



WFP EMERGENCY REPORT

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This report includes: A) Burundi, Rwanda, Zaire and Tanzania B) Iraq C) Afghanistan D) Sri Lanka

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PART I - HIGHLIGHTS

(Details below in Part II)

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

1. Zaire - Uvira

- a) No direct contact with WFP office Uvira since 25 October, following evacuation of humanitarian aid staff on 22 October.
- b) Reports of continued heavy fighting in and around Uvira town, and generalised looting, including WFP food stocks (previous stock position 1,500 metric tons).
- c) Banyamulenge reported to have taken over Uvira; some displaced refugees said to be moving back towards Uvira town.

2. Zaire - Bukavu

- a) Worsening of security situation from 25 October.
- b) On 26 October, WFP evacuate 128 relief staff from Bukavu to Entebbe, and onwards to Nairobi; remaining international humanitarian staff in Bukavu depart 28 October.
- c) Attempted food distribution on 28 October in Kashusha camp incomplete due to insecurity and confusion.
- d) Heavy artillery exchanges across the Bukavu/Cyangugu border with Rwanda on 29 and 30 October. Several casualties were reported in Cyangugu on Rwandan side of the border.

e) Reports on 31 October of people from Bukavu town moving towards Kashusha and Inera camps, some 30 km north of Bukavu.

3. Zaire - Goma (Information as of 1 November)

a) Heavy fighting 31 October and 1 November in and around Goma town; cross-border fighting at Goma-Gisenyi border.

b) Airport area highly insecure.

c) Evacuation of 107 UN and NGO staff is being attempted.

d) Violent fighting 29 October in Kibumba area; Kibumba camp had been attacked on 26 October, with unconfirmed looting and destruction of camp hospital. Some 200,000 people from Kibumba camp move towards Mugunga.

e) Food distribution possible on 29 October by WFP and NGO staff in Kahindo camp, 35 km north of Goma, with population of 200,000; Kahindo camp empty on 31 October and refugees moving towards Goma.

f) Distributions of one-week half-rations started in camps of Katale (northern axis), Mugunga and Lac Vert (western axis) (estimated total population of 500,000) on 30 October.

4. Burundi (Information as of 31 October)

a) Regional Sanctions Coordinating Committee exempts humanitarian aid for displaced persons from the embargo.

b) Kenyan Sanctions Committee gives permission to WFP to fly Fokker 50 aircraft for Nairobi-Bujumbura flights.

c) Returnees arrive in daily increasing numbers from Eastern Zaire; by 31 October some 4,000 people had crossed over into Burundi and number at border estimated at 2,000. WFP and UNHCR distribute rations to 3,000 returnees.

d) Clashes between army and rebels reported in Cibitoke province near Zaire border; on-going insecurity in Bujumbura Rural, Muramvya, and southern part of Kayanza province.

e) Fuel for humanitarian agencies leaves Kigali for Burundi.

5. Rwanda

a) Only small numbers of displaced Rwandan refugees in Eastern Zaire returning to Rwanda.

b) Government opens a new camp for Zairian refugees in Gisenyi; 4,400 new arrivals during the week.

c) Umubano camp to be closed; refugees are being moved to a new camp in Kibuye.

d) Pre-positioning of rations in Rwanda continues.

B. IRAQ

1. Update

- a) In New York, Heads of UN Agencies express concern over deteriorating humanitarian situation in Iraq and weak response by donor community to UN Interim Programme.
- b) WFP Executive Director stresses critical food aid shortfall at the beginning of harsh winter period.
- c) US Government announces pledge of USD 7.3 million; total UN needs for Iraq are USD 39.9 million through end of the year (USD 19 million required by WFP). Confirmed contributions before American announcement were US 1.6 million, including USD 500,000 from Dutch Government to WFP.

C. AFGHANISTAN

1. Update (information as of 30 October)

- a) Fighting near Kabul continues, with aerial bombing of the capital and north of the city.
- b) Temporary WFP suspension of food shipments lifted for the north and the parts of the south, west and eastern provinces where programmes for women can continue.

D. SRI LANKA

1. Update

- a) WFP approves a USD 3.6 million food assistance operation to benefit 50,000 internally displaced persons in the provinces of Puttalam, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa.
- b) Government of Sri Lanka continues to provide food to IDPs living inside the conflict zone on the Jaffna Peninsula as well as IDPs outside the conflict zone.
- c) While routinely collected data do not indicate any increase in the levels of mild or acute malnutrition in the conflict areas, with the commencement of the north-west monsoon rains many thousands of IDPs are without adequate shelter and medical supplies.

PART II - DETAILS

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

1. ZAIRE - UVIRA

1.1 WFP has not had direct contact with its WFP office since 25 October (following heavy fighting, 47 humanitarian aid staff were evacuated from Uvira on 22 October). However reports of continued heavy fighting, in and around Uvira town, from various sources, as well as reports of generalised looting, including WFP food stocks, which stood at some 1,500 metric tons. There have also been reports that Banyamulenge have taken over Uvira and some refugees have been moving from Fizi, where they had originally fled, towards Uvira town.

2. ZAIRE - BUKAVU

2.1 Security situation significantly worsened from 25 October. Due to the insecurity, the possibility for a limited airlift of urgent relief commodities was suspended. On 26 October,

WFP successfully evacuated 128 relief staff from Bukavu to Entebbe, and onwards to Nairobi, with its two Buffalo aircraft. The last remaining international humanitarian staff in Bukavu departed 28 October as the security situation deteriorated even further.

2.2 Reports of looting in Bukavu, however no hard information on WFP food stocks, which stood at some 1,000 metric tons.

2.3 WFP and NGO national staff tried to carry out food distributions on 28 October in Kashusha camp. The distribution began however was not completed due to insecurity and confusion.

2.4 Heavy artillery exchanges across the Bukavu/Cyangugu border occurred 29 and 30 October. Several casualties were reported in Cyangugu (Rwanda side). It was reported on 31 October that people were moving from Bukavu town towards Kashusha and Inera camps, some 30 km north of Bukavu; at that time, the airport was reportedly still under the control of the Zairian army.

3. ZAIRE - GOMA (Information as of 1 November)

3.1 The security situation significantly worsened 31 October and 1 November with heavy fighting reported in and around Goma town, including cross-border fighting at the Goma-Gisenyi border. Interhamwe, ex-Forces Armees Rwandaises (FAR) soldiers and tribal warriors (May-May) are reported in the town of Goma. The airport area is reported to be highly insecure. Due to the insecurity, the planned airlift for 31 October to establish an emergency relief stockpile has been put on stand-by. The evacuation of 107 UN and NGO staff is being attempted.

3.2 Violent combat reported 29 October in Kibumba area with several persons killed and injured. Attacks on Kibumba camp (some 20 km north of Goma) on 26 October. Also on 26 October, unconfirmed reports in Kibumba camp of looting of WFP warehouse and looting and burning of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' hospital. Some 200,000 people moved from Kibumba camp towards Mugunga camp.

3.3 Food distribution was successfully completed on 29 October by WFP and NGO staff in Kahindo camp with population of 200,000 (some 35 km north of Goma). By 31 October, Kahindo camp was reported empty due to fighting in the area, with refugees moving towards Goma.

3.4 Distributions started on 30 October in Katala camp (northern axis), Mugunga camp and Lac Vert camp (western axis) for a total estimated total population of 500,000. Distributions were carried out at half-rations (800 kilocalories) covering immediate needs for a one-week period.

4. PLANNING FOR EASTERN ZAIRE

4.1 In the event that the refugee population does not return to Rwanda in significant numbers, and moves further into Zaire, WFP has been investigating alternative supply routes for future operations.

5. BURUNDI (Information as of 31 October)

5.1 The number of returnees crossing into Burundi from Eastern Zaire is increasing daily. As of 31 October some 4,000 people had arrived with an estimated 2,000 at the border. At the transit point, WFP staff, in collaboration with UNHCR, have distributed a one-week food ration to approximately 3,000 Burundian returnees. Equilibre and UNICEF are providing water. The transit site requires shelter, water and sanitation infrastructure. Most of the group presently at the transit site are women and children.

5.2 The Regional Sanctions Coordinating Committee, meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, on 21 October, exempted humanitarian aid for displaced persons from the embargo. The Committee specified that aid for 250,000 Burundian displaced would be allowed to enter Burundi. First on the list of exemptions is food aid. Before importation is allowed, requests for specific quantities need to be submitted to the chairman of the Sanctions Committee. The other exempted relief supplies are bean seeds, water purification agents, blankets, plastic sheeting, jerry cans and buckets, cooking pots and utensils, sanitary facilities, and mats.

5.3 The Kenyan Sanctions Committee has given permission to WFP to fly a Fokker 50 aircraft for the Nairobi-Bujumbura flights, with larger capacity than present WFP aircraft used for this route. Service will begin next week. Flights are used for moving passengers and cargo for the diplomatic and humanitarian community in Burundi.

5.4 According to news reports, the Burundi army indicates that it has been fighting rebels in the area near the Zaire border in Cibitoke province. A civilian truck was reportedly ambushed on the road to Cibitoke town during the week. This road, as well as all of Cibitoke province, and most of Bubanza province, continue to be off-limits to UN personnel.

5.5 During the past week, military operations continued in Bujumbura Rural province, while insecurity was again reported in Muramvya province, where according to news sources a displaced camp in Bukeye was attacked by rebels (5 civilians and 10 rebels dead). Also according to news reports, the Burundi army has arrested several soldiers who are accused of killing 60 peasants in Bururi province two weeks ago in retaliation for a rebel attack which killed 40.

5.6 Reports indicate continuing insecurity in the southern part of Kayanza province, causing population movements north of Rango commune.

5.7 The caseload of WFP Burundi programmes totalled 53,362 persons, most in the Bujumbura and Kayanza areas.

5.8 Lack of fuel severely constrained WFP operations during the week, preventing planned emergency relief evaluations and distributions. Fuel trucks containing 215,000 litres of fuel for all humanitarian agencies in Burundi left Kigali for Burundi at the beginning of this week.

5.9 WFP food aid stocks in-country are sufficient for about one month except for cereals. WFP is making every effort to dispatch some 2,000 metric tons of food from Tanzania into the country, but a proposal must first be cleared by the Sanctions Committee.

6. RWANDA

6.1 Only a small portion of the displaced Rwandan refugees in Eastern Zaire (see above) have returned to Rwanda. During the week of 21-28 October, a total of 1,542 returned to Rwanda, 1,207 in Gisenyi and 318 in Cyangugu.

6.2 A large number of Zairian refugees arrived in Rwanda last week. The Government has opened a new refugee camp in Gisenyi, where 4,400 arrived during the week, to cater for these new arrivals. Food distribution is carried out by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. In Cyangugu some 36 refugees arrived; Zairians are accommodated at Bugarama transit centre and Burundians are at the Bugarama refugee camp which also accommodates previous arrivals of Burundian refugees. The nutritional situation among the arriving refugees and returnees from Zaire is reported to be good.

6.3 During the night of 23 October, almost all Zairian refugees in Umubano camp, Gisenyi, sought refuge in the local stadium, after rumours that the camp would be attacked from Zaire. All refugees returned to the camp on the following morning, escorted by the Rwandan Army.

6.4 Due to insecurity, the Rwanda Government has decided to close Umubano camp and move the refugees to a new camp in Kibuye prefecture. A total of 1,056 refugees have already been relocated to Kibuye but are currently in the transit centre until the preparations are completed in the new camp.

6.5 A total of 80,000 rations are being prepositioned in Rwanda in order to cater for a possible increase influx of returnees or refugees from Eastern Zaire. A total of 40,000 are being prepositioned in Kigali, 15,000 in Gisenyi, 20,000 in Cyangugu and 5,000 in Butare. In addition, a total of 300,000 rations will be prepositioned in Kampala and Isaka for Rwanda should a massive influx take place.

B. IRAQ

1. UPDATE

1.1 At a press briefing in New York on 28 October, the Executive Director of WFP, the Director of UNICEF, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs expressed their concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Iraq and the weak response by the donor community to the Interim United Nations Humanitarian Programme for Iraq launched in September 1996.

1.2 The WFP Executive Director stressed the Programme's concern about the critical under-funding of emergency food aid operations at the beginning of the harsh winter period.

1.3 WFP is targeting 2.15 million highly vulnerable people in Iraq, comprising 900,000 individuals in households headed by war widows, 780,000 destitute and internally displaced persons, 200,000 pregnant or nursing women, 140,000 returnees, 64,000 refugees and 67,000 people in hospitals and social institutions. Of the total, an estimated 180,000 are malnourished children under the age of five. Eighty percent of hospital in-patients in Iraq depend entirely on WFP food assistance.

1.4 Of the USD 39.9 million needed to carry out the Interim Programme through the end of the year, USD 19 million are required by WFP. At the time of the press briefing, donor countries had made confirmed contributions of only US 1.6 million to the Interim Programme (of which USD 500,000 is a contribution by the Dutch Government to WFP).

1.5 In response to the UN Heads of Agencies appeal, the American Government has announced a donation of USD 7.3 million to the Interim Programme.

C. AFGHANISTAN

1. UPDATE (Information as of 30 October)

1.1 Fighting close to Kabul continued during the week. Aerial bombings were reported north of the capital and over Kabul itself, close to the WFP office (which suffered minor damage).

1.2 Peace initiatives and conferences brokered by Pakistan, Iran and the UN Special Envoy continue.

1.3 On 28 October, the WFP Executive Director lifted the suspension of WFP food shipments into the areas of Afghanistan such as the north and parts of the south, west and eastern provinces, where relief activities in favour of men and women can continue largely unaffected by the Taliban pronouncements on women. Shipments of food had been temporarily suspended while the possibilities of directly reaching and involving women under the WFP programme were being reassessed.

1.4 WFP has resumed activities in favour of women in the capital, including the bakery project for women. Relief activities in most parts of the country continue except in Jalalabad where WFP is currently reassessing needs.

1.5 The WFP Assistant Executive Director will be travelling to Afghanistan on 5 November and is expected to meet with the authorities in Kabul and Kandahar and other areas of the country if security permits.

D. SRI LANKA

1. UPDATE

1.1 The World Food Programme has approved a USD 3.6 million package of food assistance that will benefit 50,000 internally displaced persons residing in welfare centres located in the provinces of Puttalam, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. This latest WFP commitment will be provided over fourteen months ending 31 December 1997.

1.2 WFP has been providing emergency food assistance to IDP outside of the main conflict zone since February 1992. Not including the latest commitment WFP has provided 38,700 metric tons of food aid at a total cost of USD 11.5 million.

1.3 The Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) continues to be committed, in spite of the considerable cost, to supplying dry rations to IDPs living inside the conflict zone on the Jaffna Peninsula as well as to IDPs living with friends and relatives outside the conflict zone. Since June 1996, an average of 7,350 metric tons has been sent each month to both cleared and uncleared areas within the conflict zones of the Wannu Region at a cost to the GOSL of USD 5.4 million. This amount is sufficient to feed 490,000 persons at emergency rations. The latest estimate of the number of IDPs is about 300,000.

1.4 However, the lack of reliable population data on numbers of IDPs who are on the move at any given time and the constraints on independently verifying the delivery and distribution systems make it difficult to establish the extent to which all eligible persons are receiving adequate food supplies. WFP monitors the situation to the extent possible and maintains close contact with the Government, International Organizations and NGOs.

1.5 According to routinely collected data from various sources, there are no reports of any increase in the levels of mild or acute malnutrition in the conflict areas. The level of undernutrition is estimated to be slightly higher than the national average. However, with the commencement of the north-west monsoon rains, many thousands of IDPs are without adequate shelter and medical supplies.

1.6 The food supply situation in the Jaffna Peninsula is stable. The GOSL has at its disposal three cargo ships with a combined capacity of 8,200 metric tons and food cargoes are being sent to Jaffna at regular intervals. The Food Commissioner also reports that an average of 2,750 metric tons of wheat flour are delivered to Jaffna from the Prima mill, in Trincomalee each month. There is some concern, however, that the coming monsoon season will slow offloading operations at Kankasanturai and Point Pedro harbours. Vegetable production on the peninsular is reported to be on the increase.

(End WFP Emergency Report No. 43 of 1996 - November 1, 1996)



WFP



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