

# Rwanda

February 2024

UNHCR supported **95 Burundian refugees** to return home in February.

In February, UNHCR in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda, provided legal counselling about asylum procedures to **48 new asylum seekers** who arrived to Rwanda.

**18,164 LPG gas cylinders** were distributed in February in Mahama and Mugombwa refugee camps as part of supporting refugees to meet their energy for cooking needs.

## KEY STATISTICS

**135,298** refugees and asylum seekers are in

Rwanda as of 29 February 2024. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (62%) and Burundi (37%).

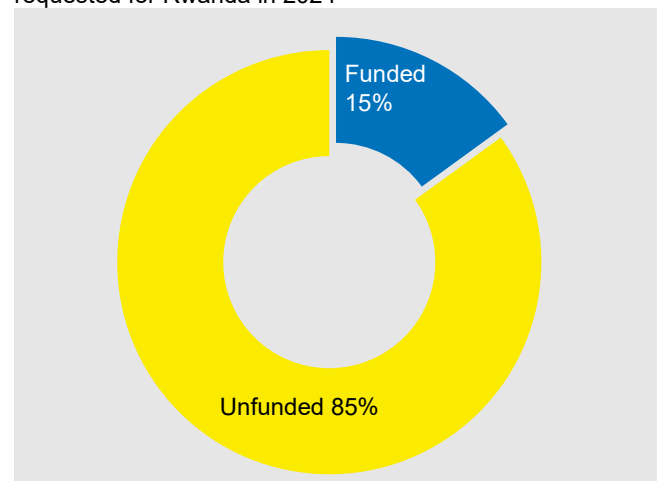
**326** asylum seekers from DRC arrived in Rwanda in February 2024.

**980** refugees were submitted for resettlement so far in 2023

## FUNDING NEEDS

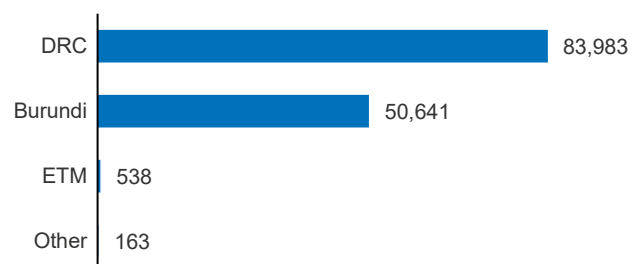
**USD 91.7 million**

requested for Rwanda in 2024



Medicine is distributed at the pharmacy in Mahama II Health Centre free of charge to refugees in the camp through UNHCR's partnership with Save the Children

## 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 February, 52 criminal cases and 5 civil cases were assisted before the courts. In addition, 48 asylum seekers from Sudan, Burundi, South Sudan, and Afghanistan were provided counselling about asylum procedures and supported to submit their asylum application to the Rwandan Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE).
- In February, 326 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 5,696 individuals, while 8,147 asylum seekers have been transferred to existing refugee camps in Rwanda. UNHCR continues the registration of new asylum seekers and provide documentation to the new asylum seekers.
- 33 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 February, 266 refugees made inquiries in Kigali and Nyamata with 14 percent of requests concerning resettlement. UNHCR also organized a mobile outreach mission to Nyamata in February to address the concerns of refugees living in an urban setting. Individual counselling was provided to 60 individuals during the mission.
- In Rwanda, UNHCR partners with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to support people with specific needs. In February, 1,233 refugees and their host communities were provided with mental health and psychosocial support services through animation of sharing groups, healing groups, follow-up of self-help groups, and individual psychotherapy support sessions.
- 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. In February, 36 refugee families from multiple nationalities received emergency financial assistance.
- International Day for Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation observed on 06 February was commemorated in ETM Gashora through a training of service providers and Focus Group Discussions

with refugees and asylum seekers including religious representative, community leaders, elders and mobilizers, women and girls' representatives. The awareness focused on explaining how FGM is a violation of human rights and its short and long-term effects.



## EDUCATION

- For the 2023/24 academic year, the gross enrolment rate for refugee students currently stands at 91 percent. Among these students, on average 96 percent of students are attending school regularly.
- As part of the Rwandan government's policy to expand Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) schools and colleges, a Technical Secondary School opened this year at GS Paysannat LD school in Mahama and has now enrolled 176 refugee students who are studying electricity technology and building construction. Despite this, the school lacks some equipment to enable practical lessons in these areas.
- UNHCR in partnership with World Vision organized a session with 151 refugee teachers in February to discuss the role of the teachers in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse within Kiziba refugee camp including at school.
- In 2024, UNHCR is supporting over 500 students attend national schools of excellence in Rwanda. In February, a local NGO Impact Hope provided financial for an additional 100 refugee students to have the opportunity to pursue their secondary education in schools of excellence. The students are selected from among Senior 4 (grade 10) students who excelled in the national exams and were offered a place through the National Examination and School Inspection Board (NESA).



## 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 February, 19,026 primary health care consultations took place at the camp-based facilities making the ratio 48 consultations per day, per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities.
- At the ETM, 699 primary health consultations took place at the clinic in February, an average of 18 persons per clinician day. 26 refugees were referred to hospitals for treatment and one new baby was born.
- 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 February, 283 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 2,858 pregnant/lactating refugee women are currently assisted through the supplementary feeding programme. In addition, 15 severely acute malnutrition and 62 moderately acute malnutrition refugee children were newly admitted into nutrition programmes for treatment.

- In February, the sexual and reproductive health team organized an extensive educational session for 104 teen mothers in Mahama Refugee Camp. Teen mothers represent a vulnerable subgroup of adolescents at risk of sexual exploitation, including transactional sex and early marriage. The primary objective was to equip these mothers with practical knowledge about family planning options, stressing the significance of informed decisions and readily available contraceptive methods, while also improving their understanding and practices concerning menstrual hygiene.



### 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 while moderately vulnerable receive 4,250 RWF. 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 support of school feeding programmes, UNHCR provides briquettes to ECD schools in refugee camps. In February, 220 tons of briquettes were distributed for ECD school feeding. 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 February, UNHCR continued to provide three hot meals a day to refugees and asylum seekers accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda.



### 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 February, water supply averaged 20.9 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Despite this, water supply remains a challenge in Nyabiheke and Kigeme.
- In February, UNHCR in partnership with World Vision, distributed 2,138 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 21.0 litres of clean water per person per day, 42 persons per latrine drop hole and 43 persons per shower stance.

**SHELTER AND NFIS**

- During the month of February, UNHCR rehabilitated a total of 38 shelters across the camps, this includes: 12 shelters in Kigeme camp, 12 shelters in Nyabiheke camp, 10 shelters in Kiziba camp and 4 shelters in Mugombwa camp. This brings the total number of shelters rehabilitated across the camps for the year 2024 to 106 shelters. Addition two shelters (one in Kigeme camp and one in Nyabiheke camp) were constructed during the month.
- In the month of February, a total of 19 terraces were constructed by UNHCR to protect shelters on high-risk areas. In addition, the roofs of 13 shelters in Nyabiheke and Kigeme refugee camps were transformed with new iron sheet roofing.
- In February, 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 recently were completed.

**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, 18,164 LPG gas cylinders were distributed in February across both camps.
- 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.

**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 enhance 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 February, the harvest of maize in Nyabicwamba marshland was completed and now awaits buyers in March. Due to the high production the drying shed was full, and the cooperative was obliged to borrow another drying shed to their neighbouring cooperative.
- In addition, during February, WFP conducted a training on cooperative governance and financial management for members of the Icyerekezo cooperative at Misizi marshland.
- On 16 February, a fire occurred in the market neighbouring Kigeme refugee camp which resulted in a huge loss of merchandise for entrepreneurs including some refugees. UNHCR and partners continue to support the affected communities including examining options for insurance claims. Despite this, the construction of a new market near Kigeme refugee camp, which was already under construction before the fire, is nearing completion. Over 200 refugees and Rwandan host community members were allocated a space to sell their wares in the market during February.
- In February, 372 refugees, asylum seekers and host community members benefited from skills training such as ICT, tailoring and hairdressing courses at the ETM including 44 Rwandans from the host community. In addition, 111 refugees participated in English, French and Kinyarwanda language classes.



### DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- In 2024, UNHCR Rwanda received submission resettlement quota of 7,037 individuals. By the end of February 2024, 980 individuals are submitted to resettlement countries. 1,524 refugees have departed for resettlement and 14 refugees departed through complementary pathways so far this year.
- In February, UNHCR supported 95 Burundian refugees to repatriate home from Rwanda. This brings the total to 30,877 Burundian refugees who have returned home from Rwanda since 2020.



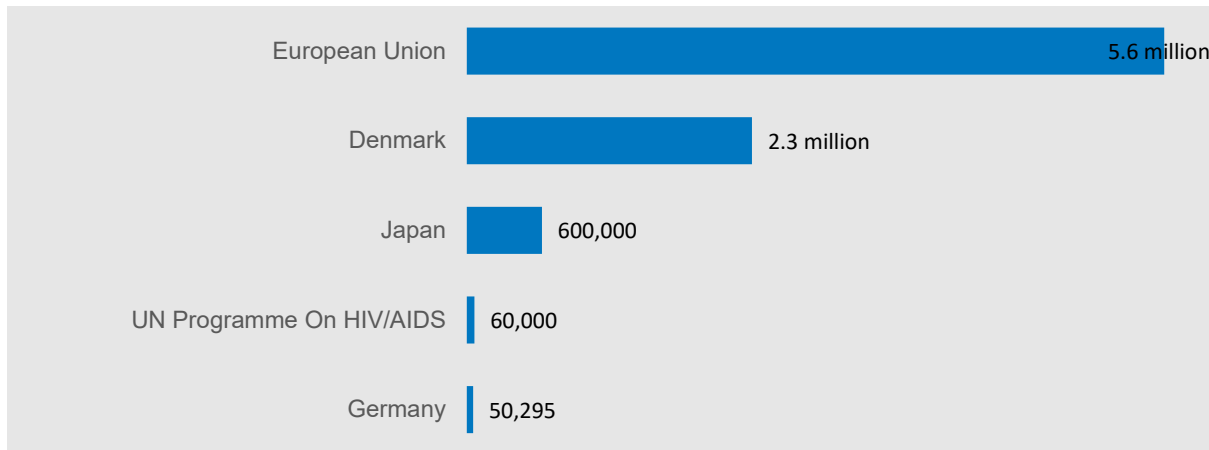
### MISSIONS, DELEGATIONS AND EVENTS

- In February, UNHCR hosted the visit of the African Development Bank Scoping Mission on Investment Climate for Refugees and Host Communities, led by Tutwe Consulting Group, EAC and IGAD. The mission met with several ministries (MINCOFIN, MINICOM, MINEMA, MINAGRI); banks (BRD, AfDB, the World Bank), partners and other actors, and included a large mission to Kirehe District, meeting the Mayor and Deputy Mayor in charge of Economic Development, and visited Mahama Camp and spoke with refugees themselves. The mission will provide three reports back to the AfDB, advising on the prospects and opportunities for AfDB support to the socio-economic inclusion of refugees and host communities in Rwanda.
- UNHCR also participated as an integral team member of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the World Bank \$80 million “Jya Mbere’ project in February, providing valuable insight and recommendations to the ongoing project as well as views on the design of Phase 2.
- The World Bank, MINEMA and UNHCR held the fourth Discussion Series event in February on the Rwandan Refugee Self-Reliance Index (RRSRI). The event was opened by the MINEMA Permanent Secretary, the Country Manager of the World Bank, and the Representative of UNHCR in Rwanda. Over 100 attendees, including some 20 in person, attended the event. The RRSRI is currently being conducted in the five refugee camps and three urban centres hosting refugees in Rwanda.
- On 7 February the Regional Protection Coordinator from the International Committee of the Red Cross, visited Nkamira. The purpose of the visit was to monitor assistance provided by ICRC to refugees in Nkamira. She visited the Rwanda Red Cross, met some asylum seekers who share their experiences with her, and she was briefed by MINEMA and UNHCR on the situation at the center.
- Between 20 to 23 February, UNHCR Rwanda facilitated the visit of representatives from the US Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) to refugee hosting areas in Rwanda. During the mission, delegates visited Nkamira Transit Centre, Mahama refugee camp and Gikondo community centre.

## 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



### UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 90.6 million | Norway 58.9 million | Netherlands 36.3 million | Denmark 35.6 million | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 28.5 million | Switzerland 19.2 million | Republic of Korea 17.9 million | Ireland 13.6 million | España con ACNUR 12.4 million | Belgium 11 million | Australia 10.7 million

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