

Assessment on the Environmental Health Conditions and Associated Health Threats in Kebribeyhae Refuge Camp Somali National Regional State, Ethiopia

Introduction: The living conditions and wellbeing of refugees can be evaluated from different perspectives. One is the assessment against absolute standards that can be identified as acceptable levels. To guide and monitor its mandated activities, UNHCR uses a set of such standards, which are largely in line with SPHERE standards and recommendations of other UN agencies.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the environmental health conditions and associated health threats in Kebribeyah Refugee camp; Somali National Regional State; Ethiopia from October to June, 2010. Four hundred and twenty two households were recruited as a study population. Standardized and structured questionnaire, observational and key informant checklists were used for data collection. Data was entered; cleaned and analyzed using statistical software and Statistical Package for the Social Sciences were utilized for data management. Data were analyzed descriptively with simple frequency distribution, cross tabs, odds ratio, binary and multivariate regression.

Results: it was found that only 33% of the individuals in the sample households met the minimum 15 liter per-capita daily water consumption standard requirement of Sphere Project. Seventy one percent of the households had a traditional pit latrine. Twenty eight percent of the respondents perceived that their shelter is adequate for all purpose. Moreover from the sampled occupants' shelter, 288 (68.2%) were infested with at least one type of public health important insects. The solid waste administration and management practice met the UNHCR indicated standards. The majority of the reported diseases 90.7% were either directly or indirectly associated with the environmental health conditions.

Conclusions: The aggregate values computed for adequacy of shelter, water supply, sanitary latrine coverage, insect and vector control and the health provision programs did not meet the UNHCR and Sphere project standards. Therefore, maximal endeavors are requiring for improving the overwhelming circumstances. Generally the concerned refugee administration should be integrating all the activities in the forth coming strategic plan.

Key wards: Environmental health, shelter conditions, water supply, sanitation, personal hygiene, public health important vectors, Refugees, Kebribeyah, Somali national regional state, Ethiopia.