring village to deny the refugee camp access to water.

As of 21 July 2015, up to 71,158 Burundi nationals have sought refuge in Rwanda due to pre- election tension and violence. In responding to the population movement, Rwanda Red Cross participated in one of the first inter-agency assessments in all affected areas where refugees were entering into Rwanda. Some weeks later the ICRC also conducted assessment which resulted in an emergency response which included some activities at Mahama refugee camp, Gashora and Nyanza transit camps and some entry points. As a result of these assessments, efforts are being made by movement partners to coordinate interventions and Rwanda Red Cross is currently working on developing a detailed Emergency Plan of Action in readiness to launch an Emergency Appeal as a continuation of the DREF activities. This Operations Update thus requests an additional extension of timeframe by another two weeks; to enable the National Society complete its activities and finalize the Emergency Appeal. The DREF operation will therefore end by 15 September 2015.

This DREF has been replenished by DG ECHO, Belgian Red Cross and Government, Canadian Red Cross and Government, Netherlands Red cross and Silent Emergency Fund. The major donors and partners of the DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the USA, as well as DG ECHO, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) the Medtronic, Zurich and Coca Cola Foundations and other corporate and private donors.

The IFRC, on behalf of the Rwanda Red Cross Society would like to extend many thanks to all partners for their generous contributions.

Contact information

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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 (NGOs) 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.

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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.