

Alert

Uganda

Congolese Refugee Influx in Uganda

Geneva, 5 June 2015

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Thousands of Congolese refugees are pouring into Uganda from the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, reportedly fleeing possible abduction, forced recruitment and rape by suspected Mai Mai and ADF militia groups (Allied Democratic Forces)¹. Mai Mai is a rebel group that claims to fight for the independence of Katanga province (DRC) while ADF originated from Uganda. The refugees are entering Uganda through Bunagana and Nyabwishenya in Kisoro and Ishasha in Kanungu district, South-Western Uganda. Since the beginning of the year, over 4'526 Congolese have arrived in Uganda. Authorities at the camps report a total breakdown in law and order in Eastern DRC. A new site within Rwamwanja refugee settlement has been opened at Mahiga with a reception centre at Mahane. In the first week of May, a joint Rapid assessment was conducted by UNHCR, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and other implementing partners on this new site and identified gaps in all sectors. The new influx continues to over stretch the limited services in the settlement. The new arrivals are in immediate need of life saving services including NFIs, shelter, food etc.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

There has been a request by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and UNHCR for support from humanitarian actors to extend services to the over 11'200 refugees currently residing in Mahiga settlement – and more are expected.

3. National and international response

- UNHCR, OPM and implementing partners conducted a rapid assessment to determine the capacity of Mahiga site in accommodating the influx.
- The OPM has opened up a new site called Mahiga within Rwamwanja Refugee settlement.
- UNHCR has deployed more trucks to ferry refugees from Kisoro to Mahiga site.
- UNHCR and OPM have scaled up screening and registration of the new refugees.
- African Humanitarian Action (AHA) has opened up temporary shelters to support refugees to access medical services.

¹ According to UNHCR in Uganda.

4. ACT Alliance response

LWF is currently managing the reception centre offering multi sectoral service to new arrivals. ACT Forum Uganda convened a meeting to discuss its response and mandated the following members: LWF (multi sectorial Reception centre management, Protection, WASH, NFIs, Shelter, environment, livelihood and community service), Finn church Aid (Education in Emergency) and Uganda Joint Christian Council (Peace Building).

5. Planned activities

- Borehole drilling (LWF)
- Distribution of essential Non Food Items (LWF)
- Provision of shelter for extremely vulnerable people and persons with special needs (LWF)
- Support food security and environmental protection (LWF)
- Construction of learning spaces (FCA)
- Peace work for refugee and host communities (UJCC)

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org).

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