

BRIEFING NOTE ON DADAAB REFUGEE CAMP – 21st July 2011

Overview

The first refugee camp in Dadaab was established in 1991. Despite the official closure of the Kenya – Somalia border in January 2007, more than 200,000 refugees have arrived in the three Dadaab camps over the last four years. In 2010, the monthly arrival rate was 5,000 individuals until January 2011 when it increased to over 9,000, then tripled from June 2011. As at 21st July 2011, the overall registered population stood at **386,229 persons** residing in Ifo, Dahagaley and Hagadera camps, which were originally designed to accommodate a combined total of 90,000 refugees (30,000 each).

Currently, there are over 60,000 refugees residing in the outskirts of the camps in poor conditions.

Situation of New Arrivals

The new influx, mainly comprising women and children, are farmers and animal herders hailing from the Lower Juba Region, Dhobley town and surrounding villages in Somalia. They cite their main reasons for flight as prolonged drought, food insecurity and generalized violence in areas adjacent to the Kenyan border.

Malnutrition: As at 13th July, the severe acute malnutrition rate is estimated at 6.3% - 9.4% and the global acute malnutrition rate 15% - 24.3% among children under 5 in the three camps. At present, the mortality rate is rising in two camps - Ifo and Dagahaley, reported between 1 to 1.2 per 1,000 under fives per month.

Protection Risks: Heightened national security measures have led to a shrinking asylum space with cases of refoulement of Somali asylum seekers, and restriction of movements of refugees outside the camp areas. Limited availability of land to host refugees has resulted in the over stretching of resources and makes the provision of assistance a challenge especially in the camp outskirts, thus compromising the protection situation of refugees.

Security: There has been an increase of vulnerability to SGBV (358 incidences reported from January - June 2011 in comparison with 75 reported during the same period in 2010) and criminal activity arising from competition for scarce resources.

Emergency Response

Reception Centres: On 6th June 2011, reception centers were established in each of the 3 camps to expedite the delivery of humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers: medical screening, identification of vulnerable groups and easier access to registration. As at 20th July 2011, a total of **57,716** asylum-seekers (**98% comprising Somalis**) have been received and processed at the reception centers. Thereafter, they are transported to Ifo Registration Centre where for registration by the Kenya Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) and UNHCR.

Health and Nutrition: Upon arrival, the malnourished and those with medical complications are referred to Supplementary and Therapeutic Feeding Programmes and stabilization units in camp hospitals respectively.

Food and NFI Distribution: New arrivals received at the reception centre have access to dry food ration for three weeks and non-food items (including, kitchen sets, firewood and fuel efficient stoves) whilst waiting registration and subsequent inclusion to the general food distribution.

Land: On the 14th of July 2011, the Kenya Prime Minister approved UNHCR's request for additional land to accommodate refugees in view of the influx.

Settlement of refugees in Ifo Extension and Kambioos: The organized settlement in Ifo Extension (Lagdera Constituency) and Kambioos (Fafi District) of new arrivals currently spontaneously resident in the camp outskirts would ease the current camp congestion. The plan for this will include an adequate layout of the site, provision of water supply and sanitation facilities, and access to health services, emergency shelter and security with increased police patrols.

Challenges

The current humanitarian response may not be sustainable if the trend of arrivals is maintained for two or three more months. The increasing congestion in the camps continues to present heightened protection risks to the general population. Unavailability of funds will further delay the much needed timely response.