



# 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> March Congolese Refugee Camps and rest of week

## Wednesday

### Repatriation registration centre

We are up and ready to go to the Congolese Refugee Camp called Nyarugusu and to the office to pick up the WFP people who will accompany us. No surprise that Rose is too busy as she has another mission coming in the following day. We head off Nyarugusu and arrive at the office of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The atmosphere is different and it can be detected immediately. This is not the friendly, happy and relatively healthy place of yesterday. This is more aggressive, not so many smiles, lots of malnourished children and pregnant women at every turn. We have a short introduction with the Minister of Home Affairs (a French dictionary perched on his desk spells out the difference here) we sign the register and walk to the registration centre. The process is exactly the same as for the Burundian camps but there a very few people here. It was explained that people are waiting for the results of the general election at home and their children to finish school for the summer before addressing the subject of repatriation. The UNHCR people expect repatriation to pick up in June. The place is predominantly filled with women and children and it was explained that a man commonly have up to 3 wives with 10 children each and they all have to be in agreement to leave. Consequently a convoy of 40 people can be one extended family.



The registration centre for repatriation



Discussing why so few will return at the moment



When they are ready for repatriation they leave their houses last night and sleep in a tent

### Re-registration centre

The re-registration process is done by street and hundreds of people turn up for their photos and details to be taken. It is hot, noisy, smelly and general chaotic



Waiting for re-registration in the hot sunshine



First re-registration



Second re-registration and all family members being photographed

### No farming

The camp is completely different; there are many trees and a complete absence of crops. The Congolese believe themselves to be business men and not farmers so they prefer to trade than growing crops. Congo is rich in minerals and extraction and selling is a key activity. This results in no supplementary food to the rations allocated so they survive on the WFP food which remember is limited to maize, pulses and CSB for every meal, every day – no option for Pizza Hut here. Hanging heavy in the atmosphere is the arms trading industry which is hinted at but no one really wants to talk about it.



Not a single crop

Congolese children sitting outside their house. Not much growing here in the way of food I am afraid, but when looking at the backside of the house we are surprised. Here is a mama with 4 children growing crops, so there exists a few people who have understood the importance of farming.





**Visiting the Dispensary**

We visit the dispensary which is managed by the Red Cross. The dispensary has same layout as before and same services but there are no smiles here. We spend a short amount of time in the supplementary feeding room where a grandmother sits on the floor with a tiny baby (3 weeks old). Her daughter died in childbirth and she is left with her 7 children ....heartbreaking. Is the husband going to support her we ask? She shrugs and gets on with life. That was so depressing so no photos were taken here.

There are 3 or 4 children in a hospital ward clearly suffering from malaria which is a terrible disease and could be reduced by the use of mosquito nets (repellant and drugs as well).

We look at the statistics the doctor keeps and we note just a couple of interesting ones

Live births per month	200
Deaths per month	10

If you add this to the repatriation figure then you don't have to do too much to work out the population is probably increasing at the moment.



**The Food Distribution Centre**

The food distribution centre are the same in both camps with the Norwegian rub halls filled with maize, CSB and pulses which are distributed to rooms called 'chutes' which are designated different family sizes to aid re-distribution. Interestingly in the food stores are the UNHCR non food items such as the all important bucket. Used for just about everything but mainly transportation of water on your head. These are awaiting distribution



Norwegian rub halls



Prize to the one who guess the correct amount of buckets!

A transporter has just arrived with sacks of food and the guys balance precariously as their colleagues pass up 50 kg bags of food at a faster and faster rate



The best way to carry a 50 kilos bag



**Micro Projects**

We call in at a couple of micro projects. The first one is a team of men producing wooden fruit for re-sale. Again whilst interesting there is not the same level of welcome and they lose interest when we are not purchasing (no surprise there). We move on to a house where the owner is breeding ducks and rabbits for re-sale. There are no many of either and we see a ducks push through the fence (so profit for this week escaped). It was dirty and dismal and no air of hope. Three young children peek through the back door fetchingly made from WFP oil tins as the wazungo shuffle around waiting to leave.



The colour full fruit made out of wood is very nice but no room in the luggage allowance I am afraid.



Children peeking through the home made door at the rabbit and duck house (very strange)

We call it a day and I can't help but notice we have accumulated around 15 people who have joined the party along the way so we are, in fact, quite a crowd. We say our thanks and leave for lunch at Hotel Source Du Nil in Mtabila 1.



Hotel Source Du Nil



The food is superb



We are not sure if the chicken is on the menu or just hovering up the crumbs

The contrast between the 2 camps could not be more marked and again the debate turns to the whys and wherefores of our and their cultural heritage. What makes us the way we are and just how difficult it is for us to change?

We visit the internet café at the local training college which is a disaster (rubberband instead of broadband) so we all meet up at the hotel for a few drinks and dinner. Dinner took over 2 hours to arrive so the party was very jolly on beer and conyagi (local brandy or aviation fuel to you and I). At one point the whole of the WFP team were in the kitchen to check on the problem. Eventually our food arrives in dribs and drabs and Ellie our driver throws a 'wobbly' when his chips arrive 20 minutes before his fried egg. We ate, laughed and took some photos and generally enjoyed ourselves.



The WFP Refugee Team waiting for the food (but we were not so happy after 2 hours waiting for the food to arrive)

**Thursday**

Time to leave; we have heavy hearts as we slowly make our way back to Singida. On the way back we have to climb up a steep road and a trailer have had an accident and blocked the road which forced us to wait for nearly one hour.



The trailer has flipped on side and the trailer is down the steep

We were hoping to leave for Arusha earlier than planned but we have been asked to attend a press conference at Dodoma as the first TNT food is arriving and there is a bit of a celebration around the event. This is significant as we read in the Chakula News (a newsletter produced by WFP in Dar) that TNT is the 12<sup>th</sup> biggest donor in Tanzania and Walk the World is 17<sup>th</sup> biggest donor. So all in all, TNT donates more than some countries do together, such as Ireland, Finland and New Zealand which puts our importance in perspective.

Rank	Donor	US\$ Total
1	USA	\$17,936,702
2	EC	\$8,443,908
3	Japan	\$2,605,042
4	Netherlands	\$1,913,820
5	Sweden	\$1,719,655
6	Canada	\$1,477,946
7	Italy	\$1,390,990
8	Germany	\$1,352,370
9	Denmark	\$1,096,250
10	Norway	\$818,606
11	Belgium	\$604,595
12	TNT	\$504,440
13	Switzerland	\$428,890
14	Multilateral	\$206,096
15	New Zealand	\$180,960
16	Ireland	\$139,445
17	Finland	\$128,405
18	Citigroup	\$20,000
19	Walk the World	\$19,676
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$40,989,120</b>

**Friday**

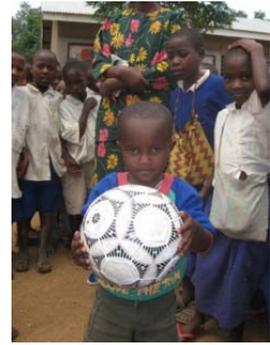
So refreshed from the previous days 7 hour journey we hit the road to our three schools to check on the water tank construction progress. We soon get to Sagara School and one tank is finished and one at the 70% stage. We are really pleased and the prediction is the tank will be finished on Monday in time for the arrival of the top 'local brass' (local Government) and hand over party on the Tuesday. We casually ask when the WFP food arrived (we know it left Dodoma on 16<sup>th</sup> March). We were told it had not arrived but the school down the road had food. We are extremely puzzled by this and as we leave we decide to go and borrow some food from the nearby school and bring it back to Sagara.



This school is only 5kms away so we are there in minutes and when we explain the situation to the headmaster he immediately dispatches a couple of strong boys to fetch 200kgs of maize and 50kgs of CSB. As they are loading it the car Kjell reaches for a football in thanks for the loan. The children and staff are delighted and the timing is a perfect way to show our appreciation. We drive back to Sagara and hand over the food.



Kjell is handing over a football as appreciation for the loan of maize bags



The happiness for the football can not be misunderstood

We visit Mgori Primary School where their tank is finished and the fundi are awaiting the fascia boards and guttering to finalize the tank. All is clam and happy here and their food has arrived, albeit delivered down the road as it was so late.

We make our way back to Singida and take our usual route to the internet café.



The tank is ready and waiting for pipes and the school building waiting for guttering



Salama

"Baba Kjell" Rosengren

"Mama Janet" Dutton