



**JOINT ASSESSMENT MISSION  
UNHCR/WFP  
with  
the Department of State for the Interior  
Concern Universal**

**THE GAMBIA**

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## ACRONYMS

CSB	Corn Soya Blend
CFSVA	Comprehensive Food Security Vulnerability Analysis
CU	Concern Universal
D	Dalasi (The Gambian currency)
DOSA	Department of State for Agriculture
DOSE	Department of State for Education
DOSH	Department of State for Health
DOSI	Department of State for the Interior
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GoG	Government of The Gambia
GRCS	The Gambia Red Cross Society
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGA	Income Generating Activity
JAM	Joint Assessment Mission
MFDC	Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques en Casamance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OMD	WFP Regional Bureau for West Africa in Dakar
PDM	Post Distribution Monitoring
SF	School Feeding
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
WEC	World Evangelical Church
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
NaNA	National Nutrition Agency

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## **i. Executive Summary**

This report presents the findings of a seven-day Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) to The Gambia by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP), which took place between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, February, 2008. The mission was joined in the field by a representative of the Government of The Gambia's (GoG) Department of State for the Interior (DOSI) and a representative of Concern Universal (CU)<sup>1</sup>.

In August 2006, a new wave of some 6,500 refugees fled from the Casamance area of Senegal to the Foni area of The Gambia<sup>2</sup> (Annex 2 shows a map of the areas affected.) These men, women and children were uprooted by new outbreaks in a long-running insurgency between the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) rebel groups and the Senegalese army. This conflict has resulted in refugees fleeing into The Gambia for the past 20 years, but with the majority returning home when tensions decreased. This time, however, with the deployment of the Senegalese army on a permanent basis along the border and sporadic fighting between the latter and the MFDC rebel groups, and between rebel factions themselves, the refugees have remained in The Gambia. To date, UNHCR has registered 958 families for a total of 7,290 refugees.

Upon their arrival in The Gambia, these Senegalese families were welcomed and housed by Gambian host families, who share a common Jola ethnicity and are often members of the same extended families. The refugees arrived carrying very few possessions and have been sharing shelter and food with their host families in some 56 villages throughout the Foni and Kombo East Districts of the Western Division.

The first JAM was fielded in September 2006, to assess the refugee conditions, with particular attention to food and non-food needs. Based on the JAM results, the WFP Country Office initiated an immediate response EMOP (IR-EMOP 10550.0 under the Regional Director's Delegated Authority), providing full food rations to all refugees for three months from October 2006 to January 2007 for initial immediate emergency support while preparing the longer term EMOP, which began in January 2007 and will end in September 2008.

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<sup>1</sup> The JAM team was composed of the following members: Susan Gannon, Food Security Specialist/Team Leader, WFP, Regional Bureau for West Africa, Jean Bosco Rushatsi, Senior Regional Programme Advisor, UNHCR Regional Bureau Dakar, Senegal, Sekou Saho, Head of Office, UNHCR The Gambia, Demba Jallow, Programme Officer WFP The Gambia, Fatou Barry, Programme Officer, UNHCR The Gambia, Ebou Njie, Programme Officer, Concern Universal and Lamin Ceesay, Immigration Officer, DOSI.

<sup>2</sup> The number of refugees originally registered by the Gambia Red Cross Society (GCRS) was 5,247 and this figure was presented in the first Joint Assessment Report, November 2006. However, more than 1,500 additional refugees arrived in the country at the same time, but they were not registered initially because they did not understand the registration process. They have since been made aware of their rights as refugees and are now counted in the number for the initial wave of refugees.

The JAM mission team presents below an overview of the main mission findings and recommendations:

1. The initial response to the crisis is appropriate and effective and greatly appreciated by beneficiaries, government and various partners:
  - ⇒ The JAM mission recommends that the EMOP be extended for a period of six months (October 2008 through March 2009), and that the rations be reduced as of January 2009 from 2,100 k cal/person/day to 1,600 kcal/person/day, since this period corresponds with end of the harvest, and the height of food availability and food access. If the harvest for 2008/2009 is below normal, and a detailed assessment reveals that a full ration is required, this recommendation can be revised;
  - ⇒ The Country Office (CO) should conduct an in-depth food security and self reliance assessment in December 2008 to determine the level of self reliance among all refugees (those based in the urban areas and the Fonis) to justify any future operations;
  - ⇒ Once the assessment provides a clearer analysis of the refugees' situation, phase out strategies and activities can be designed either for a complete phase out in March 2009, or a more gradual withdrawal over a longer period of time;
  - ⇒ For the remaining period of the current EMOP, the JAM mission recommends that the CO and partners put a greater emphasis on self reliance activities, in particular agricultural and horticultural production, as discussed below, in Point 4.
2. Refugees and host families seem ready to accept local integration. Land for settlement and farming is available in the majority of villages visited – only Jifanga mentioned this as a constraint for farm lands. The question of local integration is crucial to determining the type of assistance refugees and host communities would need in the future and inform future operations:
  - ⇒ The option of local integration should be discussed urgently with the GoG and recommendations made as soon as possible to allow families to make decisions on settlement and plan for their future;
3. There is clear evidence of overcrowding and inadequate accommodation; entire families typically share one room, without beds and host families obliged to now share a smaller living space:
  - ⇒ Select refugee families should be assisted with building materials, in particular roofing; criteria for selection should be based on community identification of need and inability to procure materials.

4. The 2007/2008 agricultural season is considered by farmers and all partners met to be below well average in all villages visited, and food stocks are low. Unfortunately, at the time of the mission, official data to confirm this were not yet available:
  - ⇒ Food For Work (FFW) activities should be planned for host communities for a period of at least 6 months (April – September 2008);
  - ⇒ Seeds (groundnut and rice) and tools should be distributed to refugees and host families well before the rains, by mid-May;
  - ⇒ All relevant partners must examine ways to increase timely fertilizer use by refugee and host families (distribution through grants, credit).
  
5. Dry season market gardening is prevalent throughout the Foni for both host and refugee families, but marketing of vegetables is a problem.
  - ⇒ Partners should expand efforts to assist in the marketing of fruits and vegetables from affected communities in the Foni (for example, CU is currently buying produce from the Ndemban garden for sale in the urban area);
  - ⇒ Provide skills training in agro-enterprise development for producer groups and organize producers groups for input procurement and marketing, by developing private sector links with urban input suppliers and urban markets or exporters;
  - ⇒ Examine the opportunities for increased food processing of fruits and vegetables, such as jam making, drying, etc.
  
6. Despite efforts by partners to address the problem, pressure on existing water and sanitation resources is increasing; the number of latrines remains insufficient to meet the needs of the population:
  - ⇒ Repair broken wells, deepen those that are insufficient;
  - ⇒ Build additional latrines; and,
  - ⇒ Lobby/research funding for new bore hole wells.
  
7. Firewood sales are the main dry season coping strategy for refugees remaining in the Fonis, and this is also popular for host community members, leading to a rapid degradation of the Gambian environment:
  - ⇒ Promote improved stoves in urban and rural areas; and,
  - ⇒ Consider the possibility of reforestation as a FFW activity

8. The overall health and nutrition situation (according to latest NaNA survey) is adequate - refugees have access to health centers and take advantage of this:
  - ⇒ Continue to promote refugees' understanding of their rights to healthcare at the designated centers – Bwiam Hospital and Sibanor Clinic.
9. Refugee primary school enrolment rates seem good, with the majority of refugee families met reporting that their children attend the local schools:
  - ⇒ Conduct a more detailed analysis of this and promote higher enrolment where necessary.
10. Refugees move freely throughout the country:
  - ⇒ Ensure that all refugees are registered, have their ID cards, or at least understand the registration process;

## **ii. Methodology**

The focus of this JAM is to look at how the refugees are living in Gambian villages and to what extent they are engaged in self-reliance activities (the Terms of Reference are shown Annex 1.) In particular, the objectives are to:

- assess the level of self reliance of the refugees in terms of their income and food sources;
- assess their present coping strategies and alternative livelihood activities and their strategies in future, in case assistance is scaled down or halted;
- determine the number of refugees that are food insecure and their level of food insecurity; and,
- provide recommendations to guide the new activities for the refugees.

The mission began with a review of secondary data in reports compiled by WFP, UNHCR and other partners. This was followed by a one-week trip to The Gambia, with partners' meetings in Banjul and two and one half days visiting seven villages. The mission held a debriefing for government, UN agencies and partners before leaving Banjul to share conclusions, recommendations and to provide an opportunity for others to make comments and suggestions for the report.

In the field, the mission visited the villages of Bullock, Kaimu Bintang, Upat, Janack, Jifanga, Somita and Bwiam. In addition, the mission interviewed staff at the Bwiam hospital and the World Evangelical Church's Sibanor Clinic and visited the Gambian military post at Sibanor. In each of the villages visited, the mission held large, community level meetings, followed by separate discussions with groups of men and women. Individual discussions were also held with key informants, such as village leaders, school heads, market women and shop keepers.

As the mission did not have the time to conduct a nutrition assessment, the team relied on the most recent assessment reported by the NaNA in November 2007. These results are presented below, under section 1.c. The mission also drew on the recent Report of the Food Security Assessment of Casamance Refugees, which was conducted by WFP between June and September 2007.

While the mission had very fruitful discussions with host community members, refugees, local officials, GoG representatives and other partners, the time spent in the field was limited. Therefore, the mission could not explore thoroughly of all the issues that emerged nor fully appreciate the extent to which refugees are self reliant. For example, several refugees met at the Kaimu distribution point explained that although they initially stayed in the rural areas, they were forced to leave for the urban areas due to both a lack of shelter and the need for income earning opportunities. Unfortunately, the mission could not evaluate to what extent this affects their level of self reliance, nor how many refugees are in a similar situation.

## **1. SITUATION OVERVIEW**

### **a. General Context**

The insurgency in Senegal's southern region, known as the Casamance, began in 1982. It is characterized by sporadic waves of conflict within the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) rebel groups and between these groups and the Government of Senegal's armed forces. This conflict has resulted in refugees fleeing into The Gambia for the past 20 years, but with the majority returning home when tensions decreased. However, since August 2006, intermittent fighting between the Senegalese Army and at least one of the MFDC groups, and conflicts between rebel groups are prevalent in the area bordering the Western Division of The Gambia, in particular the western and central areas of the Fomis (see Annex 2.)

The wave of new refugees to The Gambia in August, 2006 was estimated at approximately 6,500 men, women and children. The number of refugees originally registered by the Gambia Red Cross Society (GCRS) was 5,247 and this figure was presented in the first Joint Assessment Report, November 2006.<sup>3</sup> However, more than 1,500 additional refugees arrived in the country at the same time, but they were not registered initially because they did not understand the registration process. They have since been made aware of their rights as refugees and are now counted in the number for the initial wave of refugees. In addition, there were 870 newly registered refugees, during the month of February 2008, bringing the total number to 7,290, as shown below, in Table 1. These refugees have been in The Gambia also since late 2006, but did not partake in the initial registration exercises. As of February 2008, the skirmishes in the border area continued, precluding any discussion of repatriation of the refugees.

These Senegalese families were welcomed and housed by Gambian host families, who share a common Jola ethnicity and are often members of the same extended families. The refugees arrived carrying very few of their possessions and have been sharing shelter and food with their host families, who are predominantly farmers.

In this context, the first Joint Assessment Mission (JAM) was fielded in September 2006, to assess the refugee conditions, with particular attention to food and non-food needs. Based on the JAM results, the WFP Country Office initiated an immediate response EMOP (IR-EMOP 10550.0 under the Regional Director's Delegated Authority), providing food to all refugees for three months from October to December 2006 for initial immediate emergency support while preparing the longer term EMOP, which began in January 2007 and will end in September 2008.

The refugees have been living with their host families for 18 months. They derive their subsistence through a mix of food and non-food support from WFP, UNHCR, The Gambia Red Cross and various NGOs, primarily, as well as various income earning activities. Sending the adult male household members to seek employment in the urban and peri-urban areas (known as the Kombos) is also a coping strategy for refugee and host families alike, especially in the dry season, from January to June. In

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<sup>3</sup> UNHCR/WFP Joint Assessment Mission, Senegalese Refugee Influx into the Western Division of The Gambia, Final Report, September 2006.

fact, the recent Food Security Assessment Report revealed that some 96% of the 200 refugees interviewed claimed to have family members in the urban area, and that over 70% receive support from these relatives.<sup>4</sup>

Several refugee families explained to the mission that due to the crowded conditions in host family houses, they were obliged to divide themselves up, staying with relatives in different villages or in the Kombos. The mission met several men, who live in the Kombos, but whose wives and children are staying in the Foni. These refugees explained that the high cost of living in this Kombos precludes having the families stay together. Given the short nature of this JAM, it was not possible to determine just how many families are divided and how many refugees are currently residing in the Kombos.

The refugees, like their hosts, are farmers. Most if not all have now experienced two successive years of lower than expected agricultural production. In 2006, refugees were forced to leave their own fields during the cropping season and lost their crops. In 2007, most engaged in groundnut, millet, maize and rice production, but the production for each of those commodities was estimated at less than 50% of a normal year. While the GoG data presented to CILSS at the September meeting in Banjul did not highlight any difficulties for this region of the country, this meeting was held while the rains were still falling. Subsequently, the rains ended earlier than expected and compromised the groundnut, rice and millet production. As of February 2008, no new data were available, but several NGO and UN missions have reported that production is well below expected levels in the Western Division. In addition, data collected by the Government of Senegal for the Region of Ziguinchor, which lies directly south of the Fonis, estimates that cereal production is below normal.<sup>5</sup> This report also highlights pasture resource deficits in the areas bordering the Foni Districts of The Gambia, meaning difficulties for animals as well.

In 2008, both refugee and host families in the Fonis are facing an early lean season. It was clear during the field visits that refugees and hosts are sharing their food resources to cope with the lack of food from their own harvests. Under the EMOP, Gambian host families were given the opportunity to receive rice through Food for Work for Community Asset Development during the lean season (May-Sept. 2007). It appears that this type of activity will be necessary again to help Gambian host communities to cope with this year's early lean season.

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<sup>4</sup> Report on the Food Security Assessment of Casamance Refugees, World Food Programme, Cape Point, The Gambia, November 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Compte Rendu de la Mission d'Evaluation du Déficit Céréalière et Fourragère 16 au 26/01/2008, Cabinet du Premier Ministre, Secrétariat Exécutif du Conseil National à la Sécurité Alimentaire, République du Sénégal.

## b. Number of Refugees

**Table 1. List of Villages, Number of Households and Refugees**

Village Name	No. of HHs	No. of Refugees	Village Name	No. of HHs	No. of Refugees
Bajakarr	22	168	Janack	25	213
Luluchor	10	48	Tampato	2	20
Kappa	38	254	Kabokorr	3	16
Karunorr	25	182	Kanuma	2	11
Baipah	6	47	Janaguel	2	23
Balen	47	282	Jakoi Bintang	1	2
Kafuta	3	45	Manena	8	48
Omorto	8	29	Upat	40	485
Kafuta Tumbung	11	58	Batabutu Kantora	16	118
Penyem	2	16	Arangellen	33	258
Ndemban	6	26	Sitta	1	12
Kanjabina	40	243	Denilo	13	91
Ndemban Jola	41	290	Jako	1	4
Bulock	100	945	Kambong Madina	5	58
Somita	7	49	Bugingha	14	59
Jalokoto	25	165	Bwiam Kurunlie	5	37
Gikess	10	67	Karor	3	11
Bitta	18	153	Kambong	3	13
Batendeng Kajara	4	17	Bwiam	24	174
Kandonku	4	30	Bwiam Ginia	1	12
Jakoi Paima	0	0	Baley	3	17
Kaimu Karannai	4	45	Kaling	4	18
Kaimu Bintang	9	59	Jibanack	2	4
Bunyadu	17	162	Funtang	10	70
Seaul	28	130	Kampant	4	24
Kusamai	68	504	Karania	3	15
Sibanor	25	166	Gikess Dando	12	46
Kamosor	4	9	Kayanga	3	5
Tamba Kunda	22	186	Monon	4	32
Jilanfar	8	66	Buluntu	16	104
Kanilai	1	11	Dobong	10	74
Kayanga	10	63	Kantiba	1	5
Jifanga	93	826	Jagil	14	26
Batendeng	2	11	Grand Total	958	7290

Source: WFP, Food Distribution List, February 2008

### **c. Nutritional and Health Situation and Environmental Conditions**

The JAM mission did not have time to fully assess the nutrition and health status of the Casamance refugees. The information presented in this section draws upon the most recent survey conducted for WFP by NaNA in November, 2007.<sup>6</sup> An initial health and nutrition survey was conducted in January, 2007, as recommended by the first JAM in 2006. However, the difference in the timing of the two studies could have impacted the result. The January timing of the first was after the harvest period and at a time when food stocks are at their fullest. The second survey, by contrast, took place just after the rainy season and lean season, where infection rates tend to be higher and food stock are low.

The assessment covered 593 refugee children, 46.7% of whom were girls and 53.3% boys. Some 98% of these children receive food aid rations. The assessment focused on infant feeding practices, care, ailments and health care seeking behavior. The questionnaire asks respondents about the foods given to their children 0 – 24 months within the 24 hours preceding the assessment. In addition, anthropometric measurement was taken of all children under five years of age to assess their nutritional status.

Overall, the nutritional and health situation for the refugees is adequate, but the age cohort of 12 to 24 months has shown relatively higher rates of malnutrition than the other age groups. According to the malnutrition classification developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), anthropometric measurements for this age group classify them as critical for acute malnutrition (Weight for Height) and poor for chronic malnutrition (Height for Age).<sup>7</sup> Another finding shows that only 21% of mothers use CSB in porridge for their children under two years of age. Given that these children receive a ration of CSB on a monthly basis, more efforts are needed to raise awareness among mothers of the benefits of CSB to children in this age group.

#### **Overview of the Nutrition Assessment Findings:**

- Approximately 98% of respondents had received food aid in the month prior to the survey;
- Nearly 80% of respondents (78.4%) reported access to water from a protected source (covered well or bore hole), and the remaining 21.6% from unprotected wells;

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<sup>6</sup> Report on the Nutrition and Health Status Survey of Casamance Refugees in The Gambia, Survey for the World Food Programme (WFP), National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), Banjul, The Gambia, January 2007; and, Report on the Second Nutrition and Health Status Survey of Casamance Refugees in The Gambia, Survey for the World Food Programme (WFP), National Nutrition Agency (NaNA), Banjul, The Gambia, November 2007.

<sup>7</sup> According to the WHO the malnutrition prevalence is classified as follows: for Acute Malnutrition (Weight for Height): <5% is acceptable; 5% to 9% is poor; 10% to 14% is serious; and >15% is critical; for Chronic Malnutrition (Weight for Age and Height for Age): <20% is acceptable; 20%-29% is poor; 30%-39% is serious; and >40% is critical.

- The proportion of children sleeping under a mosquito net has increased from 59.6% to 85.3%.

***Infant Feeding Practices for Children 0 – 24 Months:***

- Exclusive breastfeeding rates for infants under four and six months old stood at 80.8% and 59.5%, respectively, which is higher than the national figures of 48.6% and 45.6% (NaNA 2005) for the same age groups;
- Some 64.7% of infants six to nine months old are also receiving timely complementary feeding and 96.6% of infants aged 12-15 months (96.6%) are still being breastfed;
- The median duration of breastfeeding in the refugee population is 24 months, which is unchanged from the last assessment;
- In addition to breast milk, other foods given include soybeans, beans, millet, fish, eggs, CSB, milk (powdered, fresh, condensed) and water;
- While 30.8% of mothers said they give porridge to their children, only 21.4% of respondents said they used the CSB in the preparation of porridge;
- Only 0.6% of respondents mentioned adding oil to the porridge.

***Vaccination:***

- The proportion of children vaccinated against measles has increased from 59.2% to 68.1%, as verified on their vaccination cards;
- The proportion of children supplemented with Vitamin A in the last six months has also increased from 43.2% to 61.9%, although, the MICS, 2005/6 (Unpublished) found that 80% of the children under five years old receive Vitamin A supplements nationally.

***Anthropometric data:***

As mentioned above, comparisons are made between the two nutrition and health assessments carried out on the refugee population in January and November 2007. The difference of two months is significant because the November timing follows the end of the rains and the lean season, and a period of greater levels of infections, such as diarrhea and malaria and also a period of lower food availability and access. By January, the harvest is complete and both food and cash reserves are relatively higher.

As each of the tables below illustrate, children 12 - 23 months of age have the highest level of malnutrition. This period often corresponds to weaning, again, these measurements were taken just after the rainy season.

Table 2, below illustrates, the age cohort with the highest proportion of wasted children is the 12-23 group, where 13.4% are classified as being wasted or acutely malnourished, which is considered critical by the WHO.

When comparing the data from the two surveys in 2007, there is an increase in the number of children aged 0-59 months who are wasted (Weight for Height) from 3.8% in January to 6.3% in November.

**Table 2: Weight-for-Height**

Age Group (in months)	None (%)	Moderate (%)	Severe (%)	Total Wasted (moderate + severe)
<6	100	0	0	0
6-11	95.8	4.2	0	4.2
12-23	86.6	11.9	1.5	13.4
24-35	96.1	3.1	0.8	3.9
36-47	94.4	5.6	0	5.6
48-59	95.4	4.6	0	4.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>6.3</b>

Source: National Nutrition Agency, November 2007.

When segregated into age groups, 30.9% of the age cohort 12-23 months had the highest proportion of stunted children, which is considered serious by the WHO classification.

Compared with the January survey, there is a decrease in the proportion of stunted children, from 28.4% to 22.2% in November. While stunting reflects the longer term effects of malnutrition, the fact that these children have benefited from many interventions over the course of a year, including food aid, could have made the difference.

**Table 3: Height-for-Age (Stunting)**

Age Group (in months)	None (%)	Moderate (%)	Severe (%)	Total Stunted (moderate + severe)
<6	90.5	2.4	7.1	9.5
6-11	89.9	4.3	5.8	10.1
12-23	69.2	27.1	3.8	30.9
24-35	78.7	13.4	7.9	21.3
36-47	76.9	19.4	3.7	23.1
48-59	75.7	16.8	7.5	24.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>22.2</b>

Source: National Nutrition Agency, November 2007.

The highest proportions of children who are underweight (33.6%) are from the 12-23 age cohort, which is considered serious by WHO classification.

Here, there is an increase in the proportion of underweight children from 23.6% in January to 25.9% in November. As with wasting, this increase is most like due to the difference in timing of the surveys.

**Table 4: Weight-for-Age (Underweight)**

<b>Age Group (in months)</b>	<b>None (%)</b>	<b>Moderate (%)</b>	<b>Severe (%)</b>	<b>Total Underweight (moderate + severe)</b>
<6	95.2	0	4.8	4.8
6-11	78.9	18.3	2.8	21.1
12-23	66.4	26.1	7.5	33.6
24-35	71.7	25.2	3.1	28.3
36-47	73.1	24.1	2.8	26.9
48-59	75.9	20.4	3.7	24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>25.9</b>

Source: National Nutrition Agency, November 2007.

## **2. FOOD SECURITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY**

### **a. Access and Utilization of Food**

Monthly food aid rations are distributed to all refugee families. Each family member must be registered and physically present on the day of distributions in order to obtain the ration. For the most part, this system is working effectively. Refugees who are sick or unable to attend for legitimate reasons (elderly, ill, funeral of a family member, giving birth, etc) may obtain authorization from the *Alkalo*, or village chief, to have someone else receive their ration for them. Family member who are living in different parts of the Fonis or Kombos are still required to be together for distribution.

The mission visited the distribution point of Kaimu Bintang where the largest number of refugees, 1,770, receive food rations. The mission members interviewed families and individuals waiting to receive their rations. Several complained that it was difficult to assemble their families because the men were in working in the urban areas and it was expensive for them to come and collect their rations. The mission also observed how these families divide the ration between the men heading back to the Kombos and the women and children staying behind in the villages.

While all of those interviewed expressed tremendous gratitude for the rations, they explained that it is insufficient in terms of quality and, for some, quantity, to last the entire months. The refugees supplement the ration with their own agricultural production, through gifts from their host families and by purchasing food. According to the recent WFP survey, 99.5% of respondents purchase food on a regular basis. The items most frequently purchased are fish, fresh vegetables, sugar and condiments, which are estimated to cost D25, or \$1.20 per day for two meals. Fewer than 10 out of 200 respondents said they buy rice, oil or beans. This is an indication that WFP support to refugees with these items can be considered adequate, and refugees are only buying complementary food items.

In terms of utilization of the ration, women explained that the oil is the first commodity to run out, as it is used to fry fish for one or two meals. The beans are cooked with sugar and served as an evening meal, lasting anywhere from one to three weeks, depending on how often they serve the beans. The CSB is also served to the entire family as breakfast porridge and does not last for the entire month. However, most women said that the ration of rice can last for the entire month, because they are eating other grains, such as millet and maize in addition to rice. This was confirmed in the field, when mission members visit family grain stores.

Focus group discussions at the village level illuminated the relatively high degree of food resource sharing and reciprocity that takes place between refugees and host families. In every village visited, hosts and refugees alike explained that when the refugees arrived, the host families generously shared the food they had with them. Now, especially in the wake of the poor harvests in 2007, the refugees share their rations with their hosts. When these run out before the next distribution, the hosts share their food stocks with the refugees. As the lean season is rapidly approaching this year, it is unclear how the host families and refugees will cope when the host family stocks are fully depleted. Options to mitigate food insecurity among host families are discussed below, under Programme Options.

## b. Targeting, Distribution and Monitoring of Food Aid

The number of refugees receiving food in February increased by over 1,000, due to the recent registration of these refugees by UNHCR. They are not recent arrivals, but rather people who had missed out on earlier registrations or were not aware of their rights as refugees. Table 5, below, shows the details of refugees receiving food and non-food items in each of the 10 distribution sites. However, there are approximately 950 refugees who are registered but do not take their rations. It is possible that these refugees are living in the Kombo and have activities that preclude their travel to get their rations. It is also an indication that they are probably self reliant and do not need the additional food.

The mission visited the Kaimu distribution point, which was very well organized and well managed. The actual distribution area was clean, well shaded and all commodities were neatly arranged. There were no problems cited at this point and no complaints by partners or refugees were registered in relation to the distribution.

**Table 5. Number of Refugees Receiving Food Aid**

Distribution Point	Household Present	Female				Male				Gross Total
		Under 5	Age 5 - 18	Adult	Total	Under 5	Age 5 - 18	Adult	Total	
Faraba Sutu	21	21	24	33	78	19	22	31	72	150
Bulock	90	116	151	183	450	117	136	178	431	881
Ndemban	80	58	82	121	261	91	54	96	241	502
Somita	53	27	77	90	194	36	79	81	196	390
Kandonku	6	4	5	8	17	2	7	8	17	34
Kabokorr	70	57	120	184	361	67	106	169	342	703
Kaimu/Karanai	226	141	264	485	890	200	271	409	880	1770
Batabut	49	30	80	86	196	26	96	75	197	393
Kampant	142	57	211	271	539	59	213	189	461	1000
Bwiam	72	40	108	136	284	27	111	95	233	517
<b>Total</b>	<b>809</b>	<b>551</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>1597</b>	<b>3270</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>1095</b>	<b>1331</b>	<b>3070</b>	<b>6340</b>

Source: WFP February 2008

## c. Ration Content and Size

A daily ration consisting of rice, peas, Corn Soya Blend, vegetable oil and iodized salt is given to each refugee during monthly food distributions conducted by GRCS, under the coordination of WFP. Each refugee is given a daily ration of 400 grams Rice, 60 grams Corn Soya Blend (CSB), 60 grams yellow split beans, 25 grams vegetable oil, and 5 grams iodized salt to meet the 2100k calories/person/day. As mentioned above, refugees must be physically present to receive their monthly rations, with exceptions allowed for sick, pregnant, physically disabled and the elderly. Heads of households

receive the food ration on behalf of other family members. Monthly food distribution records indicate that over 70% of these are women.

#### **d. Possibilities for Self Sufficiency**

The WFP self reliance assessment<sup>8</sup> revealed that 91% of all respondents are engaged in farming activities and 89% of the respondents received farmland from their host families. Focus group discussions in each community confirmed these findings. In only one village, Jifanga, was there a mention that farm lands are not adequate to serve both refugee and host populations. The reason given for this is that most of the Jifanga's farm lands are located just south of the Senegal border and it is considered too dangerous to use those lands. The community also has land to the west and north of the village, but this area is not sufficient for everyone. The mission was told that 10 refugee families borrow land from a neighboring village.

The WFP survey also found that 88.5% of the respondents in the villages visited engage in one or more income-generating activities. Most respondents (80%) sell firewood, 20% sell vegetables in local markets and about 10% engage in skilled labor, such as carpentry. These findings are confirmed by the mission, which found that given the poor agricultural campaign of 2007, nearly everyone met, men and women, were collecting and selling firewood to earn additional income. The sale of charcoal and palm oil from the Casamance was also observed in the areas visited.

The sale firewood has potentially negative consequences on the Gambian environment. While those who collect and sell wood say they only seek dead wood, the pressure to increase the supply of dead wood can lead to unsustainable practices such as burning live trees or cutting their bark so they eventually die. Therefore, alternative to selling firewood are urgently needed.

Of the 200 respondents, 87% say they routinely borrow money, most notably from local lenders or host families (62%). Borrowing money from friends accounts for 27% of the total refugee income.

The mission also discovered that many men, in both host and refugee families, leave their families in the Fonis in search of employment in the Kombos. For host family men, this migration is seasonal. For refugees, however, there is always the possibility that they will stay in the Kombos, if they do not have remunerative alternatives in the Fonis. The risk associated with their extended urban stay is that they will not find sufficient income earning opportunities and will be forced to live in difficult conditions. Therefore, greater efforts are needed to ensure that refugees are provided with the means necessary to engage in agricultural production this season.

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<sup>8</sup>WFP: Report on the Food Security Assessment of Casamance Refugees, September, 2007, Cape Point, The Gambia.

### **e. Strategies to Improve Self Sufficiency**

In the villages visited, outside of rain fed agriculture, there are very few job opportunities for those without a skill, such as masonry or blacksmithing. Teachers receive regular income, but they are often from other communities and are only posted to the village. Consequently, all young men leave their respective villages and go to Kombo, where they can get a job and extend their assistance to their respective families.

Given that the majority of refugees are farmers, agriculture represents the greatest opportunity for them to achieve self sufficiency. Refugees have access to adequate land in the Fonis, and this was confirmed in each of the villages visited, including Jifanga, where farmers are able to borrow land from a neighboring village. However, in order to achieve greater progress toward self sufficiency, refugees need farm implements and equipment, since host families cannot always share their own equipment in a timely manner. The late borrowing of equipment from host families leads to decreased productivity on the refugees' fields.

Therefore, the most promising strategy to improving self-sufficiency among refugees is to provide greater support in terms of agricultural equipment and inputs. In the off season, November to April, horticulture is the most suitable activity for refugees in the Fonis. In many of these communities, low-lying areas in or adjacent to the rice fields are used for dry season gardens. This area is relatively close to the urban markets and enjoys a relatively high water table, making the production of vegetables an attractive activity.

The JAM team visited the all-refugee garden project in Bulock, which was an area abandoned by the host community and given to the refugees. In other communities, refugees are working along side host community members in existing gardens. As with rain fed agricultural production, refugees need tools to increase their productivity. In addition, refugees and host community members need help with marketing of produce.

Under the Gambia is Good (GIG) initiative, Concern Universal is currently assisting in the marketing of produce from one garden in Bessi, Western Foni, and they should expand this support to other gardens.

Due to the long outstanding conflict in the Casamance region, many people are discouraged with the progress made to date. Refugees met by the mission explained that for some of them, they had sought in The Gambia at least five times over the course of the conflict. Others said they have already started the process of moving to The Gambia, as indicated below:

- Even before the outbreak of fighting that prompted their depart, people from Casamance were sending children to the English school system in The Gambia although Senegal, their home country is Francophone;
- A number of refugees have removed the roofing materials from their houses in Casamance and used it in The Gambia;

- Although the majority of refugees still live with host families, some have started constructing permanent shelters;
- Refugees have solid socio-cultural basis for local integration such as:
  - Same traditions, culture and language (Jola) for both refugees and local communities;
  - Same and cross border activities (farming, firewood collection, etc.);
  - Blood parent ship and inter marriage.

Farm land is widely available in the host communities, with only a few exceptions. Similarly, the latter are rather prepared to allocate plots for permanent shelter construction. Consequently, there is a largely open door for humanitarian organizations to build on above steps and provide substantial support for a real local integration. However, such a lasting solution cannot take place without a well informed legal framework which should be formally adopted by the Gambian government.

The JAM recommends that a UNHCR high level delegation initiates consultations with the Gambian government on the best way to go about developing a legal framework for Local Integration.

#### **f. Long Term Negative Impact of Non Successful Local Integration**

During the reporting period, there were very few young men on the ground as most were in the Kombo, as discussed earlier. Only elders, women, children, a few men and vulnerable people including individuals with handicap were in the field. If appropriate steps are not taken to mitigate such rural exodus, and improve their living conditions in rural areas hosting refugees, one of the most predictable long run impacts will be increased security and banditry problems in town with overcrowded skirmishes and illegal practices for survival.

### 3. NON-FOOD ITEMS

#### a. Non-Food Items – Needs and Distribution

In 2006, Non-Food Items (NFI) for Senegalese refugees were distributed by the Gambia Red Cross Society (GRCS) as UNHCR Implementing Partner in the Gambia.

**Table 6: Items Distributed from UNHCR Stock Pile Accra**

Item	Quantity	Rate/unit US\$	Total US\$
1 Blankets	1000	3.24	3,240.00
2 Sleeping mats	1000	1.63	1,630.00
3 Jerry cans	1000	1.76	1,760.00
4 Soap	14460	0.12	1,735.20
5 Kitchen sets	680	7.47	5,079.60
6 Sanitary Napkins	1500	1.72	2,580.00
7 Multi purpose sheeting per roll	35	82.14	2,874.90
8 Plastic sheeting	85	7.95	675.75
9 Mosquito Nets	500	4.5	2,250.00
<b>Total Estimated Value</b>		<b>US\$</b>	<b>21,825.45</b>
		<b>GMD</b>	<b>614,386.42</b>

#### From UNHCR stock pile Senegal

Item	Quantity	Rate/unit US\$	Total US\$
1 Blankets	100	3.24	324.00
2 Sleeping mats	100	1.63	163.00
3 Jerry cans	200	1.76	352.00
4 Soap	600	0.12	72.00
5 Multi purpose sheeting per roll	25	82.14	2,053.50
6 Plastic sheeting	25	7.95	198.75
7 Mosquito Nets	500	4.5	2,250.00
<b>Total Estimated Value</b>		<b>US\$</b>	<b>5,413.25</b>
		<b>GMD</b>	<b>152,382.99</b>

In addition, the following interventions were received and distributed by the GRCS.

- 2000 blankets from IFRC, Dakar
- 800 bed nets from IFRC, Dakar
- 12 bags of assorted used cloths from Humanity First, The Gambia
- Assorted used cloths from Iceland Red Cross
- Assorted used clothes from Danish Friends of The Gambia.

For 2008 and upward, the JAM recommends further distributions of sanitary materials, towels and mosquito nets.

#### **b. Health, Water and Sanitation**

The joint UNHCR/WFP assessment mission of September 2006 made the following recommendations for UNICEF/WHO assistance:

- i) WHO/UNICEF ascertain that children are all covered against measles at nine months and fully immunised at 12 months, following WHO recommendations, and that outreach teams vaccinate children against measles and yellow fever as was the case for meningitis with a proven vaccination cards of the vaccines injected;
- ii) UNICEF assess the situation in all villages regarding hand pump wells, concrete lined wells, and pit latrines in order to calculate the number of pit latrines needed to facilitate better hygiene conditions; ii) start chlorinating wells so that people have access to potable water; iii) distribute soap for refugees and possibly host families in particular to pregnant women and children.

In response to these recommendations, UNICEF/WHO Country Offices conducted a rapid assessment of water, sanitation and health situations in 32 host communities. Up to 180 improved pit latrines were constructed in 32 host communities based on the findings of the assessment. An open well in Karunorr was rehabilitated and equipped with a hand pump to provide safe water. Also, 84 water sources were tested and chlorinated by the Department of Water resources. The test findings showed that a majority (85%) of the water sources had faecal pollution.

#### **c. Community Services and Infrastructure**

- **Shelter**

Throughout the villages visited, village leaders assured the mission that land is available for both settlement and agriculture. While the mission did see cases of refugees building their own houses, there were far more cases where refugees did not have the means to do this. Most refugees are still living with host families in crowded conditions. Both host families and refugees expressed that living conditions have deteriorated, as the refugees usually share one room, and host families are also more crowded. Sanitary conditions have also deteriorated and the number latrines is inadequate.

To improve the situation, the JAM recommends that UNHCR provide building materials, especially corrugated sheets for roofing. It will be necessary to determine the level of need among the refugees in order to target interventions appropriately.

#### **d. Education**

The recommendations of the UNHCR/WFP JAM of September 2006 for support to the education of refugee children made the following recommendations to UNICEF and the Department of State for Education (DOSE):

- i) Assess the situation of all the schools where refugees are present in the Western Division in a view to calculating the ratio of rooms/the new refugee children enrolled at school and augment the number of classrooms in the existing Gambian schools;
- ii) Evaluate the quality of the school building and resources for possible repairs and/or upgrading;
- iii) Provide, where necessary, sufficient school materials (chairs, tables, notebooks, pencils, pens, etc.);
- iv) With the support of UNHCR and DOSE, identify teachers for refugee children, as necessary;
- iv) With DOSE, a) ensure that school fees are free-of-charge until the end of the year, allowing refugees and host families to support uniforms and shoes, and later regularise the entrance fee; and, b) through teachers, verify that all refugee children entering schools are fully covered.

From September 2006, UNICEF in response to the above JAM recommendations, and in collaboration with DOSE, enrolled and provided free school fees to all refugee children of school-going age in local community schools nearest their homes, and stocked classrooms with furniture and stationery to fill the resource gap.

The JAM met only one school aged child during the field visits since the others were presumed to be at school. The child had come back to the village at lunch time claiming he did not have the one Dalasi contribution for the meal provided at the school. It appears that not all schools are following the recommendation by WFP and partners to pursue practical solutions, such as doing chores around the school grounds to earn money, for cases where children do not have the cash to pay for meals.

In Jifanga, parents reported that relatively few children were at school because parents were afraid that they may not be in position to pay school fees for all of them. In Bullock, of 43 refugee children, only nine joined the local school system. Others remained at home, as their parents did not want them to attend the English school system.

The mission uncovered a certain level of confusion among refugees surrounding the payment of fees for girls, who are except from school fees in Gambian public schools. Many parents said that they were required to pay for all children

**e. Issues Related to Gender and Protection**

Pursuant to the 2006 JAM recommendation, and with the financial support of UNHCR, the Government of The Gambia has registered and distributed Refugee ID cards to all regularly registered refugees in the Gambia. Above ID Cards are well known by national police and security forces. The issuance of Refugee ID Cards should be considered the main achievement for 2007 as it allows for enjoyment of basic human rights including freedom of movement all over the Gambia.

At the time of the JAM, there was no prospect for peaceful settlement of the long ongoing conflict in Casamance. Rebel groups continue to fight intermittently and the Senegalese army has positioned itself within a few kilometers of the Gambia border.

Many people, in particular women, expressed a certain level of fear with the gun and heavy artillery fire being heard on a regular basis. It is this fear that keeps women from collecting firewood in the Casamance forests and from farming in the field just over the border. In the villages of Upat and Jifanga, which are located less than 200 m from the border, mission members heard shooting and watched rebels and Senegalese army moving alternatively along the border.

#### **4. PARTNERSHIPS, PLANNING AND INTEGRATION POLICY**

From the outset of the influx of refugees from Casamance to The Gambia, there has been a coordinated response. There is a Coordination Committee comprised of GoG representatives, UN agencies and NGOs. The group meets once a month or more often if issues arise.

The Coordination Committee plays an invaluable role in keeping the various members up to date on the response and in informing a wider audience. It is essential that this Coordination Committee be maintained throughout the course of the EMOP and any possible extension.

## **5. PROGRAMME OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **a. Action Plan for Next Six Months (March-September 2008)**

Table 7, below, describes the action needed under the current EMOP, between the time of the JAM and the end of the EMOP. These actions were discussed and agreed upon with partners at the mission's debriefing meeting held on 15 February 2008.

**Table 7: Action Matrix for March – September 2008**

	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Action Needed</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timing Feb-Sept 2008</b>
<b>Local Integration</b>	The option of integration needs to be discussed and recommendations made as soon as possible, to allow families to make decisions on settlement and plan for their futures.	UNHCR to organize a high level mission to discuss local integration opportunities with the GoG.	DOSI/UNHCR	April 2008
<b>Food Assistance</b>	<p>1. Continue full rations under EMOP;</p> <p>2. Develop FFW programmes for host communities</p> <p>3. Extend current food rations and support for six additional months after the current EMOP ends - from October 2008 through March 2009; Reduce ration size from 2,100 Kcal/person/day to 1,600 Kcal/person/day, unless the detailed self reliance assessment in December 2008 recommends otherwise.</p>	<p>Solicit proposals and plan distribution</p> <p>Prepare extension</p>	<p>WFP/GRC</p> <p>WFP/GRC</p> <p>WFP/GRC</p>	<p>March through September 2008</p> <p>April through September 2008</p> <p>July/September 2008</p>
<b>Shelter</b>	Refugee families need assistance with building materials	Selection of refugees to benefit; Appraisal of materials needed; proforma obtained	UNHCR/GRC	March – May 2008
<b>Self Reliance</b>	<p>1. Groundnut and rice seeds should be distributed to refugees and host families well before the rains, by mid-May;</p> <p>2. Encourage timely fertilizer use by refugees and hosts</p> <p>3. Assist with market linkages between Foni market gardens and the urban areas</p>	<p>1. Estimate the seed requirements; 2. Order seeds through FAO; 3. Deliver seeds to farmers by mid-May;</p> <p>Fertilizer distribution for cash or credit needs to be adequate and early</p> <p>Facilitate sales of vegetables through CU office in Fajara</p>	<p>FAO/UNHCR</p> <p>Relevant partners</p> <p>CU and other partners</p>	<p>March: Needs estimate; April: Order and Delivery of seeds; May: Distribution</p> <p>June 2008</p> <p>March – April 2008</p>

<b>Protection</b>	Ensure that all refugees are registered, have their ID cards, or at least understand the registration process		UNHCR/DOSI	March – May 2008
<b>Water and Sanitation</b>	Repair broken wells, deepen those that are insufficient Build additional latrines	Identify areas with greatest needs	Department of Water Resources, UNICEF	March – July 2008
<b>Health</b>	Ensure that all refugees understand their rights to healthcare at the designated health centers – Bwiam Hospital and Sibanor Clinic			

## **b. Recommendations**

1. The JAM mission recommends that the EMOP be extended for a period of six months (October 2008 through March 2009):
  - ⇒ During this time, the JAM mission recommends that the Country Office (CO) conduct an in-depth food security and self reliance assessment to determine the level of self reliance among all refugees (those based in the urban areas and the Fonis) in order to decide on the necessity of any future operations;
  - ⇒ Once the assessment provides a clearer analysis of the refugees' situation, phase out strategies and activities can be designed either for a complete phase out in March 2009, or a more gradual withdrawal over a longer period of time;
2. The option of local integration should be discussed urgently with the GoG and recommendations made as soon as possible to allow families to make decisions on settlement and plan for their future.
3. For the remaining period of the current EMOP, the JAM mission recommends that the CO and partners put a greater emphasis on self reliance activities, in particular agricultural and horticultural production:
  - ⇒ Seeds (groundnut and rice) and tools should be distributed to refugees and host families well before the rains, by mid-May;
  - ⇒ Examine ways to increase fertilizer use among refugee and host families (grants, credit);
  - ⇒ Food For Work (FFW) activities should be planned for host communities for a period of at least 6 months (April – September 2008).
4. Improve living conditions for host communities and refugees through:
  - ⇒ Assistance refugees to procure building materials, in particular roofing (selection should be made with communities and based on need);
  - ⇒ Repair broken wells, deepen those that are insufficient;

⇒ Build additional latrines;

⇒ Lobby/research funding for new bore hole wells.

5. In terms of protection, ensure that all refugees are registered and have ID cards through on-going awareness raising efforts.
6. To ensure that refugees have access to adequate health care, continue efforts to inform refugees of their rights to healthcare at the designated centers – Bwiam Hosptial and Sibanor Clinic.
7. In terms of education, conduct a more detailed analysis of this and promote higher enrolment where necessary.

## **6. REFERENCES**

Compte Rendu de la Mission d’Evaluation du Déficit Céréalière et Fourrager, 16 au 26/01/2008, Cabinet du Premier Ministre, Secrétariat Exécutif du Conseil National à la Sécurité Alimentaire, République du Sénégal.

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UNHCR/WFP Joint Assessment Mission, Senegalese Refugee Influx into the Western Division of The Gambia, Final Report, September 2006.

## **7. ANNEXES**

### **Annex 1: Terms of Reference**

#### **Terms of reference of Periodic Joint Review/Re-assessment Mission**

##### **I. Context**

The Senegalese army, in August 2006, commenced a major offensive against rebel groups in the Casamance area of southern Senegal. While this has been one of West Africa's longest running conflicts, the involvement of the army and the intensity of the fighting resulted in many of the local population fleeing and seeking refuge in neighbouring Gambia.

Currently, The Gambia is a host to 6,500 refugees from the Casamance (UNHCR, 2006) and almost all refugees are being hosted in Gambian households in 56 villages located in the Kombo and Foni Districts of the Western Region adjacent to the Casamance area.

The urgent need for food aid for both refugees and host families was highlighted by UN and NGOs. This was confirmed by a Joint UNHCR/WFP Assessment Mission (JAM) undertaken in mid-September 2006. The JAM recommended providing food assistance to the refugees and advocated for the host families to receive food as well. In response, the WFP Country Office initiated an immediate response EMOP (IR-EMOP 10550.0), providing food to all refugees for four months from October 2006 to January 2007 for an initial emergency support while preparing a longer term EMOP. In addition some NGOs provided a limited food support to host families for the period October 2006 - March 2007.

In February 2007, the EMOP 10572.0 was launched with the aim of preventing hunger and malnutrition of refugees and protecting and preventing the deterioration of the host population's livelihood due to the refugee influx. As this Operation will end in September 2008 and taking into account the unpredictable nature of the Casamance conflict, a UNHCR/WFP Joint Assessment Mission has been proposed to assess the current situation and determine the next course of action to be taken beyond September 2008.

##### **II. Objectives**

The overall objective of the mission is to assess the situation for the refugees and host communities, and determine possible appropriate support strategies for WFP and UNHCR both in the short and long term including repatriation process and 'phase out' programme that would incorporate food and non-food assistance.

The specific objectives are to:

- a) Determine whether and how the performance of the ongoing operation can be improved in relation to the defined objectives for the food security, nutritional status, self-reliance and the general well-being of the refugees and host populations; in particular, review the implementation of the food and non-food assistance, commenced in October 2006 and highlight lessons learned that can contribute to sustainable support to refugees and host communities and to the process of 'phase out' programme;
- b) Identify the positive elements on which to build and any specific problems and constraints that may be impeding the achievement of objectives, and propose solutions;

- c) Determine whether the present objectives remain appropriate in the light of the current situation and prospects for a durable solution, and propose modification if needed;
- d) Assess the current food security and under-nutrition situations of refugees and host communities, analyze the livelihood strategies of refugees and evaluate their capacities to complement the food assistance with other sources of income;
- e) Assess the current and future food and non food needs of refugees, ensuring not only acceptable food security conditions, but also the achievement of the 'durable solution' including, self-reliance, health, shelter, water, education, clothing, and all other non-food related issues;
- f) Develop or update a strategic plan for self-reliance - determine what new measures are necessary and what continuing assistance is required to ensure that the refugees achieve the maximum possible level of sustainable self-reliance pending a durable solution, and identify possibilities for the involvement of governmental, UN and NGO development agencies and linkages with development programmes in the area;
- g) Evaluate the strategies pursued by the Government of The Gambia and its partners (including UNHCR and WFP) for the repatriation and/or integration of refugees and propose a strategy for WFP and UNHCR to facilitate repatriation/re-integration of refugees, while identifying possibilities to reinforce the collaboration with local partners and projects; and,
- h) Define the types of food and related assistance (including assistance for self-reliance) required for the next 12-24 months following the end of the on-going response (EMOP 10550.0), including: the number of people to be provided for; how the food and related assistance should be delivered, targeted and distributed; how assistance for self-reliance activities should be provided.

### **III. Methodology**

The assessment is a joint WFP/UNHCR effort, and will combine various data collection techniques, while cross-checking information to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. Information will be collected by the JAM through a combination of:

- Reviewing and analysing relevant reports/documents on (i) the numbers and the situation of the refugees in different locations and any recent movements, (ii) their backgrounds, skills and capacities, (iii) the effectiveness and efficiency of current food and related assistance programmes, (iv) the current health and nutrition situation and factors influencing health and nutritional status, (v) natural resource potential, particularly fuel-wood, (vi) security, protection and gender concerns
- Meetings with national, regional and local authorities, NGOs and other organisations working with the refugees in related programmes;
- Meetings/focus groups discussions with groups of refugees – men, women and young people/adolescents - representing distinct socio-economic subgroups identified within the population, particularly the refugees engaged in self-reliance activities;

- Visits to refugee and host family locations to discuss with refugee leaders, local community leaders, and to visit community facilities (clinics, schools, etc.) and any other site as may be deemed necessary by the mission;
- Submission and presentation by the JAM, of findings and recommendations to the respective UNHCR and WFP COs, as well as donors, government, NGOs and relevant UN partners. The final report will be approved by UNHCR and WFP in accordance with the JAM guidelines and WFP/UNHCR MoU.

The analysis framework should:

- Document the progress of actions taken to implement the recommendations of the last assessment or review and the related Joint Plan of Action (including any amendments or addendums to it), including the reasons for lack of progress;
- Determine whether current targeting and distribution arrangements succeed in providing assistance to different groups of refugees according to need, and whether there are alternative methods that could be more effective and efficient;
- Determine whether the rations distributed have enabled refugees to meet their nutritional requirements and what the effects have been of any failure to deliver the planned rations;
- Determine the extent to which the refugees, or different groups among them, are able to meet the food needs of their families and how the level of self-reliance can be expected to change during the next 12-24 months, whether there are any possibilities for increasing the refugee's self-reliance and what measures and inputs would be required;
- Identify the ways in which the refugees access to sufficient appropriate food can be assured during the next 12-24 months and, where there are alternatives, the pros, cons and implications of each;
- Identify factors that assure or inhibit the receipt of food rations by vulnerable/at risk individuals, and measures that could reduce inhibiting factors; and,
- Identify factors contributing to or inhibiting the effective and efficient use of available food, and measures that could reduce inhibiting factors.

#### **IV. Output, responsibility and timing**

At the end of the mission, the JAM team will summarize its key recommendations through an Aide-mémoire to be presented to the respective UNHCR and WFP Country Offices, as well as to donors, government and representatives of other relevant UN agencies and organizations.

The second output of the JAM will be a joint report approved by UNHCR and WFP, covering the specific objectives, as outlined above. The draft of the whole report will be circulated at late 15 days after the end of the field mission. The final report will be available for clearance by UNHCR and WFP Country Offices no longer than 10 days after the first draft. The key responsibilities of members of the assessment team and WFP/UNHCR country offices are described below.

##### **WFP mission leader**

He/She will be responsible for the overall implementation of the JAM and achievement of the objectives. He/She will liaise with the representatives of WFP and UNHCR, coordinate the work of team members, participate in the launching and finalisation sessions, bear overall responsibility for the report - ie. writing and presenting the final recommendations to the WFP and UNHCR country directors. The team leader will spend time in The Gambia for the launching of the mission; -data collection and analysis; -individual report writing; - finalization and presentation of report.

##### **UNHCR member**

Will be responsible of the UNHCR side; contribute to all phases of the survey; coordinate the inputs from various UNHCR resource persons; contribute to the report writing.

##### **WFP / UNHCR COs**

Officials of **WFP / UNHCR COs** will participate in the mission and provide necessary inputs.

Timing: Mid-February 2008

## Annex 2: Map of Intervention Area

### Map showing the location of refugees

