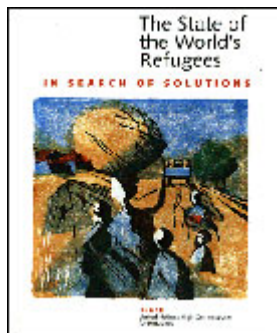


Geography – 12-14 years

Student Resources



IN SEARCH OF SOLUTIONS



Extract from "The State of the World's Refugees 1995 - In Search of Solutions"

published by Oxford
University Press
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*"Changing approaches to the refugee problem",
Chapter 1, Box 1.3 (p. 32-33)*

Rwanda: causes and consequences of the refugee crisis

Forced migrations within and across national borders are one of the most visible consequences of political persecution and armed conflict. But as the recent crisis in Rwanda has demonstrated, refugee problems that are left unresolved can also become the cause of further instability, violence and population displacements.

Refugee repatriation has been a dominant issue in Rwandese politics for the past 30 years. By the time the country gained independence in 1962, 120,000 people, primarily from the minority Tutsi population, had already taken refuge in neighbouring states, escaping the violence which accompanied the progressive seizure of power by the majority Hutu community. Over the next two decades, the exiles made repeated efforts to return to Rwanda by the force of arms, each of which provoked renewed violence, reprisals and refugee outflows. By the end of the 1980s, some 480,000 Rwandese - around seven per cent of the total population and half of the Tutsi community - had become refugees, primarily in Burundi (280,000), Uganda (80,000), Zaire (80,000) and Tanzania (30,000).

This situation took a decisive turn in October 1990, when the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF), a movement composed mainly of Tutsi exiles, attacked north-east Rwanda from Uganda, where they had helped Yuwiri Museveni's National Resistance Army to come to power four years earlier. After taking charge in Uganda, President Museveni had reminded his Rwandese counterpart of the need to find a solution to the refugee problem. But the Hutu-led government claimed that there was so little land available in Rwanda that repatriation was out of the question.



Right to return

After the outbreak of the war in 1990, the prospects for a settlement of the refugee problem appeared to improve. As a result of internal and external pressures, the Rwandese government was obliged to end 16 years of one-party rule. A transitional administration was created, which in 1993 recognized the refugees' right to return and signed a peace agreement with the RPF. But the agreement was rejected by radical elements in both the government and rebel movement, and Rwanda became embroiled in an increasingly disruptive civil war, which created up to a million internally displaced people.

The country was plunged further into crisis on 6 April 1994, when presidents Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi were killed in a plane crash. Ironically, the two leaders were returning from a peace conference in the Tanzanian capital of Dar-es-Salaam, which had been convened to discuss the implementation of a power-sharing plan in both countries.

While the cause of the plane crash remains unknown, it is clear that detailed preparations had already been made in Rwanda for the massacre of the Tutsi population and moderate Hutus. In attacks of indescribable brutality, committed by ordinary men and women as well as Hutu militia, at least 500,000 people are believed to have been killed. Some commentators put the figure much higher.

The killings were accompanied and followed by massive population displacements. On 28 and 29 April alone, as the RPF launched a new offensive against government forces, some 250,000 Rwandese flooded into Tanzania. And even this appeared modest in comparison with the movement which was to take place in mid-July 1994, when in the space of a few days, approximately 800,000 people (most of them Hutus), fled into Zaire, fearing reprisals by the advancing forces of the RPF.

But this was not simply a refugee movement. Assiduously encouraged by the retreating government, the exodus from Rwanda was in effect a calculated evacuation of the Hutu population. With a large proportion of the Tutsis already massacred, the victorious RPF was to be left in control of a state with a severely depleted population, as well as a hostile body of exiles, including the defeated army and militia, massed on the country's borders. Underlining the strategic nature of the movement, members of the ousted administration quickly asserted control over the refugee camps and established a dominant role in the distribution of aid.

Threat of violence

While they struggled to cope with the human consequences of the influx into Tanzania and Zaire, relief agency personnel also had to contend with the militant Hutus who had planned and executed the massacres, and who were now using threats of violence to prevent any refugees from returning to Rwanda. At the end of 1994, a proposal to curtail the violence by deploying a UN peacekeeping force in the refugee camps of Zaire was rejected by the UN Security Council. In February 1995, however, the government of Zaire agreed to send an elite force of 1,500 men to the settlement areas. UNHCR subsequently established a group of police



and military personnel from the western states to work alongside the Zairian security force, an unprecedented arrangement in the organization's history.

Despite a general improvement in camp security and living conditions, by mid-1995 there was little immediate prospect of a solution to the Rwandese refugee problem. At a conference held in February 1995, the countries of Central Africa and the major donor states agreed on the need to encourage repatriation by a package of confidence-building measures within Rwanda, including the restoration of the rule of law and the rehabilitation of the country's shattered economy.

The implementation of this plan, however, has been obstructed by a variety of factors: continued pressure on the refugees to remain outside of their homeland; the slow rate at which a promised US\$600 million in rehabilitation assistance has become available; disputes over property ownership, linked to the long-awaited return of the Tutsi exiles from Uganda; persistent reports of arbitrary arrests in Rwanda, leading to grossly overcrowded prisons; and the forcible closure of camps for internally displaced people in south-west Rwanda.

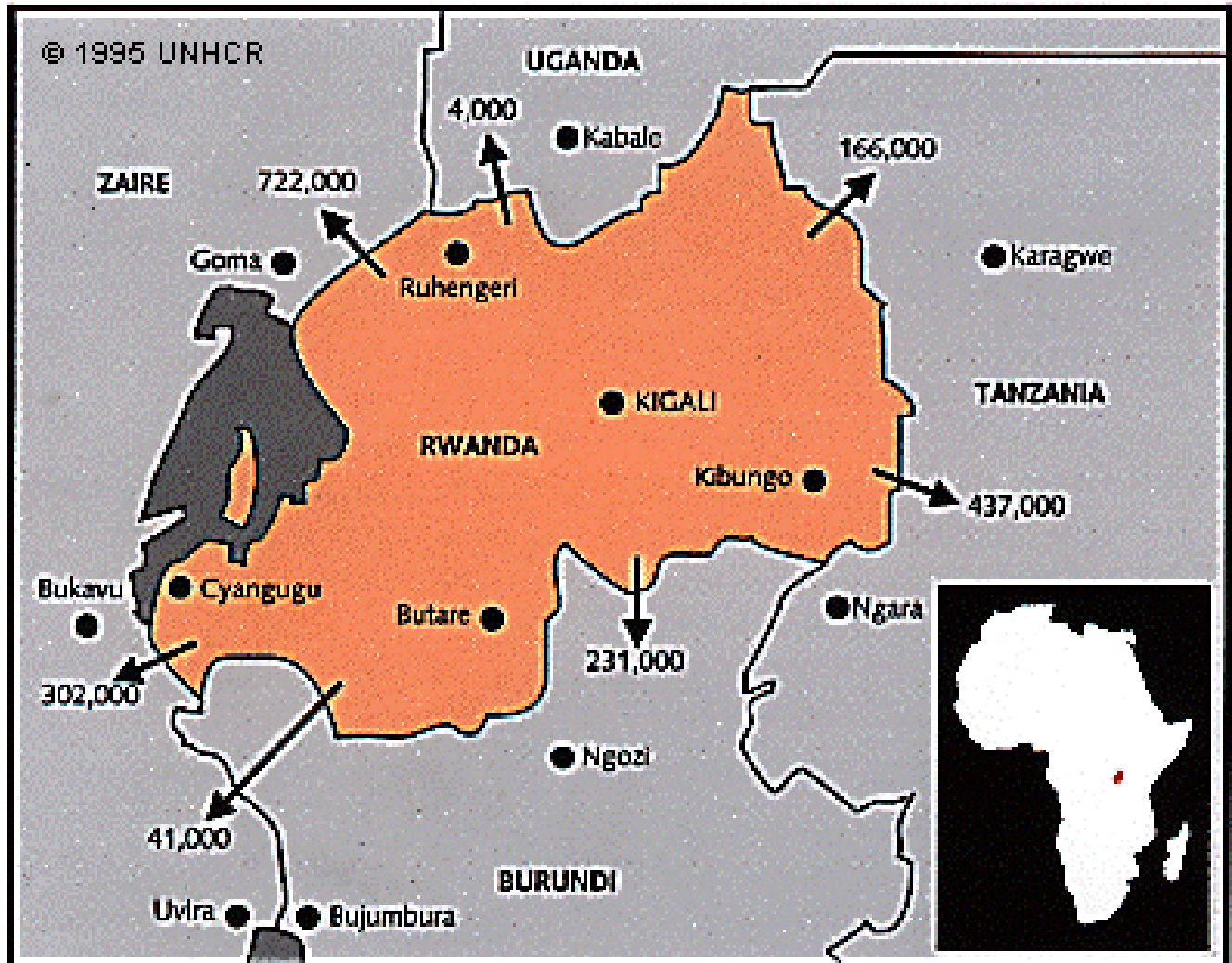
In April 1995, hundreds of people were killed when government troops opened fire at a camp for displaced people in Kibeho, an incident which had a serious impact on the prospects for a resolution of the refugee problem. At the end of 1994, UNHCR had started to provide transport and other assistance to the small number of refugees who wished to return to Rwanda. By February 1995, as many as 800 Rwandese were going back every day. But after the Kibeho killings, the numbers dropped to nothing.

Progress on the political front has also proved very slow. The new leaders in Kigali have stated that reconciliation with the former government is possible, but only if the individuals responsible for the genocide are punished for their crimes. Members of the former administration say that they will return to their homeland, but only if they are allowed a share of power. According to many reports, in mid-1995 the soldiers and militia forces who had withdrawn to Zaire were continuing to receive military training and supplies, and to conduct low-intensity operations in the border areas of Rwanda. With images of mass murders still fresh in the minds of the Rwandese people, peace is unlikely to come quickly or easily.

Map C: The Rwandese refugee population :

Map C

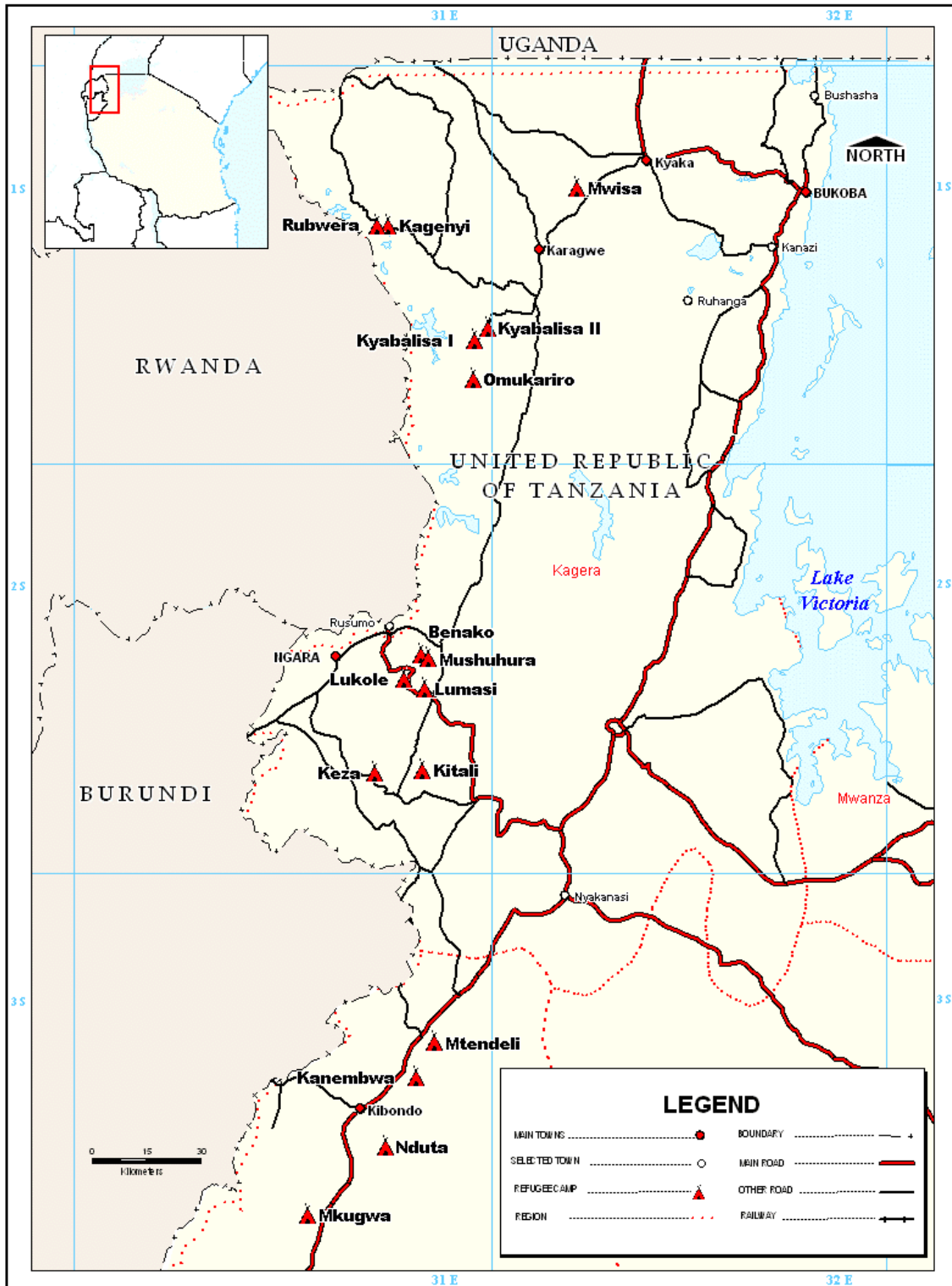
The Rwandese refugee population



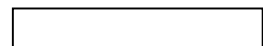
Statistics dated May 1995

Taken from "The State of The World's Refugees - In Search of Solutions"

RWANDAN REFUGEE CAMPS, KAGERA REGION TANZANIA



THE BOUNDARIES AND NAMES SHOWN ON THIS MAP DO NOT IMPLY OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT OR ACCEPTANCE BY THE UNITED NATIONS.
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Student Activity Sheet 1: Population and Areas of Rwandan Refugee Camps, Kagera Region, Tanzania, Late 1996

The information which follows was extracted from a report written by two environmental experts working for UNHCR, in December 1996, just a couple of weeks before the masses of Rwandan refugees, who had been living in the Kagera region of Tanzania, returned to Rwanda.

As at November 1996, the Kagera Region of Tanzania hosted 617,000 refugees from Rwanda and Burundi, located in 11 main camps in the three neighbouring Districts of Ngara, Karagwe and Biharamulo, where they made up 45% of the overall population.

Table 1 summarises the camp populations and areas in Ngara District.

Table 1: Camp Populations and Areas (October 1996)

District	Camp	Population	Area (hectares)	Density (people/ha)
Ngara	Benaco	159,879	586	273
	Lumasi	113,713	1,354	84
	Msuhura	80,797	1,050	77
	Keza	40,396	2,465	30
	Lukole	20,459	1,493	14

Note that the three largest camps (Benaco, Lumasi and Msuhura) also had the highest population densities, bringing a number of problems with energy supply and environmental degradation.

Question 1

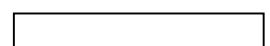
Which camp was the most crowded? How do you know?

Question 2

What problems might high population density cause in the camps of Benaco, Lumasi and Msuhura? Think about your answers and write a couple of sentences under each of the following headings:

- Health
- Water
- Cooking fuel (domestic energy)

- Soil erosion
- Social conflicts



To get an idea of the crowded living conditions in a refugee camp like Benaco, imagine 273 people living, working, cooking, eating, sleeping, bathing, excreting - everything in one hectare, a space the size of two football fields. For the sake of comparison, Table 2 provides population, area and density figures for three major cities of the world.

Table 2: Major Cities of the World - Populations, Areas and Densities (1991)

City	Population	Area (hectares)	Density (people/ha)
Tokyo	8,400,000	57,800	145
New York	7,400,000	78,200 excluding inland waterways	95
Mexico City	10,300,000	150,000	69

These huge cities, with vast areas of high rise apartments, have population densities similar to some refugee camps, which are made up of individual huts. Just imagine how close together those refugees must be living!

Student Activity Sheet 2: Comparison of an African Refugee Camp with your Home Town

Hartisheik Refugee Camp, in Eastern Ethiopia, is home to about 59,000 refugees from Somalia, most of whom have been living in the camp since 1988. In its magazine *Refugees*, (no. 105, 1996), UNHCR published a series of short articles on life as it is lived by the inhabitants of Hartisheik. As you read through the suggested articles, think about the similarities and differences between refugee life in Hartisheik and your life in your home town. Copy the table below into your notebook and fill in the information required.

	Hartisheik Refugee Camp	Your Home Town
Housing "No place like home" , pp. 12-13. (List the house types and building materials)		
Sources of daily food "Feeding the hungry" , pp. 16-17		
Sources of drinking water "Nary a drop to drink" , pp. 22-23		
Sources of energy for cooking "Preventing and repairing the damage" , p. 26		
Education and school facilities "Escape from ignorance" , p. 21		

Shelter: No place like home

It is a far cry from the stone house they left behind in Somalia, but the small hut with a floor area roughly the size of a ping-pong table is home for Sofia Abdi Ahmad, her husband and seven children in Ethiopia's Hartisheik refugee camp.

It was a lot more comfortable when they first arrived in 1988 after fleeing the civil war in northwest Somalia. The blue and white plastic sheeting UNHCR had given them covered the dome-shaped hut, or *tukul*, and protected the family from the elements.

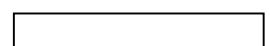
Violent winds blasting Hartisheik have since torn the tarpaulin to shreds, although its tattered remains can still be seen woven into a patchwork quilt of old rags and wheat sacks that cover the *tukul* from the ground up. Lack of funding for the Horn of Africa operation has prevented UNHCR from replacing the 8-year-old plastic, although some new sheets have now begun to arrive.

"The place leaks. Often, we spend the night on our feet when it rains," says Abdi Ahmad, a former school teacher from Hargeisa in northwest Somalia. She is standing in the small entrance that opens into the kitchen, which is separated from the main quarters by a decaying curtain.

The hut looks neat and tidy, its earthen floor covered with plastic mats. The family's possessions include two suitcases, five pillows that have seen better times and some battered and smoke-blackened pots and pans. A charcoal-burning stove provides warmth from the cold and rain outside. The stove is one of the prized possessions Abdi Ahmad carried in her flight from Hargeisa.

Most *tukuls* in the neighborhood are small and spartan inside. Each has a stove and straw mat. Latrines, covered by twigs and leaves, are constructed beside the houses. There's plenty of space between clumps of houses. Most refugees have their own gardens, planted with maize and vegetables during the rainy season. It's not much, but it's home – for the time being.

Shelter is one of the basics in any refugee situation, and its provision can be a matter of life and death in areas of extreme weather. UNHCR employs shelter specialists and site planners who try to ensure that housing is suitable to local conditions and traditions. But there is one constant in all refugee camps – no one lives in luxury.



Food: Feeding the hungry

News of a sudden reduction in food rations hit Hartisheik camp in mid-July. Because of shortages due to lack of donor pledges to the World Food Program's food pipeline for refugees in Ethiopia, individual cereal rations were being reduced from 500 grams to 375 grams per day. And, for the first time since their arrival eight years ago, the refugees also were told they were going to receive sorghum instead of the usual wheat grain from WFP, the United Nations' food arm.

"We are going to die," said a bearded Somali after a meeting called by the Ethiopian camp administrator to announce to a group of about 100 refugee leaders the WFP's food reserve position. "Send us home to Somalia," he cried.

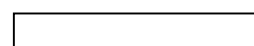
With wheat grain, the refugees say they are able to prepare several types of meals, but with sorghum only one kind. Sorghum is a staple meal in southern Somalia and has the same nutritive value as wheat. But these refugees have been receiving wheat grain or wheat flour for years and say it would take time for them to get used to sorghum.

What was left unsaid by the refugees was that wheat grain sells for more in the market than sorghum. Refugees are known to sell part of their ration to vary their diet – a practice that is looked upon with an understandable degree of tolerance by some aid providers, but with dismay by food donors.

In a place where there is nothing, food is everything. The refugees sell part of the ration to buy other needs. Food also is used as an incentive to spur people to become productive by encouraging such programs as "Food for Work." It is also used to promote repatriation. For example, large numbers of Mozambican refugees in Malawi decided to return home several years ago when it was announced that food would be distributed in Mozambique instead of the refugee camps.

Under agreements that have been refined through the years – the last time in January 1994 – WFP provides the food needs in UNHCR's camps worldwide. WFP seeks donations in cash or in kind, arranges for transport of food from the donor country or from the market where it is bought, and ensures storage and handling right up to delivery to the camps. There, UNHCR's implementing partner – either the government or non-governmental agencies – receives, transports and distributes it to leaders of groups of refugee families or to individual family heads. UNHCR is pushing for a greater role for women in the camps and efforts are being promoted to hand over food rations to women instead of men.

UNHCR and WFP agree on food baskets for refugees and returnees in different countries for a given period. The basket varies from country to country, depending on the recipients' eating habits, culture, customs, traditions and, most important, state of health. Whether the entire food package agreed upon is delivered to refugees ultimately depends to a large extent on donors making good on their pledges to WFP.



In Ethiopia, UNHCR and WFP decided in 1989 on a general daily food basket that includes 500 grams of cereals, 25 grams of oil, 20 grams of sugar, 5 grams of salt and 30 grams of blended food, usually corn and soya. Over 18 months ending in December, WFP's needs total 102,515 mt for 366,000 refugees in Ethiopia, including 275,000 Somalis, 63,000 Sudanese, 18,000 Djiboutians and 8,700 Kenyans. During the period, WFP also distributed food packages to 47,000 Ethiopians who have returned from exile in neighboring countries. This program costs WFP \$46.3 million – about half of which represents the actual food value; the rest is for transport, handling, storage and administrative services. WFP spends roughly 28 U.S. cents a day to feed a refugee in Ethiopia.

In July, WFP announced that it had a shortfall of 42,000 mt in its program for Ethiopia, saying donors had made available only 60,320 mt. Thus the cereal ration was cut. This was a severe blow since the wheat grain was in fact the only regular ration the refugees had been receiving. The 'ideal' food basket, including sugar and salt, had long been unavailable. The delivery of oil had been held up for months because local authorities wanted to impose a levy on oil. This problem had been sorted out and oil again was being distributed in the camps in late July.

Aggravating the situation of the Somali refugees is severe malnutrition. To lessen the impact of a further reduction in rations in the camps and at the same time address malnutrition problems, both WFP and UNHCR launched a supplementary feeding program. Children under five years and pregnant and lactating mothers now receive weekly dry rations consisting of blended food such as corn and soya mix in addition to the general ration. Severely malnourished children are enlisted in therapeutic feeding programs in hospitals where high-energy milk is provided.

UNHCR and its implementing partner in Ethiopia, the government Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), run the emergency feeding programs. The two agencies have also agreed to deploy additional nutrition workers and to train them in managing health and nutritional emergencies. The posting of a senior advisor from the British agency Save the Children Fund (SCF) has been recommended to supervise the blanket feeding operation and screening of children. SCF had been operating in Hartisheik before ARRA took over its feeding programs for vulnerable people.

Appeals have been made to donors to enable WFP to meet its cereal shortfall. The Italian government has said it would provide an additional \$2 million to WFP. Other donors, including the European Community, have responded positively to pleas for contributions.



Water: Nary a drop to drink

More than 275,000 Somali refugees eke out an existence in the eight refugee camps of eastern Ethiopia, a region that historically supported only nomads.

A major problem in Hartisheik and the other camps is water – or rather the lack of it.

The water ration in the eight camps averages five liters a day – far short of UNHCR's global target of 20 liters per day for each refugee. Hartisheik's doctor, Dr. Dereje Abera, says this shortage of water is a contributing factor in the camp's malnutrition rate, which is close to 20 percent for children attending the clinic.

In any refugee camp, a good, reliable source of clean water must be available. It's a basic need, but as places like Hartisheik, or Goma, Zaire, illustrate, water can never be taken for granted. It's a matter of life or death. The provision of adequate, clean water is such a serious requirement that UNHCR employs full-time water engineers to work with other specialist camp planners to ensure supply. But sometimes, for reasons outside UNHCR's control, refugee camps end up on impossibly poor sites.

Eastern Ethiopia is one of those places. After a downpour, its porous soil sucks up all the rain water and the sun bakes the earth until it cracks. On this harsh land live the 59,000 refugees of Hartisheik.

In 1988, when the first few thousand refugees arrived in this parched region, UNHCR and CARE set up an emergency water transport system using tanker trucks that brought the water 80 kms to Hartisheik.

When Somalia's civil war erupted in force a year later, sending up to 400,000 refugees into Hartisheik and other hastily assembled camps in the region, UNHCR struggled to find a better solution.

Test wells were dug around Hartisheik. But, half a kilometer down and hundreds of thousands of dollars later, the pipes came up dry. Finally, UNHCR located a new water source in a test well 240 meters beneath the Jerrer valley – 40 kms from Hartisheik.

Eight years later CARE tankers still ferry 690,000 liters of water a day to 159,000 beneficiaries in Hartisheik, Kebri Beyah, Teferi Ber and Darwanaji camps. Since 1988, UNHCR has spent some \$20 million on water transport – \$2.5 million every year. Donations have already started to come in for a 22-km pipeline which UNHCR is planning to build from the Jerrer valley boreholes to Kebri Beyah, which is located halfway to Hartisheik. Both refugees and returning Ethiopian refugees would benefit. A pipeline could halve the tankers' travel time.

If UNHCR were to help only refugees, additional tension with local communities



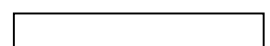
would be created. So, in addition to the planned pipeline, UNHCR has worked to improve the water situation across eastern Ethiopia. Water catchments built with UNHCR funding dot the region, helping livestock, local residents and refugees alike. Shallow well projects and an experimental 'Haffir' dam (a Sudanese-designed reservoir) are also under construction.

But meanwhile, in the camps, a lack of funds means water is wasted in leaky, 8-year-old distribution networks that receive only minimal maintenance. With UNHCR's care and maintenance budget diminishing year by year, Ethiopia's Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) has little money to upgrade and streamline aging distribution lines that stretch through camps like Hartisheik, now half-empty following the spontaneous repatriation of some 200,000 refugees.

The situation is perhaps less depressing elsewhere in Africa. With adequate donor support for other programs, UNHCR has found the funds necessary to bring water to many camps in zones which are just as parched.

In July 1994, when nearly a quarter of a million Rwandan refugees fled into Kibumba, Zaire – a town built on hard volcanic rock just north of Goma – aid workers trying to deliver clean water in the face of a massive cholera epidemic faced enormous challenges. It was a challenge that UNHCR and its partners eventually met. Today, tanker trucks run back and forth to Lake Kivu, 30 kms to the south, and deliver at least 10 liters of treated water daily to every refugee in Kibumba.

The message is clear: no funding means little or no precious water. A real danger is that Hartisheik's water problems will be repeated elsewhere as funds dry up and refugee populations are forgotten.



Environment: Preventing and repairing the damage

The Ethiopian camel and donkey drivers along the dirt road from Jijiga to Hartisheik have a common complaint against the Somali refugees: they have chopped down trees over a wide expanse of eastern Ethiopia's dry savannah.

"They are brothers," says Abdul Abdi Ali, 40, as he heads toward the market in the refugee town of Hartisheik to sell firewood loaded on the backs of his camels. "They have cut down our trees. But we have no personal problems with them."

Since the influx of the Somali refugees in 1988, the areas around their camps have been severely eroded. Now, both refugees and Ethiopians have to travel miles in search of wood for fuel and shelter. The long-term consequences are expected to be costly for the host community, which will bear the burden long after the Somalis are gone.

The situation in eastern Ethiopia is similar to the predicament experienced by other countries caring for large numbers of refugees – shrinking forests, poaching in game parks, pollution of water resources and soil erosion.

Environmental damage as a result of refugees' presence has been a major UNHCR concern for years. But the need to address immediate survival needs in emergency refugee situations often overshadowed projects to ease ecological problems in the past.

Donors recognize that moderate expenditure on environmental protection can save enormous costs in rehabilitation of damaged lands after repatriation. For this reason, UNHCR has facilitated activities of its implementing partners to provide some Rwandan refugee camps in the Great Lakes with fuel wood; to distribute fuel-efficient stoves in nine countries, including Kenya, Malawi, Somalia, Uganda and Zimbabwe; and to set up tree-planting programs in Malawi and Pakistan. The two reforestation programs, started in the 1980s, have also provided refugees and host communities with jobs.

In 1995, UNHCR issued a policy paper calling for the prevention and mitigation of ecological damage and the integration of efficient measures to deal with it in all levels of refugee operations. The initiatives require the participation of both refugees and host communities. This year, UNHCR released "Environmental Guidelines" to implement the policy, proposing the deployment of experts in the field and the education of both refugees and their host communities on the need to protect their fragile surroundings. Increasing attention is being paid to environmental planning. UNHCR has developed an environmental database at its headquarters in Geneva to support its work worldwide, including such areas as Ethiopia.

The regions around the Somali refugee camps in eastern Ethiopia have always been fragile. Abdi Hashi Abdirahman, 38, who heads the South East Rangelands



Project (SERP), says British colonizers had once attempted to make a large part of Hartisheik and its surroundings a game preserve, allowing only limited grazing. So, for years, the sparse vegetation and forest cover was protected.

"Then the refugees came and started to cut down trees and soon there was no forest left," said Abdirahman. "The locals also chopped trees and made charcoal to sell to the refugees."

Abdirahman's office, which is part of the Agriculture Ministry, is promoting tree planting to counteract the ecological damage in the country's eastern region. SERP is heavily funded by the African Development Bank. It has five seedling centers to which UNHCR has contributed \$2 million to promote tree planting.

To ease pressure on scarce water sources, UNHCR has been constructing water catchment basins and wells. It is now laying down pipes to bring water from one of its main sources in the region, in the Jerer valley, for the Somali refugee camp at Kebri Beyeh that also would benefit the Ethiopians.

Education: Escape from ignorance

Within six months of the Somali refugee influx into eastern Ethiopia's Hartisheik camp in 1988, primary schools were organized for children. Classes were held under plastic sheeting that did not last very long, recalls Geert van de Castele, UNHCR's education officer.

"The eastern region is in a dusty area. Windy. No trees. Children made holes in the plastic sheeting. After three or four months, the schools were gone and had to be replaced," said van de Castele.

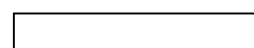
Lack of water in the semi-arid region prevented the construction of school buildings until 1991, when prefabricated materials were brought into the camp. Two schools have since been constructed. In the last school year, which ended in early July, the schools had an enrolment of 1,304 children – 1,083 boys and 221 girls – both refugees and locals.

UNHCR's policy is to ensure that refugee children have access to education, which is recognized as a basic human right. It funds governments and non-governmental organizations to construct and operate schools for refugees. Globally, more than 500,000 children benefit from UNHCR's programs for primary and secondary schools, says Margaret Sinclair, UNHCR's senior education officer. UNHCR also supports literacy classes and vocational training for adults.

Courses offered in these schools normally follow the curriculum in the refugees' country of origin, using familiar languages of instruction. In countries where repatriation cannot be foreseen in the immediate future, consultations are then held among host governments, refugee representatives and UNHCR to see if a "mix" of subjects incorporating elements in both the studies programs of the countries of origin and the host government can be offered to the refugee children. Help is given by UNHCR wherever local schools can accommodate refugee children.

In general, host countries allow the education of refugee children. Shortly after 250,000 Rwandan refugees flooded into Kagera district in Tanzania in April 1994, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNESCO and private agencies, including the German GTZ, immediately organized schools in a unique inter-agency operation, conducting classes under plastic sheeting.

However, there are exceptions, even in the Great Lakes region, host to 1.7 million Rwandan refugees. In the eastern Zaire camps holding one million Rwandan refugees, there is no education for refugee children. Since the Rwandan refugee influx into Zaire in July 1994, primary schools had been operated on an ad hoc basis by refugee volunteers. They received some modest international support from various agencies, including UNHCR. But these schools have been closed since February when the Zairians decided to shut down all commercial activities in the Rwandan refugee camps in an attempt to encourage people to return to Rwanda.



UNHCR is now negotiating with Zairian authorities to reopen the schools. Apart from the fact that education is a basic right under various international legal conventions, the out-of-school youths are contributing to increasing insecurity and criminal incidents in the camps.

In Hartisheik, keeping the students occupied is one of the concerns of refugee elders when schools are closed for the annual two-month vacation. Volunteer teachers hold classes in makeshift backyard schools in the camp.

One of these volunteers is Mussa Abdilahi Abid, 27, who calls his small hut made of twigs, leaves and rags the "Almis School" after a popular mountain resort in Somalia. Mussa, whose university studies were interrupted by the outbreak of civil war in Somalia, says this is to remind his pupils that there is such a place in Somalia that the refugees can return to and be proud of.

On a Saturday afternoon, several dozen Somali children sat on stones as Mussa gave lessons in English. His program also includes mathematics, science and readings from the Koran. He uses books he brought with him on his escape from Somalia in 1988 when the Somali refugees first flooded into Ethiopia.

"I hope to be able to help these children escape the ignorance that has made them refugees," says Mussa.

