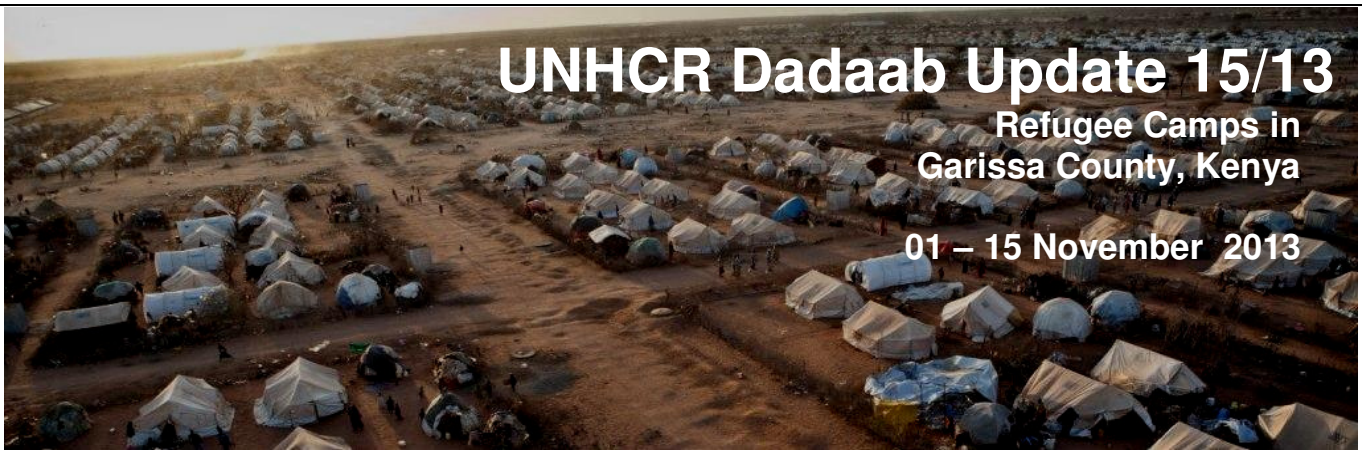


UNHCR Dadaab Update 15/13

Refugee Camps in
Garissa County, Kenya

01 – 15 November 2013



New developments

Repatriation Tripartite Agreement

The Tripartite Agreement on Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees signed on 10 November between the governments of Kenya and Somalia and UNHCR triggered a lively discussion and some apprehension among the refugees in Dadaab. In a meeting with refugee leaders, the UNHCR Head of Operations emphasized that the agreement was for a three-years period, with possibility of extension beyond that, and that nobody was going to be forced to return. Given the fact that spontaneous returns had already started, it was important that modalities were put in place to enable UNHCR to give support to those who were choosing to return. A return support package was being finalised, and Return Help Desks were going to be established in the camps where people wishing to return could go to for information on the return process and the support they would get. UNHCR and the Government of Kenya were planning information campaigns and consultative meetings with refugees at the camp level. In partnership with IOM, UNHCR will conduct a Return Intention Survey in the camps to determine the level of interest in and concerns about return.

New food collection procedures

The new food collection procedures using biometrics were running in all refugee camps of Kenya as part of the normal food distribution. In all seven food distribution centres in Kakuma and Dadaab, the fingerprints of beneficiaries were being checked before they were collecting their food assistance. A small number were being rejected or referred to the UNHCR Field Offices, and a significant number of cards had stopped being used. Overall, WFP was distributing 58,000 fewer rations since the system was introduced, with UNHCR and WFP working side-by-side to guarantee that nobody entitled to it was denied food assistance, while simultaneously improving the efficiency of the food distribution process.



Refugees at a food distribution point

Photo: UNHCR

Refugees continued to raise concerns about the reduction in food rations that was being implemented in November and December as a consequence of funding constraints. However, it was anticipated that the full food basket was going to be restored as of the second food distribution cycle in January 2014.

Security

The arrest on 1 November of 21 young refugees allegedly on their way to join Al Shabaab in Somalia was widely reported in Kenyan media. A senior police officer in Garissa was quoted as saying that “they were headed to join a terror group for training”. In fact, the young men had left Hagadera to search for a mentally disturbed man who had disappeared and they had notified the police in Hagadera before leaving the camp. After intervention by UNHCR, the men were swiftly released. UNHCR has requested the police command to refrain from making speculative public statements that could have a negative impact on the security and well-being of refugees.

After an intense exchange of gunfire with a group of armed men near the Somali border, a police patrol arrested three of them and seized four AK47 rifles plus 90 rounds of ammunition. The arrested were deserters from the Somali National Armed Forces (SNAF) reportedly on their way to the Dadaab camps. According to the police, SNAF soldiers have lately been deserting because of non-payment of salaries and many have gone to the Dadaab camps. Some of these deserters were suspected to be engaged in criminal activities, particularly banditry.

Flooding in the camps

With the onset of the short rains, roads were flooded, forcing refugees to wade through water in order to reach some essential services. There was a risk of outbreaks of water-borne diseases as children were swimming in the pools of stagnant water and latrines were flowing over in some places. However, the situation had improved compared to previous years because of preventive measures, such as canalisation and building of dams.



A road in Ifo camp 11/11/2013

Photo: U Mamo/DRA

Statistics

Population as of 15 November 2013:

Hagadera	Kambioos	Dagahaley	Ifo	Ifo 2	Total
114,697	19,989	104,338	100,698	65,173	404,894

Protection

Arrest, detention, and freedom of movement

UNHCR conducted monitoring and advocacy visits to Garissa main prison, Garissa police station, Garissa law court and the office of the County Children's Officer. The counterparts highlighted the challenges faced when dealing with cases involving persons of concern to UNHCR and the need for UNHCR and the judiciary to collaborate in training judicial officers, state counsels and police prosecutors. The prison was holding 150 persons of concern, either convicted or on remand. The team interviewed the prisoners and for urgent intervention took note of the details of those refugees charged with unlawful presence outside the camps.

Child protection

The District Civil Registrar came on a three-week mission to Dadaab for the registration of births (home and hospital deliveries) and deaths and the processing of certificates. A pilot phase of electronic processing of certificates was launched, a mode which is expected to increase efficiency in timely issuance. A total of 3,568 birth certificates were processed and 2,022 home births registered across the five camps. A concern was the increasing number of home deliveries compared to hospital births especially in Ifo 2 and the Alinjogur camps. Intensified sensitisation campaigns will be conducted on the importance of hospital delivery.

In Kambioos, a trend has been observed of parents spontaneously leaving the camps and placing their children under the care of relatives or neighbours, thus exposing the children to exploitation. This concern was raised by the Somali Bantu community leaders. Terre des Hommes (TdH) will conduct best interest assessments for these children.

Resettlement

- *Submissions:* 22 cases comprising 120 individuals were interviewed for processing and onward submission to resettlement countries. A total of 1,583 individuals have been submitted since 1 January.
- *Departures:* 56 individuals departed the camp for onward resettlement. A total of 1,217 individuals have departed to resettlement countries since 1 January.

Education

Schoolchildren in the camps were preparing for the final exams taking place in the second half of November. School holidays were scheduled to start on 22 November.



Undugu primary school, Hagadera 06/11/2013

Photo: A Nasrullah/UNHCR

Health and nutrition

The second cycle of the Malezi Bora campaign to promote good nutrition practices started with a one-week training of the new refugee leaders in nutrition and maternal-health issues, as well as a one-day training of the coordinators and team supervisors. The actual field activities included mass MUAC screening and vitamin-A-supplementary feeding of children 6-59 months old, and deworming of all children 2-15 years old.

In keeping with this year's Malezi Bora theme "improving the health of mothers and newborns", Action Contre Faim conducted 153 cooking demonstrations across the camps with special focus on iron and vitamin-A-rich food. The key messages passed during the week dwelt on the importance of iron-rich food and iron supplementation for pregnant mothers, as well as of vitamin-A supplementation for children 6 months-5 years old.

Livelihood

A joint UNHCR-Danish Refugee Council livelihood team visited Ifo and Kambioos to assess the progress of livelihood activities. During October, DRC distributed material and cash grants to 514 persons (257 female) in three Dadaab camps. The raw material for the grants had been purchased in the camps with the aim of boosting income-generating activities. A further 496 persons (282 female) benefited from cash grants.

In Kambioos, World Vision International provided material grants to a women's group comprising of 16 members. The group will be involved in basketry and mat making after a two-day business-skills training. WVI also identified a youth group which will receive material support. The group currently runs a small beauty and cosmetics shop.

Lutheran World Federation identified 54 persons in Kambioos who will benefit from livelihood support. Among the beneficiaries are youth, persons living with disability, and vulnerable women. 18 refugee youths, among them five women, have been sponsored to attend a one-month driving training in Garissa.

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Webportal on Somali Displacement:
<http://data.unhcr.org/horn-of-africa/regional.php>