

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATED STATEMENT REGARDING THEFT INVESTIGATION

Uganda, March 26th, 2018: On 20th March 2018, The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) received a complaint from a refugee on the theft of food items at the Kyaka II refugee settlement.

This incident took place at the Sweswe Reception Centre where DRC manages the wet feeding kitchen. During the initial response to the complaint, the police arrested four suspects including one DRC staff member and the Chairman of Asylum Seekers who is also contracted by DRC as a casual worker.

DRC in collaboration with other partners including World Food Programme, UNHCR and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) can confirm 24 bags of maize flour and 9 jerrycans of cooking oil were stolen. DRC has so far initiated administrative procedures by placing both employees on suspension as the criminal investigations and legal processes continue.

DRC's humanitarian food assistance programmes aim at ensuring the availability of, access to, and consumption of safe and nutritious food for the most vulnerable people. Food theft reduces the vital relief available to refugees in an extremely vulnerable situation, which is why we treat this incident with utmost seriousness.

As we work towards concluding a thorough investigation with the local police and relevant stakeholders, we would like to reiterate that we are deeply dissatisfied that DRC employees have been implicated in the theft of food items meant for refugees. Theft is a criminal act that is against the DRC Code of Conduct and the core values that each employee vows to uphold.

At this point another senior staff member has been barred from access to Kyaka II refugee settlement by the OPM. This staff member is not suspected of being part of the theft, but this step was taken in order to let the police fully conduct their investigation.

In the last year, DRC in Uganda reached more than 314,000 people with key emergency interventions. The Kyaka II refugee settlement has a population of approximately 49,000 refugees providing intervention in protection/community services, livelihoods, management

of the reception centre, and WASH. We would like to reaffirm that DRC is fully committed to providing humanitarian food assistance and support for refugees.

We look forward to continuing our work at the Kyaka settlement with the highest level of professionalism, transparency and accountability.

For more information please contact DRC Country Director in Uganda, Jean-Christophe Saint Esteben at jc.saintesteben@drcuganda.org

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