

**1: Briefing on a mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo**  
(by Mark Cutts, Inter-agency Internal Displacement Division IDD)

Mark Cutts, Chief of IDD's Field Response Section, gave a briefing on the recent IDD mission to the DRC. The mission took place from 12 to 20 May upon a request from the DSRSG/HC for DRC to assist in the development of a strategy and action plan for IDP return and reintegration.

Before looking at the general situation in DRC, Mr. Cutts first focused on a pilot project for return of IDPs launched by UNDP.

The project, which is carried out in cooperation with the Congolese Ministry of Social Affairs, had been intended as an inter-agency project but few agencies have engaged thus far.

With 75 USD per person, the project is quite expensive compared to others which normally lies around 8 USD per person. The project provides each person gets a mattress and a bike upon their return as well as a cash grant of 55 USD per family.

One of the mission's main objectives was to look carefully at the pilot project and to prepare a paper on lessons learned from the initiative. As this is an ongoing project, final recommendations can only be made at the end of the project.

One concern is, the lack of clear designation of roles and responsibilities among the involved agencies and actors. The responsibility for protection monitoring and follow-up is not designated. Furthermore the poor capacity of the MoSA constitutes another major concern.

The issue of return packages was also highlighted. While return packages can be an incentive for returning and a useful starting kit, they can also become an obstacle for return.

Regarding the general situation of IDPs in the DRC, they are mainly located in 6 provinces: Equateur, North and South Kivu, Oriental, Maniema and Katanga.

The mission visited Goma, Beni and Oyla, in the North Kivu province, and also went to Uvira to visit refugees returning from Tanzania.

The security situation is still poor, with many incidents of low-level fighting and harassment of civilians by the militia as well as the government troops, which often receive very low or no salaries. As a consequence, plundering and looting occurs regularly as well as rapes and abductions. Impunity for these serious crimes is widespread.

In general, transition in the DRC is going on, and large numbers of IDPs have returned home in the past 12 – 18 months.

However, there is no overall action plan amongst the humanitarian community for the return/re-integration process. Also, clear figures on IDPs and their locations are lacking.

MONUC troops provided some security measures, but compared to the size of the country, the number of 16000 troops is very low.

A major concern in this context is the donors' unwillingness to fund projects related to transition, which among other things reflects a general disagreement on what constitutes transition. Education, infrastructure as well as basic services such as water and sanitation is needed in the areas of return.

In the discussion following the briefing focus was on the lack of an overall return strategy, as well as the lack of clarity regarding the responsibilities among agencies active in DRC. Also the need for capacity building was underlined. An enquiry was made regarding the status of setting-up OCHA Coordination Antennas in the eastern part of DRC, which was mentioned in an OCHA briefing in a previous IASC Weekly meeting [9 March 2005].

**Action Points:**

- IDD to share the paper of lessons learned from the pilot project with the IASC Secretariat, which will forward the paper to the IASC Weekly Mailing list.

**2: Update on the situation in Uzbekistan**

(by Frank Remus, UNHCR)

Mr. Frank Remus, UNHCR Senior Desk Officer for Central Asia, provided information on the developments in Uzbekistan as a follow-up to the briefing in last week's IASC Weekly Meeting.

The influx of refugees from Uzbekistan into Kyrgyzstan that was feared last week did not happen and the number of people who crossed the border following the violence in and around the town of Andijan on May 13 stands at some 500. However, Mr. Remus mentioned that more refugees are likely to be present in Kyrgyzstan, but are not registered because they are hosted by friends or relatives.

The refugees are living in a camp near the border, but the Kyrgyz authorities' are looking to relocate them to a more permanent and secure site. Despite of Uzbek pressure on the Kyrgyz authorities, the refugees are now being treated as asylum seekers. UNHCR is assisting in the process.

A concern, mentioned by Mr. Remus, is the upcoming mourning ceremony in Andijan for the people who lost their lives on 13 May. This is likely to provoke tensions and further influx of refugees.

UNHCR is preparing for up to 2000 people and is doing pre-positioning of non-food items.

**3: IASC Standard Briefing**  
(by Marilena Viviani, IASC Secretariat)

- This afternoon, Wednesday, 25 May from 17h00 – 18h00, the IASC Tsunami TF will meet in Room 3 of the Palais. Agenda items include a briefing on a global consortium for Tsunami affected countries, on the post-relief phase financial tracking system and on Tsunami evaluation coalition.
- Tomorrow, Thursday, 26 May, the Preliminary Consultation on the IATF/DR-IASC Kobe Follow-Up will take place from 14h30 to 16h30 in Room XXIII of the Palais des Nations.
- On Friday, 27 May, the IASC TF on Natural Disasters will meet for the last time from 10h00 to 12h00 in Room C-108.

**Action point:**

Following the emerging concern of the region voiced in recent meetings, the IASC Weekly could devote a session solely on Central Asia.

**UNICEF briefing on Kyrgyzstan**

Following the regular meeting Ms. Viviani invited interested participants to stay for an ad-hoc briefing by Ms. Angela Raven-Roberts of UNICEF, who was part of an Inter-Agency mission present in Kyrgyzstan at the time of the events of 13 May.

The mission had been called by the Country Team in Kyrgyzstan to assess the situation. Even though there is no humanitarian crisis in Kyrgyzstan, the situation is hazardous. Poverty dominates and the interim government set up in March 2005 is weak and political opponents could use the situation to gain momentum. The risk of overspill into conflict is evident.

The mission report, which has been handed in to the RC, recommends contingency planning as well as increased support to the Country Team.

**IASC Weekly Meeting  
25 May 2005  
List of Participants**



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