

Kenya – Djibouti



May 26 – 2015

Program Update

**Round Table**

Last week we had meetings (“Round Table”) with our related agencies and member churches. Thank you to all who participated and contributed to the good discussions! One of the days was dedicated to a discussion about the crisis in South Sudan, the LWF response inside South Sudan, in Adjumani (Uganda), Gambella (Ethiopia) and Kakuma (Kenya). LWF being one of the few agencies present and responding on the ground in all these locations! The sharing of experiences was very fruitful and valuable to all.

**OPERATIONAL CONTEXT**

**South Sudan –> Kakuma**

Unfortunately the general conclusion and feeling is that the conflict in South Sudan is not near to an end or lasting peace. Rather it seems likely the conflict will continue for a long time, possibly years. It also seems likely that there will continue to be refugees leaving South Sudan, although we do not anticipate a massive influx of refugees in any of the three neighbouring countries. We do however anticipate a continued influx at current levels, occasionally higher and at other times lower. The most likely scenario is a “trickle in” effect in Kakuma, that will last over several months or more.

“*The outcome of the war will be determined by who is able to sustain sufficient spending to keep their political-military coalitions functional,*” Alex de Waal (executive director of the World Peace Foundation at the Fletcher School in Massachusetts) recently said by e-mail to Bloomberg news. “*The current financial collapse in South Sudan is indicative that the government is losing badly on this front.*” He also noted. As we know, fighting began in December 2013 and has slashed the oil output by at least one third to about 165,000 barrels per day or less (according to South Sudans Oil Ministry). In January, Frontier Economics, based in London, estimated that the war could cost the economy as much as $28 billion if it continues for another five years, with neighboring countries also facing losses.

**Somalia –> Dadaab**

In Kenya Somalia's Al-Shabaab militant group on Tuesday this week claimed responsibility for an attack in Yumbis, Garissa, in the northeast. They claimed to have killed 30 police officers. This claim have not been confirmed, Kenyan authorities have confirmed one officer being killed.

During the past week fighting inside south Somalia between Al Shabaab militants and the Somali Government forces have killed at least 24 people, and a rebel attack in the capital Mogadishu killed three Transport Ministry workers and a lawmaker. Al Shabaab also seized the control of a strategic town in the southern Somali region of lower Shabelle on Sunday night after government forces vacated it, witnesses and residents said on Monday. The Government have stated that they have made a tactical withdrawal.

According to residents in Janaale town, the militants had taken over the control of the town without firing a single shot.

**Yemen –> Djibouti**

According to the news outlet AP a United Nations-sponsored Yemeni peace conference that was to start on Thursday in Geneva has been indefinitely postponed. The talks were meant to end the heavy fighting and stop the Saudi-led airstrikes against an Iran-backed rebel group, all amid a humanitarian crisis that has left millions in the Arab world's poorest country short of food and fuel.

The UNHCR says a total of 5,000 Yemeni refugees have made it to Djibouti, including 3,000 in the capital, Djibouti city, and 1,000 in Obock. This makes Djibouti to currently be the biggest Yemeni refugee population.

Those in the camp have been provided with mosquito nets and blankets, and they get a daily ration of food and water. But conditions in Obock and the new Markazi Camp are extremely challenging.

Marie-Claire Sowinetz, with the UNHCR in Djibouti, says: "*To be able to address all the needs of the vulnerable, we would need more and robust support from the international community*".

***I want to take this opportunity to request support for our operation in Djibouti, where the LWF is present in Obock and the Markazi Camp and in need of resources to monitor, assess and respond to the humanitarian needs.***

**GENERAL PROGRAM UPDATE**

**Kakuma**

The slow influx of refugees continues in Kakuma. Even if there is no significant increase in South Sudanese asylum seekers coming through the Nadapal transit center, we have noted an increasing trend of refugees being referred by UNHCR and DRA mostly coming from Dadaab, Nairobi, Burundi and DRC. The numbers are still not very high, but could increase.

The weekly influx trend in Kakuma is as follows

There are currently more than 103,000 children at the camp. The black lines are trend lines, whether the last two weeks increase does represent a new trend we don’t know yet.

LWF continues to provide services in the camp. Our focus is on expanding Primary Education, Early Childhood Development and Child Protection Services. The work is ongoing with no significant change over the past few weeks.

**Dadaab**

The main highlights now from from Dadaab include a visit by António Guterres, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. . During his visit he shared the news from meetings with the Kenyan Government that the threat of camp closure is no longer in place.

John Kerry, the US Secretary of State has met with Dadaab refugee leaders in Nairobi and spoke with refugee students via teleconference.

A stakeholder workshop has been held, aiming at sustaining a harmonious relationship between the Kenyan host community, the refugee community and the and humanitarian agencies in Dadaab. A follow up will be held shortly, as there are several issues of concern that needs to be discussed and agreed – especially that agencies have requirements (legal, accountability, humanitarian principles, internal policies) that must be respected for award of contracts and recruitment of staff.

Voluntary return movements from Dadaab to Somalia remain suspended due to the ongoing rainy season and the road conditions in Somalia. No returns have taken place during the first two weeks of May. Since December 2014, when the pilot project of return started, 2,048 refugees from Somalia have been supported by UNHCR to spontaneously return to Somalia.

LWF continue in Dadaab to provide services especially to persons with disabilities in our rehabilitation center in Hagadera camp, and to provide primary education and early childhood development. We have made a follow up recently on trained teachers (trained refugees) and note that several of them have been among the refugees returning to Somali. We are currently assessing to what extent their training as teachers have been a factor in their decision to return – and to what extent they work in Somali in a field related to their training (in Education or other). We believe that training plays an important role for voluntary and sustainable return, and we will now try to follow up on those we have trained to see to what extent this is correct.

**Djibouti**

According to statistics from IOM and the Djiboutian government, 11,183 persons of mixed nationalities have arrived in Djibouti from Yemen (not all are refugees/asylum seekers, see also above).

A new refugee camp in Markazi (Obock) is now being established to host people fleeing from Yemen. The site of the camp, Markazi, is located on the coast, four kilometers away from Obock city.

The November last Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) highlighted a lack of access to fresh vegetables in both refugee camps of Ali Addeh and Holl Holl. The participation of FAO in the JAM exercise resulted in exploring the feasibility of introducing micro- gardens within the daily activities of refugees, in order to increase the availability of fresh vegetable within the camps. LWF has not prepared a project proposal for this and is looking forward to establish micro gardens with refugees.

Lastly I want to highlight the context we operate in currently – i.e. the developments in neighbouring countries like South Sudan, Yemen and Somalia. In different ways these developments are putting a lot of pressure on the refugee population and on the support and assistance provided in Kakuma and Dadaab (Kenya), Holl Holl, Ali Addeh and Markazi (Djibouti). The security situation in Garissa County in Kenya (where Dadaab is located) also means both high costs for security, limitation in what we can do and reach out and it puts a lot of stress and pressure on staff.

This pressure will continue, with more refugees coming and very few, if any, leaving. The recent developments in all these crisis hit areas are, unfortunately, negative.

**I also want to highlight here the need for your support to staff care. Our frontline staff work and very difficult and stressful conditions, far away from their families and relatives, for long periods and long hours every day. They do a commendable job, and unfortunately funding for proper staff care is often seen as ‘unnecessary overhead’ by funding partners. It is of outmost importance that we care for our frontline staff, they do great work under very challenging circumstances, and they need our – and your – support to keep up the good quality.**

***Thank you!***

Contacts

* LWF World Service

Phone +254 732 818 818

P O Box 40870

00100 Nairobi

Kenya

* Lennart Hernander, Representative

Mail: rep.ken@lwfdws.org

Phone: +254 733 515 383

Phone: +254 715 393 788

Skype: lwfug.lennart

* LWF Kenya – Djibouti “Hotline for Heroes”

Mail: hotline.lwfkenyadjibouti@gmail.com