

# Rwanda

January 2024

The birth registration rate for refugee children under five years old currently stands at **97 percent**.

The construction of **28 new classrooms** at Paysannat L school near Mahama refugee camp was completed in January. The new classrooms will greatly improve the classroom to student ration.

In January, **416 refugees in need of advanced health care** were referred to hospitals for treatment. Due to funding limitations, UNHCR is only able to support lifesaving health referrals in 2024.

## KEY STATISTICS

**135,343** refugees and asylum seekers are in

Rwanda as of 31 January 2024. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (62%) and Burundi (37%).

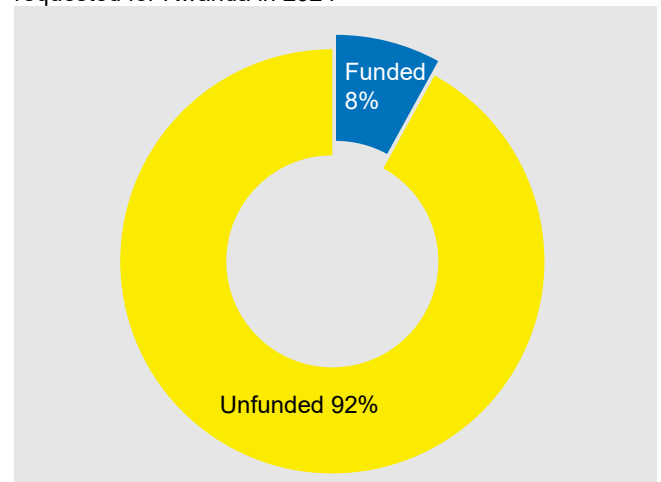
**382** asylum seekers from DRC arrived in Rwanda in January 2024.

**416** refugees were submitted for resettlement in January.

## FUNDING NEEDS

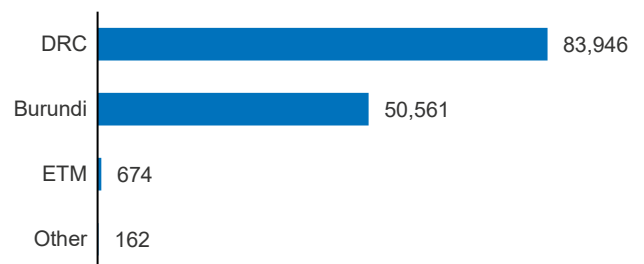
**USD 91.7 million**

requested for Rwanda in 2024



An art workshop takes place in Nyabiheke refugee camp in collaboration with Rwandan artist Timothy Wandulu and Concept Arts Studio

## CURRENT POPULATION



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

## Operational Context & Partners

The Government of Rwanda (GoR), through the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), leads the refugee response in Rwanda in coordination with UNHCR. In addition, a range of UN Agencies, NGOs, operational and development partners participate in sector working groups at both country and district levels. In 2024, UNHCR works directly with eight NGO partners in implementing key activities to assist both the refugee population and Rwandan host communities. To further strengthen the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR maintains close collaboration with key government institutions, ministries, operational partners, and the private sector working with refugees in Rwanda.



### PROTECTION

- UNHCR works closely with the Government of Rwanda, specifically Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration, to issue refugee ID cards to refugees over 16 years old. Currently the Refugee ID coverage stands at 87 percent.
- UNHCR works in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) to provide legal counselling and assistance. In January, 31 criminal cases and 7 civil cases were assisted before the courts. In addition, 35 asylum seekers from Sudan, Burundi, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and DRC were provided about counselling about asylum procedures and supported to submit their asylum application to DGIE.
- In January, 382 new asylum seekers fled from DRC to Rwanda and were initially accommodated at Nkamira Transit centre. As of the end of the month, Nkamira hosted 5,324 individuals, while 8,147 asylum seekers have been transferred to existing refugee camps in Rwanda.
- UNHCR continues the registration of new asylum seekers to provide documentation to the 13,471 asylum seekers who have sought safety in Rwanda since November 2022. 23 asylum seekers were registered during January. Following approval from the Government of Rwanda in 2023, UNHCR continues to issue proof of registration documents to new asylum seekers from DRC.
- 34 percent of the refugee population were born in Rwanda. The birth registration rate among refugees born in Rwanda irrespective of age stands at 93%, and for children below 5 years of age the coverage stands at 97%. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and associated ministries to improve the birth registration rates as refugees are included within the national Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system.
- To continue to fulfil its mandate, UNHCR has established various channels to facilitate communication with refugees such as help lines, SMS, WhatsApp, email, face-to-face counselling, and community meetings. In January, 184 refugees made inquiries in Kigali with 28 percent of requests concerning health care and 25 percent on resettlement.
- In Rwanda, UNHCR partners with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to support people with specific needs. In January, in Nyabiheke refugee camp, for example, 11 refugees with eye concerns were identified and supported with specialized medical care services in the Kabgayi Eye hospital.
- In January, UNHCR observed an increase in mental health cases needing support particularly among the new DRC asylum seekers. At Nkamira transit centre, 97 new mental health cases were identified during the month with more than 100 cases currently receiving treatment and assistance.
- UNHCR in Rwanda provides urgent financial assistance to refugees living in urban areas in exceptional cases to help them meet their basic needs such as paying rent and buying food. In 2024, this assistance is directly provided by Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) as part of UNHCR's partnership agreement with them.

- UNHCR operates Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) across all refugee camps in Rwanda in partnership with SCI and Plan International where refugee youth and children can participate in recreational activities such as arts and crafts, reading, online digital platforms for learning, and sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball.



## EDUCATION

- The construction of 28 new classrooms at Paysannat L school near Mahama refugee camp was completed in January. The completion of these classrooms will greatly improve classroom to student ratio which is now 1:80 for primary and 1:65 for secondary level. Currently the school uses 87 classrooms accommodating more than 9,400 refugees and host community students. While these additional classrooms will have significant impact, the ratio of classroom to students in this school remains far from reaching the national standard which is 1:46.
- Following the resumption of school on 8th January after the 2nd term break, the school attendance rate in refugee hosting schools in the first two weeks was relatively low averaging about 86% of the enrolled students attending regularly. This prompted series of back-to-school campaigns and the school attendance rate has subsequently bounced back to its weekly average of 97%.
- UNHCR in partnership with World Vision and SCI organized a reproductive health awareness session with 57 teachers (of ECD, primary and secondary) at the informal school in Nkamira Transit Centre which aimed at increasing awareness on prevention of teenage pregnancy which is a large reason for school dropouts.
- As part of the efforts to improve literacy among children, Impact Hope launched a 'Mobile Library' in Mahama primary schools. Interested students can easily access age-appropriate books/reading materials such as story books which are transported from one school to another on motorbike.
- UNHCR provides refugee students with scholastic materials to facilitate their education. In January, 31 asylum seekers-students were provided with school uniforms while 25 others were provided with scholastic materials in Nyabiheke refugee camp
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## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- UNHCR is managing eight camp-based health care facilities in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children (SCI) and Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) at the ETM. The health centres and posts offer a broad range of primary health care services, including laboratory tests and vaccinations. In addition, some services including the provision of TB and HIV medications are provided through district government health centres. In January, 24,633 primary health care consultations took place at the camp-based facilities making the ratio 50 consultations per day, per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities.
- At the ETM, 900 primary health consultations took place at the clinic in January, an average of 30 persons per clinician day. 31 refugees were referred to hospitals for treatment and three new babies was born. UNHCR and AHA also provided for supplementary nutrition for 27 children under two and 28 adults with special nutrition needs.
- Due to funding challenges, UNHCR is currently only able to support the referrals of refugees to secondary and tertiary healthcare in emergency or lifesaving cases. Other refugees in need of elective

healthcare including routine or minor surgeries are having to be put on a waiting list. In January, 416 cases were referred to hospitals for further treatment.

- To support the nutrition of refugees and prevent malnutrition, UNHCR and partners conduct regular nutrition screenings and provide support for vulnerable refugees especially infants, children under the age of six, mothers and refugees with chronic diseases. 5,410 refugee children between 6-23 months and 1,763 pregnant/lactating refugee women are currently assisted through the supplementary feeding programme. In addition, 25 severely acute malnutrition and 104 moderately acute malnutrition refugee children were newly admitted into nutrition programmes for treatment. UNHCR has observed an increase of malnutrition cases over the last month.
- From 1 to 31 January 2024, in collaboration with community health workers and clinical staff (nurses), SCI Nyabiheke conducted Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) screening at community level in the camp. As a result, 18 people were diagnosed with essential hypertension and 24 people with Hyperglycaemia, all cases have been enrolled in NCDs program.



### FOOD SECURITY

- In support of the World Food Programme (WFP) cash assistance for food programme in refugee camps across Rwanda, UNHCR provided lists of refugees in the highly vulnerable and moderately vulnerable categories who are eligible to receive assistance. In total, 88 percent of refugees are classified as highly vulnerable, while 6 percent of refugees are moderately vulnerable. As part of the cash transfers for food assistance distributed by WFP refugees in the highly vulnerable category receive 8,500 RWF a month and 4,250 RWF for the moderately vulnerable. All new asylum seekers from DRC relocated to existing camps are enrolled in the highly vulnerable category for three months to enable them to receive the full food assistance value. Asylum seekers in Nkamira Transit Centre receive two meals a day from WFP.
- In January, the renovation and expansion of the kitchen in Nkamira Transit Centre begun. As of the end of the month, construction works are at 75 percent completion. This will ease the cooking and distribution of in kind meals to asylum seekers accommodated at the centre.
- In support of school feeding programmes, UNHCR provides briquettes to ECD schools in refugee camps. For primary and secondary schools, the Government has the responsibility for school feeding and WFP also supports by contributing 90 percent of the cost of refugee school feeding directly to the Government of Rwanda.
- In January, UNHCR continued to provide three hot meals a day to refugees and asylum seekers accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda. 87 LPG cylinders were provided to persons with special dietary requirements to support their particular cooking needs.



### WATER AND SANITATION

- UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, provides water to refugees living in all refugee camps, reception, and transit centres across Rwanda. In January, water supply averaged 21.5 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Despite this, water supply remains a challenge in Nyabiheke and Kigeme.
- In January, UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, distributed 2,238 litres (L) of liquid soap for handwashing and other cleaning practices to stave off diarrheal diseases in all sites. Throughout the

month, UNHCR also worked to remove sludge from septic tanks across the camps and dispose of garbage.

- In Nkamira, UNHCR has finalized the construction of latrines, showers and other WASH facilities to meet the needs of 7,200 asylum seekers from DRC who can be hosted at the transit centre. Currently there are 22.0 litres of clean water person per day, 40 persons per latrine drop hole and 41 persons per shower stance.



### SHELTER AND NFIS

- During the month of January, UNHCR rehabilitated a total of 68 shelters across the camps, this includes: 22 shelters in Kigeme camp, 18 shelters in Mugombwa camp, 17 shelters in Kiziba camp and 11 shelters in Nyabiheke camp.
- In the month of January, a total of 15 terraces were constructed by UNHCR to protect shelters on high-risk areas, this includes: 8 terraces in Mugombwa camp and 7 terraces in Kigeme camp.
- In January, UNHCR provided monthly cash assistance to refugees accommodated at the ETM. In addition, bank registration processes for refugees and asylum seekers who were evacuated to the ETM Rwanda in November 2023 were completed where 107 individuals received their new bank cards.



### ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- UNHCR provides gas for clean cooking / energy in kind for refugees in Mahama and Mugombwa refugee camps in the form of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). LPG cookers emit 50 times fewer pollutants than cooking stoves fuelled by biomass such as mud stoves. In total, 18,158 LPG gas cylinders were distributed in January.
- UNHCR distributes cash assistance for energy to refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke and Kigeme refugee camps to ensure refugees have the financial resources to purchase gas for cooking and other energy needs. In 2024, UNHCR will provide cash assistance for energy on a quarterly basis and the first distribution is scheduled for February.
- As part of UNHCR's environmental protection programme in refugee camps 116 trees were planted inside the camp in Mahama in January. In addition, the planting of trees has facilitated the rehabilitation of 22.8 square meters of drainage channels which were facing environmental degradation.



### LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE

- Agriculture is one of the main sectors through which refugee self-reliance can be achieved in Rwanda. UNHCR is currently running three projects to develop refugee and Rwandan host community livelihoods and self-reliance through the Misizi (covering Mugombwa camp), Nyabicwamba (covering Nyabiheke Refugee Camp), and Mushishito (covering Kigeme Refugee Camp) marshlands. In January, heavy rains caused flooding in Mushishito marshland affecting 68 plots of land in the marshland. In addition, during the month, farmers were trained on pesticide control

for maize. In collaboration with Duhuzimbaraga Mushishito cooperative, 70L of pesticide were distributed to farmers.

- In Misizi marshland, UNHCR supported a meeting of the Icyerekezo Misizi cooperative where a member's assembly was convened to discuss 2024 plans. During the meeting farmers expressed some issues related recovery of the debt and theft of their maize cobs from drying sheds. Gisagara district's business development unit also attended the meeting and promised to support cooperative members to settle challenges mentioned by farmers.
- In January, 209 refugees and asylum seekers and 64 members of the host community benefitted from various vocational and skills training activities such as hairdressing, tailoring and ICT/computer literacy. Also, a total of 124 refugees attended language classes (English, Kinyarwanda, and French) to facilitate their integration in the country of asylum and future places of residence.
- Inkomoko, an operational partner in the livelihoods sector, started recruiting refugee entrepreneurs to benefit from its 2024 programme in January. In Mugombwa, for example, 1,100 refugees and Rwanda host community members will be expected to benefit from startup loans and entrepreneurship trainings.
- In Mahama refugee camp, UNHCR met with refugees who own cows in the camp on how to set up milk collection as a way of earning an income. Support was provided in collaboration with Umutanguha microfinance to encourage saving and eventually help them expand their milk collection project.
- In January, the self-reliance Index survey (first round) funded by the World Bank has started country wide in refugee camps. The results will help to guide the graduation of refugees from extreme poverty. UNHCR is coordinating this exercise together with the World Bank and MINEMA.



#### **DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

- In 2024, UNHCR Rwanda received submission resettlement quota of 6,937 individuals. By the end of January 2024, 416 individuals are submitted to resettlement countries. 637 refugees have departed for resettlement and 01 refugees departed through complementary pathways.
- In total, 30,782 Burundian refugees have returned home from Rwanda since 2020 including 325 so far in 2023. In 2024, however, no Burundian returns have so far happened.
- UNHCR provides cash assistance to Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from abroad. The reintegration grant is 250 USD per adult and 150 USD per child. When returnees initially arrive in Rwanda, they will receive 20 percent of the cash assistance value from UNHCR through Equity Bank while they are hosted in UNHCR transit centres. Upon their return to their location of origin, and verification and provision of national identity cards by NIDA, returnees will receive the remaining 80 percent of the cash assistance. In January, UNHCR provided cash assistance to returnees who had returned in December 2023 and were being accommodated in Kijote and Nyarushishi transit centres.



#### **MISSIONS, DELEGATIONS AND EVENTS**

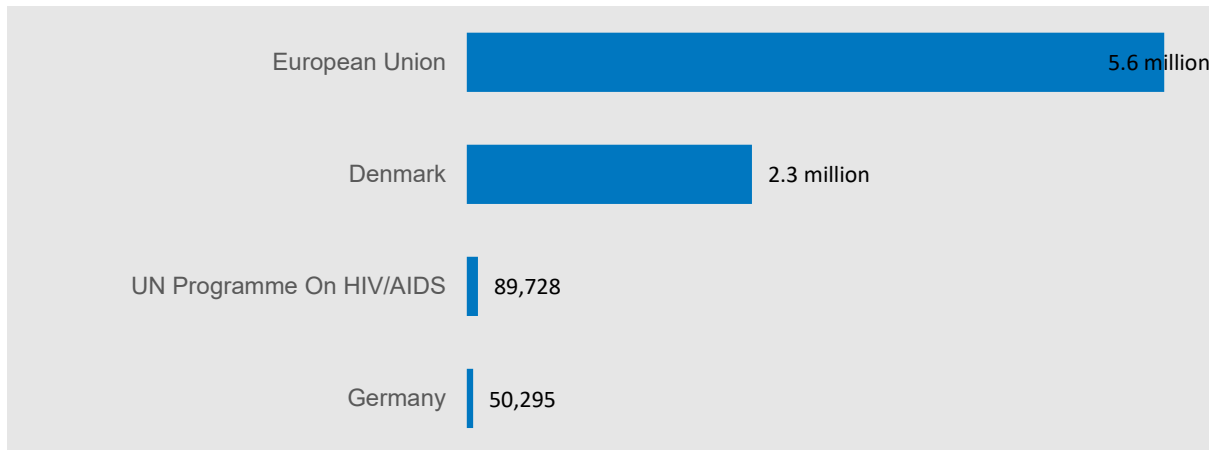
- On 10 January, UNHCR facilitated a visit of the Howard G Buffet foundation mission to Mahama Refugee camp to learn more about the refugee situation in Rwanda, in particular solutions available to refugees.

- On 21 January, UNHCR Representative in Rwanda met with the Danish Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy to discuss key challenges facing the refugee response in Rwanda
- Seven Catholic Bishops from ACEAC (Association of Episcopal Conferences of Central Africa), visited Kiziba camp on 26th of January 2024. The delegation visited the health center, Amahoro secondary school as well as the Catholic church under construction. During their tour, the visitors were briefed on different services the refugees receive in the camp. They were accompanied by the Governor of the Western Province, Karongi District authorities and representatives of security personnels.

## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the Rwanda operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes regionally and globally with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

### EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS to UNHCR Rwanda in 2024 | USD



### BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions which contribute to the response in Rwanda and the region.

United States of America | Italy | Australia | Canada | Private donors USA | Finland | Private donors United Kingdom

### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden | Norway | Private donors Spain | United Kingdom | Private donors Japan | Netherlands | Denmark | France | Private donors Republic of Korea | Germany | Switzerland | Private donors Italy | Private donors Sweden | Belgium | Ireland | Private donors USA

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