

## Mozambican Refugees In Zimbabwe

1. Over 1983-84 probably at least 100,000 (perhaps up to 200,000) Mozambicans have died of famine. This is partly drought/flood/cyclone. Primarily it is political - the MNR (the RSA mercenary/proxy insurgency) has systematically destroyed relief grain stores, clinics, bridges, lorries and killed drought relief personnel. In more northern areas which were equally weather hit but less MNR hit, Mozambique and agencies have pushed relief food/some medical through and there is not mass famine death disaster.
2. Mozambican refugees have fled on foot (many - especially children - dying en route) to eastern/southeastern Zimbabwe from last half 1983 on. Rise in flow in early 1984. Now estimated to be about 80,000 (half at least children).
3. The part of Zimbabwe they are in is poor, isolated, itself hit by third successive year of drought. Many Zimbabweans have been hospitable (but if no money and near starvation yourself you cannot be very hospitable). Local voluntary organisations tried to help. Did some work and got national publicity of the numbers involved and horror. National human response good, e.g. all workers at a clothing mill gave a free day's work (on Saturday) to making children's garments and factory gave cloth, Holiday Inn sent soap and food, at least one secondary school's students raised funds, some churches collected goods/money for their churches in area to distribute.
4. But until last few weeks Zimbabwe Government of very mixed mind. Really did not want to know and worried about voluntary effort and associated publicity. (To its credit it did not suppress newspaper and television coverage which it could have done.) And at one point ordered local drought relief people not to give food to Mozambicans and to try to stop Zimbabweans hiring them to work on farms.

5. Why? In 1983-84 Zimbabwe's Budget Deficit (and bank borrowing) has broken IMF trigger clauses. One reason is drought relief which - including items under other votes - may well come to Z\$200 million (\$ USA 160 million) for the year. Last 1983 drawing on IMF Standby was blocked because of trigger clause. Zimbabwe felt spending yet more money to save Mozambican lives would kill its IMF programme, chance of follow on 1984/5 IMF arrangement, chance of Bank structural adjustment support. It felt (rightly or wrongly) IMF officials on country team were totally unsympathetic to drought relief, countering RSA inspired insurgents in Zimbabwe, defending (RSA attacked) low cost rail-road-pipeline link to Beira as reasons for extra spending.
6. I think it fair to say that the IMF trigger clause was killing Mozambican refugees (especially children).
7. There are some positive developments:
  - a. Zimbabwe has blocked dividend and similar remittances to cover most of (\$200 million plus) 1984 food imports to offset drought;
  - b. it has reaffirmed drought relief and reorganized toward \$2(Z) a day rural works programme in drought areas as main relief vehicle;
  - c. It has - to a degree - sold IMF (I think at higher level) on this and got its delayed tranche. (But very gloomy on prospects any further arrangements. Feels reality of drought and starvation treated by IMF as a form of wasteful bureaucratic spending.)
  - d. Zimbabwe has decided it must try to save Mozambicans. Has begun one large camp and is committed to two more. Actively canvassing for international help. Major publicity to UNHCR/WFP (? - I'm not certain on agencies) \$900,000 for three months initial food/some drugs for 40,000. Has instructed its field people to do what they can and coordinate/use all the voluntary (Zimbabwean) help they can get.
8. But:
  - a. there are 80,000 people;
  - b. they cannot go home until MNR is broken and Mozambique has funds/food for them to survive 6-9 months planting to harvest

cycle;

- c. thus earliest possible return in September 1984 and earliest probable September 1985;
- d. so Zimbabwe has 80,000 human beings (not 40,000) for realistically 15 (not 3) months;
- e. and still sees its negotiations with IMF and consequently others as prejudiced by trying to keep Zimbabwean/Mozambican drought defeated people from dying.

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