

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
IASC WEEKLY MEETING

Summary Note

9 January 2008
Geneva

I Briefing on the Current Situation in Kenya

Ms. Ute Kollies and Mr. Matthew Cousins (Geographical Coordination and Monitoring Section, OCHA) briefed participants on the developments over the past days and the current situation in Kenya and the humanitarian response provided and planned.

The post-electoral violence in Kenya that has taken many by surprise as the political situation in the country has been considered to be rather stable, has so far claimed over 500 lives (according to government figures) and caused large scale displacement (255,000 according to most recent government estimates, a figure which the UN has decided to use for planning purposes). The violence has roots in longstanding perceived and/or actual inequalities and has now taken on ethnic dimensions and is mostly affecting ethnic Kikuyus. Tensions seem to be easing in some parts of the country, which has also lead to improved accessibility, but other regions are experiencing continuing displacement and continued tensions, which severely hampers the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The protection crisis caused by the post-electoral violence has been added to ongoing humanitarian concerns, such as Tana River flooding displacements, Mount Elgon and Molo pre-election displacements and potential locust infestations.

The first situation reports issued by the UN Country team (UNCT), accessible at <http://ochaonline2.un.org/Default.aspx?tabid=10370>, are based on the humanitarian assistance delivered so far rather than needs assessments. These are now ongoing and necessary in order to ensure that the humanitarian response is needs based and proportional. There is also a need for strong coordination to avoid duplication and gaps and undermining of local capacities. The Government of Kenya has not officially requested international assistance, but has mandated the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS), which in cooperation with NGOs and local partners has provided most of the humanitarian assistance so far, as the leading agency in sudden onset disasters. The UNCT has decided to implement the cluster approach to support the government in addressing the crisis and has requested to establish eleven clusters along the lines of the former sectors. The appointment of the Resident Coordinator as the Humanitarian Coordinator is awaited, and the appointment of a UN SG Special Envoy is under discussion.¹ Furthermore, agencies have requested a total amount of approximately USD 7 Million from the CERF to address immediate needs and a Flash Appeal is expected to be launched during the upcoming week. The KRCS has issued a national appeal for their response to the current situation, requesting a total amount of approximately USD 15.4 million for one month.

Efforts to mediate between the government and the opposition have been made by, amongst others, US Assistant-Secretary of State, Jendayi Frazier, Nobel Peace Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Ghana's President Kufuor (currently AU chair) and have contributed to a

¹ Update as of 14 January 2008: The activation of the eleven clusters has been approved by the IASC and the Ms. Elizabeth Lwanga (Resident Coordinator) has been appointed as Humanitarian Coordinator.

de-escalation without resolving the conflict and will require further attention. Humanitarian planning is estimating a need to provide assistance for a time span of approximately six months.

The crisis in Kenya not only affects the country's own economy, but also has several implications for the entire region. First, despite the fact that the borders with Tanzania and Uganda have been officially closed, around 3,500 people have crossed the border from Kenya to Uganda and are requiring assistance, which is provided by the Ugandan government in cooperation with UNHCR and the Ugandan RCS. Second, with Nairobi and Mombassa being two of the main hubs for the supply of food stuffs and fuel to the entire region, the precarious situation in Kenya has had a regional impact. Despite this, humanitarian assistance to Somalia has been largely unaffected. Finally, the media coverage devoted to Kenya has caused attention to shift away from the acute humanitarian crisis in Somalia.

Participants pointed out that humanitarian actors tend to respond to the crisis in Kenya in an emotional way due to personal bonds and that there is a need for serious coordination among humanitarian actors in order to avoid competition for funds, duplication of efforts and gaps in assistance. This also includes the need for improved reporting of NGO collaboration in situation reports in recognition of the vital role they are playing in the delivery of assistance. The OHCHR is currently awaiting the authorization for a three-week field fact-finding mission to address the imminent lack of information on the human rights situation. The mission, which is prepared in cooperation with the Kenyan National Human Rights Commission and the UNCT, is intended to monitor and report publicly on human rights violations committed during the post-election violence, and OHCHR is also hoping for the mission to have a mitigating effect. Concerns were raised over likelihood of long-term displacement and need for resettlement, and the need to monitor housing, land and property rights issues. Participants also noted the need to support host communities and non-Kikuyu ethnic groups in areas affected in order not to intensify ethnic division.

Furthermore, the current crisis and humanitarian response in Kenya makes clear, that there is a need to engage in contingency planning efforts that take into account a worst case scenario, which has not been done in the past presumably due to attempts to remain politically neutral. IASC members' attention was pointed to the revised version of the "Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Guidelines for Humanitarian Assistance", which can be accessed at http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/products/docs/IA%20CP%20Guidelines%20Publication_%20Final%20version%20Dec%202007.pdf.

In addressing a remark that psychosocial support to humanitarian workers is often an issue that does not receive the necessary attention, participants were reminded of the recently endorsed "IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings" which are available in hardcopy at the IASC Secretariat in Geneva and can be downloaded from <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/content/products/docs/Guidelines%20IASC%20Mental%20Health%20Psychosocial.pdf>.

Participants

	Name	Organization	Email
1	Mr. Pascal Daudin	CARE Int.	daudin@careinternational.org
2	Mr. Paul Paredes	FAO	pparedes-portella@unog.ch
3	Mr. Guido Ambroso	IASC Secretariat	ambroso@un.org
4	Ms. Mirja Peters	IASC Secretariat	petersm@un.org
5	Mr. Norwin Schafferer	IASC Secretariat	schafferer@un.org
6	Ms. Marilena Viviani	IASC Secretariat	viviani@un.org
7	Ms. Lisa Carl	ICRC	lcarl@icrc.org
8	Mr. Alexandre Liebeskind	ICRC	alieberkind@icrc.org
9	Ms. Nomkhosi Mhlanga	IFRC	nomkhosi.mhlanga@ifrc.org
10	Ms. Christine South	IFRC	christine.south@ifrc.org
11	Mr. Donato Kiniger-Passigli	ILO	kiniger@ilo.org
12	Mr. Mario Malanca	IOM	mmalanca@iom.int
13	Ms. Susanne Melde	IOM	smelde@iom.int
14	Mr. Adam Combs	NRC	adam.combs@nrc.no
15	Mr. Nuur Sheekh	NRC	nuur.sheekh@nrc.ch
16	Mr. Raafat Abdel-Tawwab	OCHA	abdel-tawwab@un.org
17	Mr. Matthew Cousins	OCHA	cousins@un.org
18	Ms. Carolina de Borbon Parma	OCHA	deborbonparma@un.org
19	Ms. Anne-Sophie Durand	OCHA	durand@un.org
20	Ms. Ute Kollies	OCHA	kollies@un.org
21	Ms. Anne-Marie Linde-Thalmann	OCHA	lindea@un.org
22	Ms. Manga Mialaret	OCHA	mialaret@un.org
23	Ms. Rebecca Richards	OCHA	richards2@un.org
24	Mr. Panagiotis Stefanou	OCHA	stefanou@un.org
25	Ms. Eva Vognild	OCHA	vognild@un.org
26	Mr. Andreas Wustenberg	OCHA	wustenberg@un.org
27	Ms. Sonia Bakar	OHCHR	sbakar@ohchr.org
28	Mr. Scott Campbell	OHCHR	scampbell@ohchr.org

	Name	Organization	Email
29	Mr. Alwin de Greeff	OHCHR	idpintern@ohchr.org
30	Ms. Idrissa Kane	OHCHR	ikane@unhcr.org
31	Ms. Nina Sreenivasan	UNFPA	sreenivasan@unfpa.org
32	Mr. Gert Ludeking	UNHABITAT	ludeking.unhabitat@unog.ch
33	Mr. Peter Joshi	UNHCR	joshi@unhcr.org
34	Mr. Ahmed Warsame	UNHCR	warsame@unhcr.org
35	Mr. Quoc Nguyen	UNICEF	qnguyen@unicef.org
36	Ms. Maria Gilani	UNRWA	gunrwa@unog.ch
37	Ms. Elena Mancusi Materi	UNRWA	emancusi@unog.ch
38	Mr. Philippe Guiton	WVI	Philippe_Guiton@wvi.org