



Refugee Consortium of Kenya



**Monitoring mission to Garissa and Dadaab 19th – 22nd September 2011
Report**

INTRODUCTION

Dadaab town is located around 480 kilometres from Nairobi and hosts the largest refugee population in Africa.

The population in Dadaab refugee camps as of 11th September 2011 stood at 433,157¹. The refugee population was broken down as follows;

- (i) Dagahaley camp – 133, 166
- (ii) Hagadera camp – 134, 684
- (iii) Ifo camp – 131,440
- (iv) Ifo 2 camp – 8,998
- (v) Ifo 3 camp – 21,116
- (vi) Kambioos camp – 3,753

95.6% (414,054) of the refugees in Dadaab were from Somalia followed by Ethiopians who made up 4.1% (17,788) of the population. This large refugee population had stretched the facilities at the Dadaab camps, creating a humanitarian crisis. Between June and August 2011, there was a daily influx of about 1,300 refugees crossing the border into Kenya, mainly from Somalia. Many were fleeing the protracted conflict in the horn of Africa nation but a new trend had emerged with a significant number crossing the border due to the famine ravaging the region.

To document the humanitarian crisis in Dadaab to better understand the situation and inform programming, RCK undertook a monitoring mission to the area from 19th – 22nd September 2011. The mission was made up of Rudiger Schooch (ICVA Associate Advocacy Officer) and Charles Njanga (RCK Information and Research Programme Officer). The mission was co-ordinated by the RCK Dadaab team.

The other big refugee concentration in Kenya can be found in Kakuma refugee camp that hosts 82,339² refugees as of 25th September 2011.

1. Meeting with North-Eastern Provincial Commissioner Mr. James Ole Serian 19th September 2011

The meeting with the Provincial Commissioner (PC) took place in his office in Garissa town. Also present during the meeting was the RCK protection monitor based in Garissa Muktar. The administrator said that the large number of refugees in Dadaab was a concern for the government. He said the Government wished that the international community would feed them in their country of origin. The PC also raised the following issues during the meeting;

- There was massive destruction of the environment due to the large numbers.
- Cross-border movement was a concern. This had security implications and the PC called on the international community to provide security support to the Government of Kenya (GoK).
- International burden sharing with more support for Kenya needed.

¹ UNHCR camp population statistics 11th September 2011

² UNHCR Population Statistics by Country of Origin, Sex and Age Group 25th Sept. 2011

- Smuggling posed a concern for example of firearms. To curb this, the PC called for support in the form of firearms detectors, additional vehicles and fuel for security agencies.
- The PC lamented that North-Eastern Province (NEP) cannot take in more refugees. The refugee population was more than the locals he said. 250,000 locals vs over 400,000 refugees. He said the refugee population by December 2011 was expected to reach 600,000 if the current influx continued.
- Kenya was being forced to take in more refugees while Western countries did not. He said the solution lies in offering support inside Somalia.
- The capacity of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) should be built said the administrator.
- The PC called for support to repair the Garissa – Dadaab road that had been damaged by the large vehicular traffic.
- Fake and forged documents were also being used by refugees.
- According to the PC 70% of the refugees who were given movement passes to travel from the camps did not go back. He said this is an issue that humanitarian agencies were not interested in or did not focus on.



The Garissa – Dadaab road

2. Meeting with Garissa Officer Commanding Police Division SSP Jay Felix Munyambu 19th September 2011

The meeting with the Garissa Officer Commanding Police Division (OCPD) took place in his office at the Garissa Divisional Police headquarters.

The OCPD started by saying that Dadaab could not accommodate any more refugees. He said that people were now fleeing due to hunger/famine and were not ‘normal’ refugees. The police officer said this in turn affected Kenya. During the meeting, the following issues were highlighted/discussed;

- People fleeing from famine in Somalia should be assisted inside their country.
- There was insecurity in the camps due to the influx of refugees/asylum seekers.
- There is need to assess who needs assistance. Kenya should not just be propelled by willingness to assist refugees/asylum seekers.

- There is need to continuously monitor the situation in Somalia as Kenya was not handling normal refugees at the moment.
- The Kenyan refugee camps have been infiltrated by Al Shaabab, which has become a concern for security agencies.
- Killings had been reported in the refugee camps. This was as a result of conflicts being extended into the camps by people from opposing sides.
- There were no adequate law enforcement officers to secure refugees in the camps.
- Vetting of asylum seekers was not being carried out properly. Adversaries should not be put in the same location/camp and they should be separated.
- Refugees do not divulge information about crimes committed in their localities. This makes law enforcement a challenge.
- Some refugees should be relocated away from the proximity of the border e.g in Kakuma. Cross-border movement of refugees is because of the proximity of the camps to the border.
- There is no monitoring of returnees.
- Insecurity along the Garissa – Dadaab route can be attributed to presence of refugees.
- Humanitarian workers should be protected. UNHCR has been unable to contain movement of refugees. The Tana River has controlled the movement from the camps to other areas.
- Human trafficking used as a cover-up.
- Police officers do not arrest refugees with valid documents because they can defend themselves in court with such documents.
- Security vetting committee has final authority on refugees who should be taken to court. Police officers cannot charge anyone in court without authority of vetting committee.
- Forgery of documents is a concern.
- UNHCR is not in firm control of refugees. Sale of NFIs and food rations rampant due to this. Refugee management is not just about giving them food.
- UNHCR not timely acting on court orders to transport refugees back to the camps even after being informed by the police. This has resulted in refugees remaining in police custody for a long duration even after the court had ordered them to be taken back to the camps. The OCPD produced evidence of nineteen (19) refugees currently in police custody at the Garissa Police Station, some since 6th September, even after they had been ordered to be transported back to the camp. The OCPD said it was a challenge feeding them since the money allocated to police commanders was limited.

The Garissa OCPD finished by saying that law enforcement officers faced many challenges in the area but called for understanding since they were also human beings.

3. Meeting with DRA Dadaab Camp Manager Mr. H.C. Komen 20th September 2011

The meeting with the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) Dadaab camp manager took place in his office at the District headquarters in Dadaab. Joining the monitoring mission team for the meeting was Koome Fred, the RCK Dadaab Assistant Legal Officer.

The DRA Camp Manager informed the mission that the rate of new arrivals had gone down to 800 per day, mainly from Southern Somalia. They were fleeing from famine and prolonged war. From the discussions, it emerged that;

- There was increased insecurity in the area with very frequent of firearms.
- There were tensions due to the large population.
- The DRA officer appealed to RCK to advocate for assistance to Somalia.
- Environmental degradation was cited as an effect of refugees.
- There was a limit to hospitality the DRA camp manager concluded.

The meeting was abruptly adjourned because the camp manager had to rush to the Dadaab airstrip to receive the visiting Government of Kenya Security Council delegation.

4. Meeting with Dadaab Youth Chairman Mr. Aden Abdi 20th September 2011

The Dadaab youth chairman is from the local/host community and was accompanied by the Secretary of the youth group during the meeting the Dadaab district headquarters offices. The following issues came up during the meeting;

- The large number of refugees has led to environmental degradation.
- There is an outbreak of diseases from Somalia such as polio, measles and cholera.
- Malnutrition is common among children, which in turn makes them adversely affected by diseases.
- No proper feeding programme in refugee camps and children are the most affected.
- Gender based violence (GBV) targeting women. Many refugees are not trained on GBV. Training is needed to instill mediation skills. According to the youth leader, 80% of GBV perpetrators are locals.
- Drug abuse is common among the youth, both local and refugees. Drug abuse leads to violence and suicide.
- HIV/AIDS is also affecting the youth.
- The youth lack income generating activities (IGA). There should be more integration initiatives/activities for the youth because they are the most vulnerable.
- There is conflict over land between the refugees and host community.
- Some organizations are bringing conflict because of employing incentive workers from the refugee community ignoring locals.
- The minimum wage as stipulated by the Kenya labour laws is not being implemented. The poor pay is affecting both refugees and locals.
- Youth should be provided with sports activities, ICT centres and training on peace to empower them. DSTV for youth centre should be installed as part of IGAs.
- Public address systems for awareness creation can also be provided to the youth as part of IGAs.
- The local youth do not get similar support from humanitarian agencies such as computer centres set up for refugee youth. Initiatives focus of refugee youth ignoring the locals.
- Local youth community based organizations (CBOs) should be supported by international agencies.
- Contracts should be given to local youth by humanitarian agencies to empower them economically.



The Dadaab youth chairman Aden Abdi (right) talks to Rudiger Schoch (centre) of ICVA and RCK's Charles Njanga (left) at the Dadaab District offices.

5. Meeting with Dadaab deputy Officer Commanding Station Victoria Mutuku on 20th September 2011

The meeting with the Dadaab deputy Officer Commanding Station (OCS) Victoria Mutuku took place at her office in Dadaab Police Station. The deputy OCS requested that she should not be quoted since the person authorized to give information is the OCPD. The meeting was therefore off the record but the following issues emerged;

- Insecurity was very high in Dadaab mainly due to the large influx of refugees
- No proper screening of asylum seekers took place because there were many entry routes with no designated entry points.
- The influx of refugee has also seen the influx of illegal firearms.
- There are a few police officers to man the porous Kenya – Somalia border.
- Refugees do not divulge information to law enforcement officers.
- Police cannot carry out search operations in the refugee camps to mop up illegal firearms because UNHCR prevents them.
- The most reported crimes in the area include murder and assault.

6. Meeting with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Manager Hagadera Refugee Camp Mr. Bacha Zeleke on 20th September 2011

The meeting took place at the IRC hospital in Hagadera Refugee Camp. IRC provides clinical, nutrition and community health services in Dadaab and runs the hospital at Hagadera refugee camp. IRC started operations in the camp in 2009. Present during the meeting were

the IRC information statistician and Lobna Abdel Hadi of the IRC Safe Programming project. From the meeting it emerged that;

- Coping with the large number of refugees was a challenge as facilities were greatly stretched.
- From the statistics, there were 86 patients per clinician.
- The current bed occupancy in the wards stood at 107%
- 3,000 patients access out-patient services per week currently compared to the previous 1,600
- Malnutrition levels in the area were going high. The global malnutrition level stood at 14%.
- Communicable diseases such as measles due to new arrivals had been reported.
- There were some confirmed cases of Cholera.
- The GBV programme had been running since September 2010. Increased cases of GBV had been reported due to new arrivals. Under-reporting of GBV cases was related to stigma and religious issues.
- Significant low reporting of GBV was also noted in Ifo and Dagahaley camps. There was limited referral of GBV cases to other agencies.
- Information gaps on GBV exist. Community outreach thorough radio programmes and continuous community mobilizations should be undertaken to increase reporting of GBV cases. 72 hour threshold in GBV is very important.
- Between July to September 2011, there was significant reporting of GBV violations/cases.
- Level of water and sanitation contributes significantly to the health sector.
- Support at the household level is needed for children and youth.
- A gap exists in targeting adolescent girls.
- Provision of education still remains a challenge.
- On co-ordination structure, IRC is the lead in health sector.
- More resources are needed in provision of services. There should be sustainability in donor funding.



Some of the buildings at the hospital run by IRC at the Hagadera refugee camp

Safe programming project

- Safe programming group is a new initiative to focus on protection issues between agencies. Involves protection mainstreaming with all agencies working in Dadaab.
- Consideration is given for vulnerable groups during relocation of refugees in new sites i.e in Ifo Extension and Kambioos camps.
- The safe programming initiative was designed for pre-emergency era/phase. 6 organisations are involved in Hagadera.
- The aim of safe programming is to identify protection gaps identified by agencies. IRC is to provide funding.
- Provision of a voucher system for vulnerable groups aims at assisting them for example in the transport of food rations from distribution sites. This is to avoid vulnerable groups being taken advantage of.
- Putting up of high-mast security lights in Kambioos camp at strategic points is one of the activities.
- Training of the community on the project needs to be done.
- The project aims at safety and dignity for beneficiaries.

7. Visit to Hagadera Refugee camp reception centre 20th September 2011



The visit to the reception centre at Hagadera refugee camp took place in the afternoon on 20th September 2011. The mission only found a handful of refugees at the reception centre as most of them had been attended to in the morning. 2 refugees gave their accounts to the team.

- (i) The IC, a woman, was accompanied by four young children and informed the team that she had travelled from Kismayu in Somalia. She said she had taken 2 days to reach Dadaab, after travelling by foot to the border and by vehicle from Doble.

The reason for fleeing Somalia was because of the current famine ravaging the horn of Africa. However she had to leave behind two of her teenage daughters aged 14 and 15 because she could not afford the transport to Kenya.

- (ii) Hussein Mohamed

The IC came from Husungu region of lower Juba in Somalia and had spent 3 days en-route to Dadaab, arriving on the 4th night (yesterday). He had been registered in the morning (20th September) after arriving the previous night, which he spent at the reception centre.

He said drought, famine, the death of his livestock and the war in Somalia had forced him to flee. Because of transport problems, he had been forced to split his family into two, with his wife being registered in Ifo with 4 children while he registered in Hagadera with one daughter aged around 10 years.

They had travelled by donkey cart and had not been harassed on the way. He said they had not encountered any other asylum seekers on the way and had crossed the border through Liboi.

He concluded by saying that he wants to join the rest of his family in Ifo refugee camp.

8. Meeting with UNICEF Dadaab 20th September 2011

The meeting took place at the UN compound in Dadaab. The UNICEF team comprised of Martin Muhindi - CPE, Catie Steains – Senior Protection Officer and Andrea. UNICEF was currently setting up its operations in Dadaab and was temporarily housed by the UNHCR. To inform their interventions, UNICEF had carried out a rapid assessment on child protection in Dadaab. From the meeting it emerged that;

- There was no proper shelter for children especially new arrivals. The current shelter did not meet standard housing.
- UNICEF was coming into Dadaab also to provide water. 16 water trucking points from the border had been established together with DRC.
- The organization was identifying children during passage to the camps to ensure their safety.
- The follow-up of children from the border to the camps was being done by Save the Children.
- There is need for a government Children's Officer as the current population justifies this.
- Training is needed for foster parents who had been identified.

- Refresher courses for staff of children protection agencies was necessary on new and emerging trends such as trafficking, pornography and prostitution.
- There is a weak point in children protection structures between the community and agencies. Safe space for children.
- Community outreach in society is necessary to identify deserving children for example on education.
- The youth have not been actively engaged and are prone to fall to crime.
- The porous border was a concern and the Government was unable to secure it.
- Identified issues affecting include early marriages and child labour.
- There is need for a detailed research to gather information to map out areas of intervention. The rapid assessment was not enough.
- The Government should also step up children issues among both host community and refugees.
- UN agencies and NGOs should also focus on the host community to avoid conflict.
- Overcrowding in classes was noted especially with the introduction of free primary education (FPE). Refugees have also set up private schools in the camps.
- The parallel education systems e.g madrassa should be monitored to understand what is being taught.
- Girls also face retrogressive practices such as FGM. Conflict between religion and traditions.

9. Meeting with Dadaab deputy Officer commanding Police Division (OCPD) Mr. Nelson Talit 21st September 2011

The meeting with the Dadaab deputy OCPD took place in his office at Dadaab Police station. The police officer said that the border was porous with no designated entry points with few personnel to man it. From the meeting, it also emerged that;

- Police officers from the TFG in Somalia were defecting to the camps with arms. One of the reasons for this was that there was no command structure.
- Entry of Al Shaabab had also been noted in the camps. The police had intensified patrols as a result of this.
- Police have issued an amnesty to those with illegal firearms to surrender them.
- Community policing was being organized with refugee community leaders.
- Intelligence gathering had been intensified.
- Rape and assault the common crimes in the area. Murder is also common.
- Rape mainly occurs within the camps and perpetrators are mainly refugees.
- The Dadaab community was close to 1 million. There was tension between refugees and locals. Environmental degradation was noted as a result of the big numbers. Agencies mainly focus on refugees.
- Refugees should be discouraged from rearing animals to avoid conflict with the locals.
- Police require more vehicles and fuel for patrols. The current fuel allocation is not enough.
- More housing is required for police officers as Dadaab has been elevated into a police division.

- Distribution programmes of food should also extend to to due to the current crime in the area.

The OCPD lauded the relationship between RCK and the law enforcement agencies.

10. Visit to Ifo I refugee camp reception centre 21st September 2011

The reception centre receives asylum seekers who after going through the registration process are taken through different steps before being given a place to settle.



The following are steps that new arrivals go through at the reception and registration centre.

- (i) Recording of bio data
This involves recording of details about the refugees. The information is keyed into a database. The fingerprints of the refugees are also taken.
- (ii) Medical screening
At Ifo I, the medical screening is done primarily by GiZ. Immunisation for children under 5 years is also done immediately. The immunization for measles has been extended to people of up to 29 years.
Nutritional screening is also undertaken to determine the nutritional levels of mainly children. To supplement nutritional levels, high nutrition biscuits (EP5) are also distributed at the reception centre.
Pregnant mother are given an ante-natal package.
- (iii) Vulnerability screening
This stage involves screening of refugees who constitute vulnerable groups such as children, the disabled and the elderly persons.
The organizations involved at this stage include LWF, Handicap International and Save the Children.
- (iv) GBV screening
This involves looking at gender issues. Counselling of survivors is also undertaken.
- (v) Distribution of Non-Food Items (NFIs)
The refugees are issued with NFIs such as plastic sheeting to put up structures, cooking utensils, mats and soap.
- (vi) Distribution of food rations
The food rations distributed include CSB mix, legumes, flour, sugar and cooking fat.
The process takes 5 – 15 minutes per person and between 500 – 1,000 refugees are issued with food rations daily depending on the number of new arrivals.

- The whole process per person at the reception centre takes an average of one (1) hour.
- A big influx had been seen between June and August but the numbers had gone down significantly during the time of the mission in September.
- 300 new arrivals were currently being received at the Ifo reception centre daily from Liboi. Transport from Liboi had been started 2 months ago (July).
- Assistance inside Somalia was currently changing trends. The physical condition of new arrivals had also improved according to UNHCR.

Visit to Dagahaley Refugee Camp 21st September 2011

11. Meeting with MSF Dagahaley Field Co-ordinator Ms. Heidi Becher

The meeting was held at the MSF office in Dagahaley Refugee Camp. MSF provides medical services at the Dagahaley refugee camp and was running 2 hospitals in the camp. MSF is also involved in provision of water and sanitation (WASH).



Dagahaley refugee camp

The MSF field co-ordinator informed the mission that new arrivals had not been allocated land. MSF had been pushing UNHCR to put pressure of the Government to act on the humanitarian situation in Dadaab. From the meeting, it also emerged that;

- MSF had carried out a rapid assessment on nutrition. The response to nutrition interventions is expected to change as a result of the survey. The preliminary results of the nutritional survey in Dagahaley were out and would be shared with other agencies.
- MSF was setting up 2 additional hospitals in the area. It had also upgraded the bed capacity in the current hospitals. A nutritional center had also been set up.
- On water and sanitation (WASH) MSF had taken up water trucking in the outskirts of the camp until October to address the gaps.
- The refugee population in the outskirts of the camp had reduced.
- Medical screening of new arrivals was being undertaken by MSF in Dagahaley.
- Reception centres had been opened in all camps since June 2011. Registration of new arrivals was being done at Ifo.
- Recyclers had been noted due to the registration process. There is need to monitor the registration process.

- IOM was transporting new arrivals from Liboi. MSF was pushing for the opening of a transit camp at Liboi.
- It was noted that tension was building up in Somalia.
- MSF was targeting 5-10 year olds in its nutritional programmes.
- In the hospitals, the bed occupancy stood at 160. The bed capacity was 200 and MSF had put up 3 additional temporary wards.
- 296 children had attended the out-patient feeding programme.
- 4,211 children had been attended to during the emergency phase of the refugee crisis.
- A recent outbreak of measles has seen vaccination extended even to adults.
- MSF was prepared for a cholera outbreak. 1 case had been confirmed in Dagahaley and 1 each in other camps. A cholera centre with a capacity for 200 patients was being set up.
- The services offered in the hospitals at the camp were similar to the normal services in District hospitals.
- To strengthen the medical side of SGBV, there was reinforced training of staff.
- Children survivors of GBV were referred to Save the Children while Care Kenya was handling adults.
- MSF does not use armed escorts while undertaking its services but relies on dialogue and acceptance to maintain its neutrality.
- To improve information sharing and co-ordination in Dagahaley, regular meetings were held by agencies. Meetings on health and nutrition were also taking place.

The Dagahaley field co-ordinator concluded by saying that MSF believes the current humanitarian crisis in Dadaab was not just about drought but also because of the conflict in Somalia.

12. Meeting with UNHCR Dadaab Sub-office 21st September 2011

The meeting took place at the UNHCR Dadaab office with Mr. Vincent Briard, UNHCR Dadaab Protection Officer. UNHCR is willing to fund RCK for additional office space in Dadaab as it was noted that the current facilities need to be expanded. From the meeting it emerged that;

- There was forced recruitment of youth into Al Shabaab in Dadaab.
- There is need to monitor identification and number on escapees.
- On border monitoring, UNHCR do not receive comprehensive reports with displacement patterns and clear mapping of incidents.
- Awareness campaigns on violation of rights should be undertaken. This should be a policy.
- Simplified versions of refugee law should be availed/produced.
- Regarding GBV, there should be a code of conduct to prevent PSEA among incentive workers.
- UNHCR has clearly allocated duties/roles to protection unit.
- There is need for more staff in light of new arrivals. Need for a child protection officer in Dadaab.
- Concern over partnership with Human Rights Watch (HRW).

13. Meeting with Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Area Co-ordinator

The meeting with the Dadaab LWF Area Co-ordinator Anne Wangari took place in her office in Dadaab. LWF mandate is camp planning and management in Dadaab. LWF was also involved in working with local community leaders.

- The organisation is in-charge of information for new arrivals. Community policing is being done through refugee focal points.
- LWF was helping in the establishment of refugee self governance through supporting refugee elections. Refugee leaders meetings were also
- Development of Terms of Reference (ToRs) for elected refugee leaders through training was being undertaken.
- Refugee elections are supposed to be held every 2 years but the last elections were held in 2008. The emergency had affected the holding of elections. Support to the current refugee leaders had been withdrawn.
- It is important to ensure refugee elections take place at planned time.
- Armed attacks in the camps had been reported. 4 incidents reported in Hagadera since 16th September 2011. The Government was concerned about insecurity in camps.
- TFG army personnel have been entering the camps with arms. They had not been paid in the last 4 months.
- The presence of bandits in camps was a threat to refugees and aid workers.
- LWF had 150 national staff, 130 of them lived in the camps while the other 20 in Dadaab.
- Interference by host community in refugee affairs derails plans.
- There were concerns about co-ordination between agencies. UNHCR as the co-ordinating agency should deal with the host community.
- Concern about acceptable sizes in demarcation of plots in the camps. LWF was paying Kshs. 300/- to refugees to put up houses while 500/- was being paid to locals to clear the land.
- Dialogue among agencies is essential for co-ordination. Agencies should also take a stand as a group when dealing with issues.
- DRA does not have the capacity. Human resource should be empowered/developed to improve performance by employing the right persons.
- Management of new arrivals has improved since 2008.
- The border was closed in May 2008 leading to no proper reception of asylum seekers. Situation has improved about the reception of refugees. The challenge is co-ordinating the assistance being received.
- LWF has moved from emergency mode to programming.
- Innovative ways in refugee management should be undertaken. There has been continuous lack of involvement of refugees in planning their future.
- Education should play a part in empowering refugees.

The LWF Area Co-ordinator concluded by saying that refugees who have been in the country for more than 20 years should not be treated as new arrivals.

14. Meeting with Garissa Principal Magistrate Hon. John Onyiego 21st September 2011

The meeting with the Garissa Principal Magistrate was held in Dadaab, where the mobile court had been sitting throughout the week. There is no court in Dadaab despite the large population and a magistrate from Garissa periodically holds mobile court sessions in Dadaab. The large number of refugees in Dadaab was a concern according to the magistrate. From the meeting it emerged that;

- A High Court was to be built in Garissa. In Daadab, plans to build a court had already been finalized and land acquired for the construction.
- The Judiciary was concerned about the discrepancy between the very few new cases that were currently being heard by the mobile court compared to the large number of refugees/population in Dadaab.
- Traditional practices of refugees such as early marriages and domestic violence were a concern. The magistrate said that he had directed Imams not to officiate/solemnise weddings of underage girls i.e those below 18 years of age.
- Regarding handling of cases, the court was concerned by tampering/presentation of evidence. Some doctors did not properly fill in P3 forms, affecting the cases.
- Low crime rate may be attributed to compromising of police/law enforcement officers.
- Parallel/traditional justice systems may also be contributing to the few number of cases reaching the courts. The magistrate said that the mobile court currently sitting in Dadaab was dealing with old cases as no new ones had been presented.
- Infiltration of criminal elements in the camps is a concern. Al Shaabab fighters are allegedly hiding their families in the refugee camps.
- Refugees do not divulge information about criminal elements in their midst.
- Many refugees do not know how to plead in court because of lack of legal representation and knowledge.

As a way forward, the magistrate suggested the following;

- Doctors should be trained on documenting and preservation of evidence. The poor filling in of P3 forms was cited as an example.
- Awareness creation for refugees on the Kenyan laws and legal structure should be undertaken.

The magistrate appealed to RCK to enhance its outreach activities to the refugees and also enhance the capacity of Government officers in refugee management.

Conclusion

The large number of refugees in Dadaab poses many challenges to the Government and humanitarian agencies. Hosting of refugees in Dadaab is taking a toll on the area and the local community. With no end in sight to the protracted fighting in Somalia, new and innovative ways should be found to deal with this large population, some of whom have lived all their lives in Kenya. There is need to re-look at the durable solutions available, especially local integration, as the refugee problem seems to be far from over for Kenya.

The humanitarian situation in Dadaab is dire with refugees living in harsh and sometimes inhuman conditions due to the large case load.

From interviews with Government officials, it seems that the State is advocating for humanitarian agencies to concentrate their efforts inside refugees' country of origin such as Somalia.

Reports of insecurity attributed to the hosting of refugees cannot be wished away. However a delicate balance should be found between national security and refugee protection.

As the Government takes over more roles in the management of refugees, the capacity of the Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA) and other departments should be enhanced to meet the increased mandate.

More efforts should also be undertaken to reach out to the local community, many of whom feel that they have been neglected at the expense of the refugees that they host.

RCK must remain vigilant to emerging trends in refugee protection for it to remain relevant as an organization that champions the rights of refugees and other forced migrants.

