



## WFP WEEKLY EMERGENCY REPORT

Report No. 42 of 1996 Date: 25 October 1996

**Issued weekly by the United Nations World Food Programme**

This report includes: A) Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania B) Liberia and Sierra Leone C) Iraq D) Afghanistan

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### PART I - HIGHLIGHTS

(Details below in Part II)

#### **A. EAST AFRICA: REGIONAL OPERATION FOR BURUNDI, RWANDA, ZAIRE AND TANZANIA - information as of 25 October**

##### 1. Regional

- a) WFP Eastern Zaire Crisis Support Facility put in place in WFP Rome headquarters.

##### 2. Zaire - Uvira

- a) Rwandan and Burundian refugees in Uvira area flee fighting between Zairian army and Banyamulenge rebels, resulting in major displacement of entire camp population; 40,000 move towards Bukavu, 180,000 towards Uvira town.
- b) Humanitarian aid staff evacuated from Uvira on 22 October.

##### 3. Zaire - Bukavu

- a) Refugees and Zairians flee violence in area of southern Bukavu camps, heading west of Bukavu. As of 24 October numbers on the move were 40,000 refugees and 20,000 Zairian nationals.
- b) Zairian authorities commandeer all private trucks, including those contracted by WFP to move food aid.
- c) WFP airlift operation from Entebbe planned, in view of limited food stocks in Bukavu (currently 1,100 tons) and inaccessibility of the area by road due to security situation.

d) Situation in Bukavu extremely tense.

#### 4. Zaire - Goma

a) Government of Zaire closes Uganda-Goma road 20 October; as a result, 75 WFP trucks carrying 2,200 tons food aid blocked at border. Negotiations under way to open northern corridor, to reach refugee camps located along this route (with camp population of 517,000 people).

#### 5. Burundi

a) Further delays in obtaining permission to import fuel for humanitarian operations from Rwanda; food distributions severely restricted as a consequence.

b) Attacks take place in Karuzi and Kayanza province; Governor of Cibitoke province killed in ambush.

### **B. LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE**

#### 1. Liberia

a) Members of joint WFP/UNICEF/NGO mission to Bo-Waterside seized by ULIMO-K fighters at Tiene, robbed, and taken 20 km before being released.

#### 2. Sierra Leone

a) RUF rebels attack parts of Tonkolili district, burning and looting houses and hospitals and leaving a number of people dead; major offensive against the rebels in progress. Clashes in the south and east raise concerns about relief needs.

b) WFP assistance given to starving people recently held under terrible conditions by RUF.

### **C. IRAQ - information as of 25 October.**

#### 1. Update

a) Cease-fire between PDK and PUK announced 24 October.

b) WFP temporarily suspends transport of food to Sulemanya while roads between Erbil and Sulemanya blocked for two weeks.

c) Food shortages limit October distributions in north and to even more restricted level in south and central Iraq.

d) Acute disruptions to food aid pipeline will hit in near future; carry-over stocks and confirmed pledges for centre and south at drastically low level of 4 percent of what needed for winter months. Shortfall at 50 percent for north.

### **D. AFGHANISTAN - information as of 25 October.**

#### 1. Update

a) Fighting intensifies between Taliban and coalition of opposing forces.

b) In-country stocks used for continuing WFP programmes; authorities request WFP to resume certain activities in Kabul at instigation of beneficiaries; WFP activities in Jalalabad

remain suspended.

c) Reassessment on-going to determine possibilities of directly reaching and involving women in WFP programmes; preliminary results indicate that humanitarian relief activities can continue in certain areas and can be monitored by WFP and NGO national and international staff.

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## **PART II - DETAILS**

### **A. EAST AFRICA: REGIONAL OPERATION FOR BURUNDI, RWANDA, ZAIRE AND TANZANIA**

#### **1. REGIONAL**

##### **1.1 WFP Eastern Zaire Crisis Support Facility**

a) To ensure follow-up on critical issues and events and provide 24-hour backstopping coverage for the fast evolving situation in Eastern Zaire, WFP has activated its Crisis Support Facility (CSF) at its headquarters in Rome in support of the Region.

b) CSF functions include processing and timely dissemination of information related to the crisis and acting as a venue for operational meetings and teleconferencing. CSF dedicated external communications links are as follows:

Fax: 39 6 5228-2828 Telephone: 39 6 5228-2535  
Electronic Mail Address: [ezaire@wfp.unicc.org](mailto:ezaire@wfp.unicc.org)

#### **2. ZAIRE - UVIRA - information as of 25 October**

2.1 Fighting dramatically escalated on 19 October between the Zairian army and Banyamulenge rebels in the Uvira area, and has continued throughout the week.

2.2 The entire population of 220,000 Rwandan and Burundian refugees from the Uvira area have fled the camps since the fighting broke out. As of 24 October, 40,000 refugees were reportedly moving towards Bukavu, while the remaining 180,000 refugees are said to be moving towards Uvira town, as fighting is blocking the movement of people to the north of the Luvungi camp axis.

2.3 WFP successfully evacuated 47 humanitarian aid staff, including two international WFP officers, from Uvira on 22 October. Aid workers had been gathered at the UNHCR compound in Uvira for three days before security conditions and clearances allowed the plane to land at Kiliba landing strip. Immediately following the plane's departure, heavy shooting and widespread looting broke out in Uvira town. Extensive damage to UN and NGO property has been reported and vehicles have been stolen.

#### **3. ZAIRE - BUKAVU - information as of 25 October**

3.1 As of 24 October, an additional 40,000 refugees from southern Bukavu camps and an estimated 20,000 Zairian nationals from the same area were also fleeing violence. Most of this population, and the 40,000 refugees fleeing from Uvira, are heading west of Bukavu, some apparently into Nyamirange and Chimanga camps.

3.2 All private trucks, including those with which WFP had a prior working arrangement, have been commandeered by the Zairian local authorities. WFP is exploring possibilities to bring in support vehicles to allow its operations to continue.

3.3 In view of limited stock in Bukavu (1,100 tons which represents only 6 days at current population level of 302,000) and present surface inaccessibility to area, WFP intends to carry out a limited airlift operation ex-Entebbe to bring in urgent commodities, including non-food items, to support on-going operations. Airlift will be subject to security conditions. The aircraft should arrive in Entebbe 26 October. WFP continues to investigate all surface access options.

3.4 The security situation in Bukavu remains very tense. One WFP international staff was beaten by uniformed armed elements on 24 October.

#### **4. ZAIRE - GOMA - information as of 25 October**

4.1 Due to the intensified insecurity, the Government of Zaire closed the Uganda-Goma road (northern corridor) as of 20 October, blocking 75 WFP trucks carrying a total of 2,200 tons food supplies at the border. Some 7,200 tons of food aid commodities are presently inaccessible in warehouses along the northern axis. Negotiations are under way with Zairian authorities in Goma to open the northern corridor to humanitarian assistance. Three refugee camps with a total population of 517,000 people (of the total Goma camp population of 727,000) are located on the northern axis.

4.2 Humanitarian agencies have been requested to keep movements in town and west of Goma to a minimum. Curfew has been enforced since 23 October from 18:00 hours to 06:00 hours.

#### **5. BURUNDI**

5.1 Because of problems with obtaining permission from the Rwanda national sanctions committee, the planned importation of fuel by WFP for the humanitarian agencies in Burundi has again been delayed.

5.2 After cancelling a planned visit earlier in the week, ministers from neighbouring East African countries spent six hours in Bujumbura on 18 October. According to news reports, Burundi leader Pierre Buyoya reiterated to the delegation his refusal to negotiate with rebels as long as the regional sanctions remain in force.

5.3 There are no reports of any Rwandan or Burundian refugees arriving in Burundi from South Kivu. Only about 80 Zairian refugees arrived in Burundi during the reporting period.

5.4 According to news reports, the Governor of Cibitoke province was killed in an ambush on the road north to Cibitoke from Bujumbura.

5.5 The WFP sub-office in Ngozi reports that several communes of Kayanza province (Rango, Butaganzwa and Gahombo) affected by insecurity and conflict during the past week. A local administrator was killed. The hospital at Musema was attacked for the second time in several weeks, and medicines stolen.

5.6 An attack was reported on the displaced camp of Ruvubu (Karuzi province) a day after an inter-agency mission, including WFP, visited the site. Similarly, attacks were reported in Buranana (Kayanza province) several days after the WFP distribution team completed a two-day emergency relief distribution to displaced persons.

5.7 The fuel stocks of the Ngozi sub-office were depleted. This resulted in the suspension of food distributions and needs evaluation missions during the week.

5.8 The total WFP Burundi caseload during the reporting period totals 51,507; most of these were in Bujumbura Ville (20,000) and Kayanza (9,000) and most were recipients of ad hoc emergency distributions.

5.9 Stocks in Burundi as of 20 October were 3,865 tons.

5.10 Twice weekly Nairobi-Bujumbura flights by the WFP regional aircraft continued from 14 to 20 October, but as reported previously, the 20 places available weekly are not sufficient to meet demand.

## **6. RWANDA**

6.1 A joint WFP/UNHCR assessment mission, accompanied by donor observers (USAID and EU) has just completed a mission to the Great Lakes region (the mission precedes the regional WFP/UNHCR coordination meeting which takes place in Kampala 24-27 October). Before heading to Kampala, the Mission spent two days in Rwanda following their evacuation from Goma due to insecurity.

6.2 Heavy fighting in Goma area caused Zairian refugees located at Umubano camp (at the Gisenyi/Goma border in Rwanda) to seek protection at the stadium in Gisenyi during the night of 24 October. Refugees returned to the camp on 25 October.

6.3 In order to ensure adequate preparedness for a possible major refugee and/or returnee influx from Zaire into Rwanda, WFP has prepositioned 5,000 rations at transit centres in Cyangugu, Gisenyi and Kibungo prefectures, and 3,000 rations in Nyagatare prefecture. Each ration is composed of 24 kg of cereals, 7.2 kg of pulses and 1.2 kg of vegetable oil, and covers a period of two months. A further 32,000 rations are being prepositioned in Kigali.

6.4 The Government of Rwanda and UNHCR are currently discussing possibilities for the transfer of Zairian refugees who fled the Uvira area from Bugarama transit centre, where they are currently accommodated along with returnees, to another location.

6.5 Despite the insecurity in Eastern Zaire, the security situation in Rwanda remained relatively calm this past week. However, a land-mine incident in Gikongoro prefecture damaged a WFP truck and resulted in the loss of some of the cargo.

## **7. TANZANIA**

7.1 While the movement of Burundian refugees across the Tanzanian border continues (a total of 1,639 during the week ending 20 October), the general security situation in the area of the camps remains stable. The influx does not include new arrivals from Zaire.

## **B. LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE**

### **1. LIBERIA**

1.1 WFP has led several assessment missions to Bo-Waterside in Cape Mount County, on the Sierra Leonean border some 100 km from Monrovia, following the opening of the road by ECOMOG. The last WFP distribution to the area was via airlift in March 1996. Through December 1995, WFP had been feeding a population of 30,000 refugees and IDPs. Present population is estimated at 7,000 persons (4,000 Sierra Leonean refugees and 3,000 Liberian residents/displaced persons), with reports of 10,000 of the former population having moved to Sierra Leone and several thousand living off the side of the highways.

1.2 The overall situation in Bo-Waterside was found not to be as serious as previously

expected, with malnutrition present but at levels much lower than those of Tubmanburg. Households have some access to rice, cassava and wild yam, but additional food inputs needed as most civilians are afraid to search for food due to harassment from fighters. To address immediate food needs in Bo-Waterside, WFP is discussing the opening of a feeding centre with World Vision International.

1.3 On 17 October, a joint WFP, MSF, Action Contre la Faim, CARE, UNICEF, World Vision International and LIURD mission to collect information on the health and nutritional situation in Bo-Waterside was stopped by ULIMO-K fighters at Tiene, some 10 km from Bo. Members of the mission were seized at gunpoint and robbed of valuables, then taken to Dambala, 20 km from Tiene, where they were finally released by the faction commander.

1.4 WFP is supplying food commodities to CONCERN for their feeding programme in Gbah, Bomi County.

## **2. SIERRA LEONE**

2.1 In what is thought to be one of the bloodiest cease-fire violations of the year, RUF rebels reportedly burnt and looted houses and hospitals, and killed an unidentified number of people in the Masanga, Mathoi and Panguma areas of Tonkolili district on 18 October. A large offensive operation is presently in progress by the Executive Outcomes (South African mercenaries hired by the Government), the Sierra Leone military and Kamajor civil defence forces against RUF bases in the eastern provinces. Recent clashes in the south and east of the country have also sparked major relief concerns.

2.2 WFP is providing food aid to hundreds of recently liberated RUF-held captives. On 23 October a joint mission including UN, Government, donors and NGOs, visited Blama (18 km from Kenema) where over 500 former captives are gathered, and reported appalling conditions among the group, who had suffered severely while held in virtual slavery by the rebels.

2.3 A household socio-economic survey began on 21 October in Bo. The household survey is part of the overall national strategy of targeted feeding in 1997, to identify vulnerable households and support the resettlement process.

## **C. IRAQ**

### **1. UPDATE - information as of 25 October**

1.1 The security situation in the north appears to have calmed down since the official declaration of a cease-fire between the two Kurdish factions PDK (Democratic Party of Kurdistan) and PUK (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan) on 24 October. Roads between the governorates of Erbil and Sulaymanya have been blocked by fighting for two weeks, forcing WFP to temporarily suspend transport of food commodities, monitoring and registration activities in the governorate of Sulaymanya.

1.2 The October food distribution cycle has been completed in the governorates of Dohuk and Erbil, but 50 percent of the scheduled beneficiaries in Sulaymanya could not receive their food entitlement. During the month of October, due to a shortage in pulses and oil, WFP could distribute a complete basic ration to only 203,650 beneficiaries in the north (a total of 2,130 tons of food). The figure represents one-third of WFP target beneficiary figure in the north. Food aid supply situation for this area faces serious problems mid-December.

1.3 In the centre and south, due to alarming stock shortages, distributions during the month of October could cover only 220,000 beneficiaries out of a total caseload of 1,485,000 people. Distributed rations consisted mainly of canned fish, sugar and lentils as there was

no wheat, oil, rice or wheat soya blend in stock. In November WFP will be compelled to stop distributions in the centre and south because of the complete depletion of available stocks and the absence of new contributions.

1.4 The implementation of Security Council Resolution 986 is still on hold. WFP is extremely worried about the marked lack of donor response to the difficult humanitarian conditions in Iraq, which were reported in the UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal in September 1996.

1.5 WFP Baghdad reports a serious aggravation of humanitarian needs, evident in the continuing increase in the price of basic food commodities, and growing numbers of dropouts from schools and of street children begging in the street.

1.6 To respond to this worrying situation, and in parallel to the Inter-Agency Appeal, WFP is finalising a new phase of its emergency operation to cover estimated food needs of 2,151,000 people over the October 96 - March 97 winter period.

1.7 As at October 1996, carry-over stocks and confirmed pledges enable WFP to cover only fifty-five percent of food requirements over the harsh winter in the north and a mere four percent in the centre and south.

## **D. AFGHANISTAN - information as of 25 October**

### **1. UPDATE**

1.1 Over the past week fighting has intensified between the Taliban and a new coalition force composed of Tajik forces loyal to the former government's military commander Ahmed Shah Masood, the mainly Uzbek Jumbesh party of General Dostom, the Shi'ite Moslem Hezb-i-Wahdat party of Mr. Khalili and the Hezb-i-Islami party of ousted prime minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. The fighting is taking place at the intersection of the Panjshir and Salang valleys. Although Kabul has not been significantly affected by the current fighting, the situation remains highly volatile in the capital and elsewhere.

1.2 From existing in-country stocks, WFP programmes in most areas of the country are continuing. In Kabul, as a result of pressure from the very needy women beneficiaries who depend almost entirely on the food they receive in WFP-assisted vocational training and home-based small-scale enterprise projects (carpet making, poultry raising and bakeries), the authorities have requested WFP to resume these activities. All WFP activities in Jalalabad remain suspended.

1.3 A reassessment exercise is currently in process to determine the scope for directly reaching and involving women under the WFP programme in the light of restrictions imposed on female employment and education. Preliminary results indicate that humanitarian relief activities can continue in certain areas and can be monitored by WFP and NGO national and international staff. As described in WFP Emergency Report no. 41, Taliban authorities do not uniformly impose a single policy on women in all the areas under their control.

1.4 The WFP Assistant Executive Director will be travelling to Afghanistan in the first week of November to reiterate with Taliban authorities the Programme's concerns relating to human rights and specifically the rights of women and girls, within the context of WFP humanitarian activities in both the relief and rehabilitation sectors.

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(End WFP Emergency Report No. 42 of 1996 - October 25, 1996)

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WFP



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