

Burundi

April 2024

In April, **UNHCR** officially handed over to national authorities the **Kigamba hospital** located in Cankuzo Province. The hospital comprising 19 infrastructures was constructed **to enhance the healthcare services available to refugees, returnees, and the local population.**

Moreover, **1,382 individuals, including 699 women and 683 men, were voluntarily repatriated** to their home country of Burundi.

In addition, **2315 refugee identity cards were distributed** to refugees by UNHCR and ONPRA ensuring that each refugee is officially recognized within the country of asylum, and has access to rights, protection, services, and opportunities.

Operational Context

As of April 2024, the security situation in Burundi was generally calm, although tainted by various criminality incidents across the country. These incidents did not affect UNHCR's activities in Burundi.

The El-Nino phenomenon has been the main threat affecting Burundi with excessive flooding causing deaths, destruction of public infrastructure, houses, and crops. Landslides block roads and bridges were destroyed resulting in delay of the delivery of UNHCR programs. Access to some refugee camps was difficult and forced staff to take several detours to reach the camps.

Economically, the persistent shortage of fuels continued to pose a significant problem.



UNHCR funded hospital built in Kigamba Commune located in Cankuzo Province was handed over to the Burundian authorities on April 19th @UNHCR/Burundi

Update On Achievements



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

- **2315 refugee identity cards were distributed** by UNHCR and ONPRA to urban refugees and those living in the 5 camps of Burundi.
- **276 persons of Congolese nationality were recognized as refugees** during sessions of the *Advisory Commission for Foreigners and Refugees* (CCER) together with ONPRA and UNHCR.
- In April, **248 newborn babies were registered to obtain birth certificates** in the Bwagiriza, and Nyankanda refugee camps in Ruyigi Province, in Kavumu in Cankuzo Province and Kinama and Musasa refugee camps in Muyinga Province. As of April 30th, a total of **55 670 refugees lives in the 5 refugees camps** in the North and East of Burundi with Kavumu refugee camp being the most populated camp with 18 514 refugees.
- **As part of legal protection efforts, 56 persons of concerns (20 in Bujumbura and 36 refugees from Ruyigi, Muyinga and Makamba provinces were advised on various legal matters and were referred to the appropriate services as needed** during this reporting period. Their inquiries ranged from documentation, the status of resettlement cases, to request for family reunification/separation, or for security and health issues, and asylum application follow-ups. Additionally, UNHCR legal partner, Association du Barreau de Bujumbura, provided judicial assistance to 23 refugees with lawyers representing 19 of these cases in court and before public prosecutors
- **On April 10th, the first convoy of 271 refugees of 73 households were transferred** from Cishemere refugee transit center in Cibitoke Province **to the new Giharo refugee site** in Rutana Province. The new Giharo refugee site is an integrated site where refugees and host communities will share infrastructures facilities.
- In April, a total of **63 GBV incidents** (44 cases from refugees, 12 cases from returnees and 7 cases from asylum seekers) **were reported and attended to by UNHCR and its partners** Save the Children and International Rescue Committee in Burundi. In addition to this, a total of 50 older cases have been monitored, including cases of rape, physical assault, psychological violence, and denial of resources. Thus, a total of 113 survivors were assisted (108 female and 5 male). Out of the 63 reported GBV violations, **11 violations were against children** (11 girls). The majority of GBV incidents reported were **perpetrated by individuals who were unknown to the survivors** [44%], followed by 32% of perpetrators were an intimate partner / former partner. The remaining 18% of the community members were perpetrators who had no connection to the survivors, while

the remaining 6% were other refugees, IDPs, asylum seekers, or friends from school as indicated by survivors.

- During the month of April 2024, **120 monitors of UNHCR's protection monitoring partner CEJP benefitted from a series of training sessions on Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)**, and the Code of Conduct were conducted by two staff members from UNHCR. The training aimed to equip participants, who are redeployed across 54 communes in 12 Provinces: Bujumbura, Bubanza, Bururi, Gitega, Muyinga, Ngozi, Ruyigi, Rutana, Karusi, Kayanza, Makamba, and Muramvya, with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent and respond to GBV and SEA incidents, as well as to ensure adherence to ethical standards in their professional conduct. The sessions strengthened their capacities on the various definitions of general concepts enabling them to improve the quality and quantity of their reporting.
- **120 men (40 men per camp) in Bwagiriza, Kavumu, Nyakanda refugees' camps participated in training on positive masculinity** conducted by UNHCR partner Save the Children. The training aimed at refreshing the concepts of gender and gender equality and strengthening their skills as key sources involved in activities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in camps.
- In April, **460 new cases of persons with special needs** (those living with mental and physical disabilities, elderly people, those with chronic diseases) **were recorded including 337 in refugee camps and 73 in returnees transit centers**. Women make up the majority of those with special needs, with 233 cases. UNHCR and its partners IRC, Health Net TPO, Save the Children provided them with various forms of assistance including protection, psychological, medical, and social support and were given dignity kits comprising of blankets, loincloths, soaps, underwear, and creams, according to their individual needs.
- As part of child protection, UNHCR's partner Save the Children carried out various activities aimed at strengthening children's rights, in particular raising awareness on the non-discrimination and stigmatization of albino children with the participation of 142 (79 girls and 63 boys) children; the youth responsibility in preventing early marriage with the participation of 137 (53 girls and 84 boys) children; the responsibility of adults and community leaders in preventing early marriage with the participation of 249 children (108 girls and 141 boys); the consequences of pregnancy and early marriage for 214 children (140 women and 74 men); the causes and consequences of GBV on minors with the participation of 146 children (66 girls and 80 boys). In addition, in **the Musasa and Kinama refugee camps, 3 student clubs made up of 60 students (30 girls and 30 boys) were set up to fight SGBV in school following awareness-raising sessions on sexual exploitation in schools**.
- **As part of peaceful cohabitation, an inter-community meeting was held at the new Giharo refugee site between refugees and members of the host community**, chaired by the local authority of Giharo in Rutana province. The meeting, which was attended by local officials, members of the host population, refugees, UNHCR and its partners, aimed to initiate exchanges between refugees and members of the host community, who will be cohabitating in the same area

and sharing infrastructures and services. **It should be noted that Giharo refugee site, as a new concept, welcomed the first group of refugees last month April 2024. UNHCR and authorities have been working together to ensure that both communities live peacefully together and maintain safety.**



Achievements and Impact

- On April 19th, **UNHCR formally handed over Kigamba Hospital** to the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development, and Public Security, which subsequently transferred it to the Ministry of Public Health and AIDS Control. **The UNHCR-funded hospital in Kigamba commune, Cankuzo Province, is equipped with 19 facilities**, including administrative offices, inpatient wards, a maternity unit, a laboratory, incinerators, storage areas, a morgue, and more. **The hospital is expected to significantly improve the health conditions of refugees, returnees, and the local population, offering access to modern healthcare services** previously unavailable in Cankuzo Province and neighboring areas. This initiative also aims to integrate refugees effectively into the national healthcare system.



Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Malaria cases rose from 361 to 533 in April**, with Nyankanda refugee camp being the most affected, accounting for 63.2% of all cases in the three camps in eastern provinces. All patients received appropriate treatment. UNHCR and partners continue preventive campaigns, particularly the importance of using mosquito nets.

- **The number of nursing staff in camps remained insufficient in April.**
- The treatment of moderate acute malnutrition in camps was insufficient due to the unavailability of porridge flour.



SHELTER AND NFIS

Achievements and Impact

- **50 shelters were constructed in Nyakanda refugee camp** located in Ruyigi Province allowing more refugees households to live in better conditions.
- Construction is ongoing at Kabuyenge Primary School in Gisuru commune, Ruyigi Province. **The new school will provide an improved learning environment for returnee children and those from host communities.** However, UNHCR and its construction partner, COPED, encountered delays due to challenges primarily related to the rainy season, which degraded roads and hindered the delivery of building materials. Additional measures, such as the construction of retaining walls, have been implemented to address the rugged terrain.



- During this reporting period of April, **UNHCR and partners completed the rehabilitation of the Nyabitare Transit Center in Ruyigi Province.** The Transit Center will welcome its first convoy of Burundian returnees in May after three years activities suspension.



- UNHCR partner COPED has started the construction of a health center at the Transit Center of Gitara in Makamba Province. The transit center receives Burundian returnees who chose voluntary repatriation to their home country. The partner COPED is also rehabilitating the road leading to the transit center.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

Achievements and Impact

- In April **1382 persons of 524 households**; 699 women (including 371 girls) 683 men **were voluntary repatriated to their country-of-origin Burundi** mainly from Tanzania and including 460 persons from Uganda, 148 persons from Kenya and 7 persons repatriated from Malawi. All returnees were welcomed in safety and dignity at the transit centers where **they received certificates of recognition of their repatriation status** issued by the government namely the *Direction Générale du Rapatriement, de la Réintégration et de la Réinsertion (DGRRR)* as well as their return package in cash assistance to meet a variety of needs in their areas of return. Returnees were welcomed and taken care of by UNHCR and partners and were provided with adequate legal services (15 cases including 3 related to land issues) and medical care (265persons). **61 most vulnerable returnees received dignity kits** composed of blankets, soaps, and hoes to cultivate. 15 unaccompanied children received school and assistance kits composed of notebooks, pens, clothes, soaps, and shoes.
- As part of the reintegration process, 180 vulnerable households, including 10% of the host community in Gahoro and Mwakiro communes in Muyinga province were identified by UNHCR and its partner DGRRR to receive shelter kits composed of 1 Door, 2 windows, 24 Sheet Metal, 20 Wooden Poles, 2 kg Ordinary Nails, 2 kg Sheet Metal Nails).

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- 187 repatriated children under the age of 5 were unable to receive porridge supplements with their mothers during their stay at the transit centers, as UNHCR partner Healthnet TPO is out of stock.

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