

A.7 Rwanda - 2008 - Returns

Materials distribution and technical guidance

Project type:

Community mobilisation
Establishment of beneficiary associations
Technical guidance
Materials distribution

Emergency:

Forced repatriation of people of 'Rwandan origin' from Tanzania to Rwanda

No. of people displaced:

Approximately 60,000 people considered to be illegal immigrants in Tanzania were required to return to Rwanda. 8,000 people had been forced to return by June 2007.

Project target population:

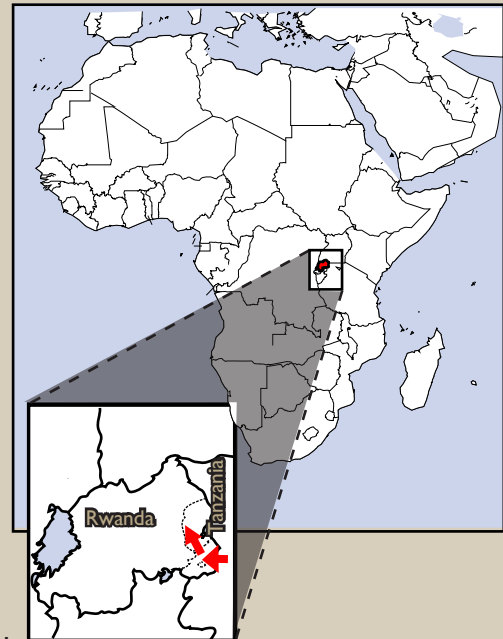
469 households

Occupancy rate on handover:

All 220 shelters completed by August 2008 were occupied.

Shelter size

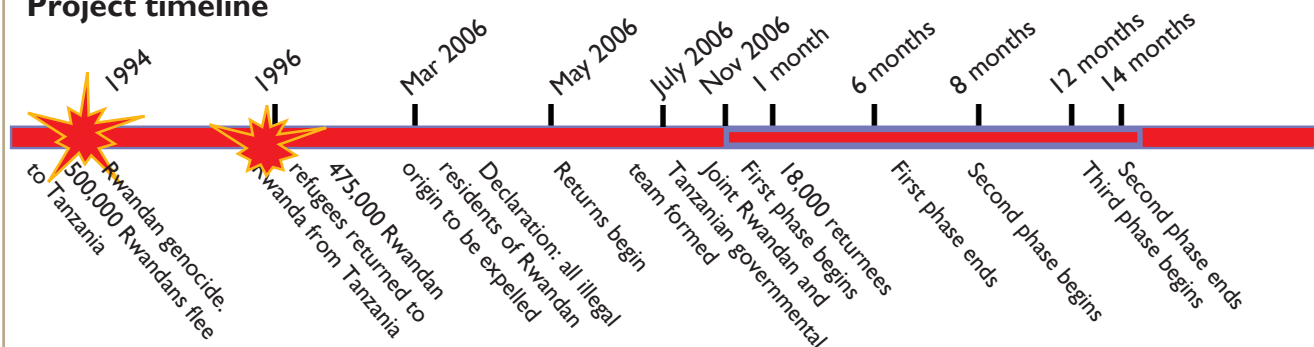
48 m² (6m x 8m)



Summary

This project provided support to people of Rwandan origin expelled from Tanzania by providing materials for house building, masons and providing shared services at the site of return. Communities were mobilised by forming beneficiary associations in consultation with the local government. The role of the associations was to collectivise the tasks required for house building.

Project timeline



Strengths and weaknesses

X By collectivising activities in mixed beneficiary associations, shelter was built for all members of the community without requiring a different construction process for vulnerable households.

X Participation of vulnerable beneficiaries in the construction process was possible and necessary.

X Integration of returnee families and local families in one resettlement site meant that the association approach increased opportunities for integration.

W Some houses were quickly attacked by termites as timbers had not been treated or protected.

W People had to resolve their current shelter problems as best they could until their house was completed. For some families this meant living in makeshift shelters for nearly two years.



Photo: Matthias Wohlfell

Completed shelters

Situation before emergency

Despite a long history of welcoming Rwandan refugees, the Government of Tanzania decided in March 2006 to expel people of 'Rwandan origin' who had arrived in Tanzania at any time from the 1920s onwards and who did not have legal permission to stay.

Four categories of illegal immigrants were defined: migrants from the 1920s, 1959 refugees, 1994 refugees and those that had arrived from 2005 onwards. Most of these people lived in the Kagera region of north Tanzania (which borders Rwanda) and many did not speak Kinyarwanda, the primary language of Rwanda. Only a few hundred of those specified by the criteria lived in the refugee camp in the region. The vast majority were integrated into the local Tanzanian communities.

Forced returns began in May 2006 and many of those forced to return experienced violence in some form and had their property seized. Many returnees, the majority of whom were women and children, arrived in Rwanda empty-handed and without relatives to stay with.

After the emergency

A return process was agreed to by the Rwandan and Tanzanian governments in July 2006. Returnees passed

through a transit centre in Kiyanzi, in the Kirehe District of Rwanda, where they would wait before being allocated land in the east of the country by the government.

The Rwandan government identified a number of resettlement sites, including Rugeyo and Ndego. Joining 208 returnee families in Ndego were 156 poor households from the surrounding area, which the Rwandan government hoped would help with integration in establishing the new 'villages'. In Rugeyo, 105 returnee households were settled on their own.

Although each household was allocated its own plot of land, the resettlement sites lacked both water and sanitation. In cooperation with the local district authorities, the project agency provided accommodation and latrines to 469 families in the Rugeyo and Ndego resettlement sites.

While the beneficiaries completed their houses, they lived in temporary, makeshift mud huts with roofs made of plastic sheeting, which was distributed as part of a return package.

Selection of beneficiaries

With returnees having to rebuild their livelihoods from scratch, the project used the construction programmes to create a sense of

solidarity among the returnees and the local families that had moved to the new villages, and to support the returnees in providing for themselves.

Both returnees and local families living in the resettlement sites were considered as beneficiaries of the project, with all households requiring shelter. Vulnerability criteria were used to decide which houses would be built first.

Implementation

Beneficiary associations were established by the agency in collaboration with local authorities. The associations were small groups of beneficiary families formed to collectivise the tasks required for house building. Peer pressure within the group helped to ensure that tasks got done.

The formation of associations was accompanied by an intense community mobilisation campaign. Representatives of local authorities and community leaders conducted meetings with all beneficiaries to explain the aims of the project and how the project would be implemented.

Beneficiaries were free to choose which group they wanted to join as long as each group had a mixed membership. Each group had to include women and men, young and old people,

those of different physical abilities, as well as able people.

Each association produced the necessary materials to build houses for all the families in its group. They produced the clay bricks needed (1,800 for a house; 200 for a latrine), dug latrines, de-barked timbers to be used for construction and cleared and levelled sites. Associations were registered with the local authority and all work was unremunerated.

'Nobody is vulnerable! You can always give something to your community!' -Slogan of the mobilisation teams in the returnee communities

Through the collectivisation of tasks it was possible to build houses for all members of the community. This would not have been possible if families had worked alone. Materials that could not be produced were provided: cement, foundation stones, sand, construction wood, doors and windows, roof sheeting, as well as tools and other non-food items. Materials were provided at the appropriate stage of construction.

Before house building began, the agency contracted skilled masons to build latrines, each shared by two households. Once the latrines were completed and the necessary construction materials were produced, house building could begin.

Although no other shelter materials were provided for the transitional period between arrival in the new villages and construction of new houses, the agency supported initial livelihood recovery with a distribution of seeds and food rations.

The construction of each house was overseen by a skilled mason hired by the agency and paid a total of US\$ 240 in five instalments for each house. Each household appointed one person from the household to be an assistant to the mason, who monitored the attendance and contribution of the assistant. In return for providing their labour, the 'assistants' learned basic construction skills as well as improving their physical living conditions.

The associations were supported by agency field workers who dealt with questions and resolved problems.

Technical solution

After approval of the house design by the Ministry of Infrastructure, the building of houses was monitored by the agency, with inspections made by local authority representatives.

The design is based on local building traditions but with some upgrading, such as cement plastering.

Each house provides 48m² of covered living space (6m x 8m) and has four rooms and one corridor with two doors. A foundation of hardcore, sand and cement is laid for each house and the exterior of the mud-brick walls is coated in 'rough-cast' – a mixture of cement and other materials to provide protection against the weather.

The roof is made of galvanised roofing sheeting and additional roofing sheets were used for the guttering.

Each house is equipped with a rainwater catchment system, storing up to 1.2 cubic metres of water. The system follows the local design and uses cement layers cast together over a reed mould. Local technicians were hired to produce the mould and others to make the cement layers.

To reduce the fuelwood used for cooking, the agency has developed a stove design in collaboration with the Kigali Institute for Science and Technology. The stove can be built out of local materials and has greatly improved fuel efficiency, protecting the community's natural resources from deforestation.

Planned shared services

In its third phase, the project is now concentrating on the following shared services:

- A multi-purpose community centre to be shared with surrounding villages. It is intended to be a semi-open hangar accommodating up to 300 people with storage rooms for materials and products of local workshops.
- A day centre for children whose parents worked in the fields.
- Boreholes are also planned to improve access to clean water.

Logistics and materials

Some materials were transported directly to the site and distributed to each plot. Other materials of high value or requiring special storage were stocked in a nearby warehouse and distributed on demand.

Beneficiaries were involved in the quality control of materials and were responsible for ensuring the security of the warehouse.

Materials	Quantity
I) Foundation	
Twine for setting out	2 balls
Cement	2.5 sacks
Plastic sheeting for roof	0.2 roll
Hardcore	10 m ³
Sand	5m ³
II) Walls	
Brick mould	1 piece
Plastic sheeting for water	1 piece
Timber planks	5.5 pieces
Breeze blocks	8 pieces
Poles for scaffolding	4 pieces
Mud bricks (20 x20x35 cm)	1800
III) Roof	
Poles for truss	26 pieces
Nails 15cm	3 kg
Nails 12cm	3 kg
Nails 10cm	3 kg
Nails 6cm	2 kg
Roofing nails	3 kg
Roofing sheets	29 pieces
Strip iron - for binding joints	18 pieces / 1.5m each
IV) Exterior	
Cement	3 sacs
Doors	2 pieces
Windows	4 pieces
V) Other	
Roofing sheets for gutter	2 pieces