Rwanda

September 2024

On 26 September, **119 refugees and asylum seekers** were evacuated from Libya to the ETM in Rwanda. This marked the 19th evacuation flight since 2019 and the fourth in 2024.

The new academic year 2024-2025 began on 9th September and **enrolment of refugee students was at 91%** in all locations during the first week.

Over **3,390 asylum seekers from DRC were relocated** from Nkamira Transit Center to Mahama Refugee Camp, most of them were families with school-aged children.

KEY STATISTICS

134,658 refugees and asylum seekers are in Rwanda as of 31 September 2024. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (61%) and Burundi (38%).

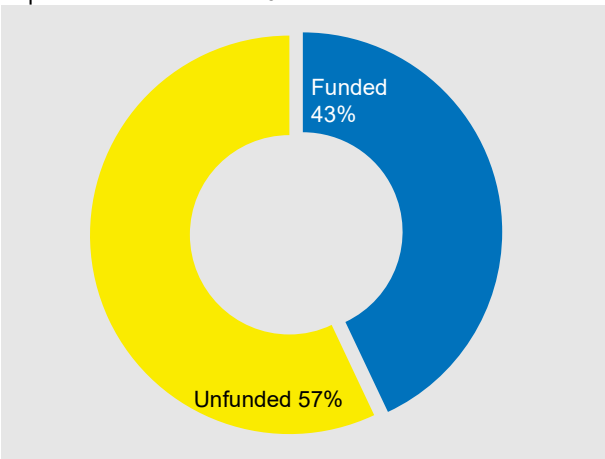
113 asylum seekers from DRC arrived in Rwanda in September 2024.

5,157 refugees were submitted for resettlement so far in 2024.

FUNDING NEEDS

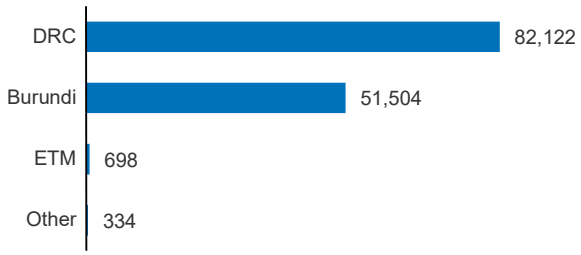
USD 91.7 million

requested for Rwanda in 2024



UNHCR, MINEMA and EU senior officials welcoming 119 asylum seekers and refugees evacuated from Libya.

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 nine 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 worked 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 91 percent.
- UNHCR worked in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) to provide legal counselling including on asylum procedures. In September, 53 asylum seekers from Sudan, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, and South Sudan were provided counselling about asylum procedures and supported to submit their asylum application to the Rwandan Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE). UNHCR, in collaboration with PFR, also continues to facilitate the travel of refugees located in camps to Kigali to participate in refugee status determination interviews conducted by DGIE.
- UNHCR has continued to observe an increase in the number of Sudanese asylum seekers fleeing to Rwanda. As of 30 September, 642 Sudanese have been recorded as arriving in Rwanda in 2024. This includes 267 individuals (139 families) in Kigali and 375 individuals (199 families) in Mahama refugee camp. The Sudanese community in Mahama and Kigali continue to face several challenges, including language barriers, difficulties in accessing education for their children, and issues with healthcare access.
- In September, 113 new asylum seekers fled from DRC to Rwanda and were initially accommodated at Nkamira Transit centre. Following approval from the Government of Rwanda, UNHCR commenced the official registration of asylum seekers at Nkamira transit centre in May. Over 5,240 individuals were registered and provided with Proof of Registration documents by September 2024. UNHCR and MINEMA initiated the relocation of over 3,390 asylum seekers from DRC residing in Nkamira Transit Center to Mahama Refugee Camp, focusing on families with school-aged children. After the relocation, Nkamira hosted 2,088 individuals at the end of September.
- The 19th evacuation flight from Libya to Rwanda arrived at Kigali airport on 26 September, carrying 119 refugees and asylum seekers from Libya, marking the first flight after the extension of the tripartite MoU to December 2025. The latest group of arrivals comprises individuals from five nationalities: 41 Sudanese, 36 Eritreans, 12 Somalis, 17 Ethiopians, and 13 South Sudan nationals. A total of 2,474 people were evacuated from Libya to Rwanda since September 2019. The next evacuation flight is anticipated in December 2024, depending on available space at the ETM. UNHCR is actively engaging with resettlement countries to expedite the processing and departure of refugees, thereby creating additional space for more evacuees from Libya.
- Thirty-four percent of the refugee population were born in Rwanda. The birth registration rate among individuals born in Rwanda, regardless of age, is 96%, with a coverage rate of 98.9% for children under 5 years old. UNHCR continues to collaborate with the Government of Rwanda and relevant ministries to enhance birth registration rates, integrating refugees into the national Civil Registration and Vital

Statistics system. In September, UNHCR assisted in the processing of 251 birth certificates for refugees in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda.

- Legal assistance was provided to 2,280 refugees and asylum seekers in terms of general assistance (advice and orientation), civil status documentation and awareness raising on national laws.
- UNHCR in collaboration with Prison Fellowship Rwanda secured the release of 9 refugees and asylum seekers from different detention facilities across the country.
- 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 September, 184 displaced persons made inquiries in Kigali and Nyamata with 44 percent of requests concerning health care and community-based health insurance (CBHI) enrolment.
- 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 September, 6 Burundian refugee families, 2 Sudanese refugee families and 1 Congolese refugee family were provided with such financial assistance to help them cover costs for food, accommodation or transportation.
- In September, UNHCR and Rwanda National Association of Deaf Women (RNADW) conducted a mission to Kigeme and Mugombwa camps to assess the needs of deaf women and girls. FGDs attended by 8 women and 22 girls revealed that a majority were not able to use sign language properly and most of the children were sent to mainstream schools that didn't address their specific needs. UNHCR and RNADW will organize sign language classes and GBV prevention activities in Kigeme, Mugombwa and Mahama camp, as well as advanced sign language classes in Kigali.
- In September, 169 best interest procedures for child protection cases were conducted by UNHCR and partners. This included assessments to determine the best course of action in supporting unaccompanied and separated children.
- 1,936 women and girls participated in targeted empowerment activities as part of GBV prevention programs. UNHCR continued to follow-up and support new and previously reported cases of gender-based violence (GBV) in September. Where needed medical services, psychosocial support and referrals to legal assistance are provided to victims/survivors by UNHCR and partners.
- UNHCR partners with Save the Children and Plan International in Rwanda to run activities for refugee children in camps. In September, 6,350 refugee children attended different activities at child friendly spaces and 1,749 adolescents participated in targeted programs in refugee camps.
- UNHCR and GoR partners attended a regional Statelessness meeting in Dar es Salaam on 23-25th September 2024. The meeting brought together participants from Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, South Sudan, to assess and advance the progress made towards eradicating statelessness ahead of the imminent end of the #Ibelong Campaign in November 2024. The meeting also served as a preparatory session for the UNHCR Executive Committee (ExCom) meeting and the High-Level Segment on Statelessness in Geneva on 14 October.

EDUCATION

- The new academic year 2024-2025 began on 9th September and enrolment of refugee students in all locations was at 91% during the first week. The relocation of families with school aged children from the Nkamira Transit Center to Mahama Camp was scheduled timely to ensure the children will be enrolled in school as the start of the new academic year.

- UNHCR, World Vision and Save the Children identified children with severe disabilities in need of special education support in Mahama Camp and the number of children with disabilities attending special schools increased from 12 to 141.
- In September, Impact Hope offered 50 Senior Five scholarships (60% for female students), bringing the total of scholarships for Senior Four refugee students to 250 in 2024-2025 academic year. Impact Hope is currently supporting 64 university refugee students, 833 secondary refugee students and 87 at Center for Hope TVET.
- 374 upper primary level teachers in 15 ProFuturo-supported schools were trained in ProFuturo Mathematics and received refresher training on the use of the ProFuturo digital platform. The training was delivered by the Connected Learning coaches with the support of the ProFuturo team based in Madrid, Spain.
- UNHCR Rwanda attended the regional GRF Education Mega Pledge Workshop on 10-12 September in Nairobi and presented the refugee inclusion approaches in Rwanda's educational national system. UNHCR operations in the EHAGL region, together with partners from the World Bank, FCDO, GPE, ECW, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, Germany, Denmark, LEGO and Porticus Foundations discussed education inclusion strategies across the region, common approaches and advocacy across selected countries, engagement with development actors, and the identification of cross-country synergies. In addition, 2025 workplans were developed for the GRF Mega Pledge Leadership group, and for the Education Inclusion Accelerator.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- In line with the Global Compact on Refugees, the Government of Rwanda registered a new health pledge: "to enrol all refugees into the National Health Insurance Scheme".
- 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 in cooperation with district government health centres. In September, 21,093 primary health care consultations took place at the camp-based facilities making the ratio 49 consultations per day, per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities free of charge.

A health professional in Mahama refugee camp screening for non-communicable diseases.

- 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 September, 796 cases were referred to hospitals for further treatment.
- On 27 September 2024, the Rwandan Ministry of Health declared a Marburg Virus Disease (MVD) Outbreak in Rwanda. The following day, the Ministry of Health reported 26 confirmed cases including 6 deaths, most of which occurred among healthcare workers. No cases have been identified in refugee

and asylum seekers settings. The Ministry of Health activated national and district-level command posts. UNHCR and partners worked hand in hand to ensure that the MVD refugee response was streamlined from national to camp levels. At country level, MINEMA and UNHCR led the response in collaboration with the key implementing partners in Health and WASH: Save the Children International, Africa Humanitarian Action and World Vision International. At camp level, the response was activated, and partners were coordinated by UNHCR and MINEMA.

- To prevent the spread of Mpox in refugee settings, UNHCR and SCI continued working closely with the Ministry of Health and district health authorities. In September, an active-case search and awareness-raising campaign were carried out in Mahama Refugee Camp: 5,691 households were visited, reaching a total of 33,377 individuals. Awareness messages were shared to inform the community about Mpox, including signs, symptoms, and prevention measures. Following the house-to-house visits, no individuals within the population were identified as having symptoms or signs of Mpox.
- 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. By the end of the month, 22 SAM and 133 MAM children were still admitted in the therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs respectively in all the camps.
- At the ETM, supplementary feeding was provided to 40 children under two years old and 38 adults with special nutrition needs.

FOOD SECURITY

- In support of the World Food Programme (WFP) cash assistance for food programme in refugee camps across Rwanda, UNHCR provides lists of refugees in the highly vulnerable and moderately vulnerable categories who are eligible to receive assistance. In total, 90 percent of refugees are classified as highly vulnerable, while 5 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. In addition, asylum seekers in Nkamira Transit Centre receive two meals a day from WFP.
- To support school feeding programmes, UNHCR provides briquettes to Early Childhood Development (nursery) centres in refugee camps which are used as fuel for cooking lunch.
- In September, UNHCR continued to provide three hot meals a day to 698 refugees and asylum seekers accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda. People with special needs were provided gas (LPG) to enable them to cook at home and dry food to supplement their nutritional 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 September, water supply averaged 22.4 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Despite this, water supply remains a challenge in Nyabiheke and Kigeme.
- In September, UNHCR in partnership with World Vision, installed 120 new handwashing stations at public spaces and camp entrances to strengthen the WASH measures for prevention of the spread of MVD and Mpox. 2,655 litres of liquid soap for handwashing and other cleaning practices were distributed to stave off diarrheal diseases and prevent MVD and Mpox outbreak spread in all sites.

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

- In September, UNHCR and World Vision completed the construction of four latrines blocks in Mahama refugee camp and 2 garbage collection points and 4 laundry slabs in Nyabiheke refugee camp. These constructions will enhance the camps' hygiene and sanitation infrastructure, improving the overall living conditions for refugees.
- In Nkamira transit centre, UNHCR ensured the provision of basic WASH services to 5,489 asylum seekers with access to average of 21.0 litres of clean water person per day, 39 persons per latrine drop hole and 39 persons per shower stance.

Aerial view of shelters in Kiziba refugee camp. In September, UNHCR rehabilitated a total of 247 shelters across the camps.

SHELTER AND NFIS

- In September, UNHCR rehabilitated a total of 247 shelters across the camps, this includes: 100 shelters in Mahama camp, 62 shelters in Kiziba camp, 42 shelters in Kigeme camp, 25 shelters in Mugombwa camp and 18 shelters in Nyabiheke camp. This brings the total number of shelters rehabilitated across the camps for the year 2024 to 988 shelters.
- In addition, during the month, UNHCR constructed 76 new semi-permanent shelters, this includes: 24 shelters in Nyabiheke camp, 24 shelters in Kiziba camp, 24 shelters in Kigeme camp and 4 shelters in Mugombwa camp. This brings the total number of new semi-permanent shelters constructed for the year to 188 shelters.
- 12 terraces were constructed by UNHCR to protect shelters on high-risk areas, this includes: 9 terraces in Mugombwa camp, 2 terraces in Kiziba camp and one terrace in Kigeme camp, which brings the total number of terraces constructed for the year 2024 to 245 terraces.
- Two lightening arrestors complete with 12-metre-high metallic towers for the residential area were installed at the ETM Gashora.
- In September, UNHCR distributed the monthly cash assistance of $50 per person to refugees and asylum seekers at the ETM in Rwanda. In addition, the newly arrived 119 asylum seekers evacuated from Libya, received an arrival cash assistance package of 95$.
- In Mahama refugee camp, UNHCR distributed 87 kitchen sets, 147 sleeping mats, 146 bars of soap, 98 mosquito nets to newly arrived asylum seekers. In addition, 27,424 items of clothing were distributed to over 13,000 individuals.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- In Mahama and Mugombwa refugee camps, UNHCR supplies refugees with Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for clean cooking and other energy needs. LPG cookers are a cleaner alternative than traditional cooking methods, emitting 50 times fewer pollutants than biomass-fuelled stoves such as mud stoves. In September, a total of 16,868 LPG cylinders were distributed across both camps.
- UNHCR provides cash assistance for energy needs to refugees in the Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme refugee camps. This support enables refugees to purchase gas for cooking and other energy requirements. After a pause of the programme caused by a lack of funds, the cash assistance is planned to resume in October.
- In September, UNHCR in partnership with World Vision, continued maintaining tree nurseries for planting in November-December, with the goal to prevent soil erosion.

LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE

- Agriculture plays a pivotal role in fostering refugee self-reliance in Rwanda. Currently, UNHCR is overseeing three projects aimed at enhancing livelihoods and self-reliance for both refugees and Rwandan host communities through the Misizi project (covering Mugombwa camp), Nyabicwamba project (covering Nyabiheke Refugee Camp), and Mushishito project (covering Kigeme Refugee Camp) marshlands. In September, crop preparation was ongoing in Nyabicwamba marshland with material acquired: 230 Mt of compost, 4.6 Mt of chemical fertilizers and 0.69 Mt of maize seeds. In Mushishito marshland, awareness sessions were held to emphasize farmers' responsibilities and active participation, and new leaders were elected for all 63 farmers' groups. In Misizi marshlands, continued efforts led to a positive trend in maize flour sales, with over 800kg sold in September.
- In Mahama and Kiziba refugee camps, in partnership with Caritas Rwanda and through funding from Denmark, UNHCR has supported refugee entrepreneurs and businesses through the *Pathways to Economic Inclusion and Self-Reliance* programme. In September, 676 Rwandan and refugee entrepreneurs who are part of the project in Mahama refugee camp received mentoring on business development from Caritas.
- In September, 286 refugees and asylum seekers and 63 members of the host community benefitted in various vocational and skills training activities at the ETM such as hairdressing, driving lessons, language classes, tailoring and ICT/computer literacy.
- An awareness campaign was organized in Nyabiheke for the socio-economic data collection survey pilot. Different groups including partners, refugee leaders, volunteers, opinion leaders including church leaders, representatives of businessmen/women and other social groups were invited to attend. The sessions were facilitated by UNHCR staff, WFP country office staff and MINEMA camp management. The key message was to explain the main purpose of the upcoming exercise, how it will be conducted and the benefits of having socio-economic data.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- In 2024, UNHCR Rwanda received submission resettlement quota of 7,087 individuals. By the end of September 2024, 5,157 individuals are submitted to resettlement countries. 4,794 refugees have departed for resettlement and 115 refugees departed through complementary pathways.

- In September, Germany concluded their interviews mission in Kigali where they interviewed 106 refugees from the ETM with a view for resettlement. France concluded their second mission to Rwanda where they interviewed 118 refugees. USCIS concluded resettlement interviews in Kigali for a total of approximately 630 refugees. RSC Africa, who process resettlement cases for the USA, also continued case processing in July from Karongi, Kirehe and Kabarore. In addition, RSC conducted cultural orientation sessions in Kigali, Kabarore, Karongi and Kirehe where they trained around 1500 individuals.
- So far in 2024, UNHCR has 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. An additional 205 Burundian refugees have expressed their intention to repatriate over the coming months.
- UNHCR supported the return of 146 Rwandan refugees and provided cash assistance to assist their reintegration. In total, UNHCR has supported 717 Rwandan refugees to return home in 2024.

MISSIONS, AND EVENTS

- The African Food Systems Forum launched in Kigali on the 2nd of September. On the 4th, the UNHCR Representative participated in a panel discussion, alongside refugees, on “Food Systems & Nutrition in a Time of Crisis: Youth Refugees, Migrants, and Displaced People as Part of the Solution, highlighting refugee inclusion from the start of a crisis.
- On 3-4 September, a delegation from the Denmark Project Office in Rwanda conducted a visit to Kiziba camp and met with the beneficiaries of the Graduation project funded by Denmark and implemented by Caritas. A similar mission will be organized to visit activities in Mahama camp in October.

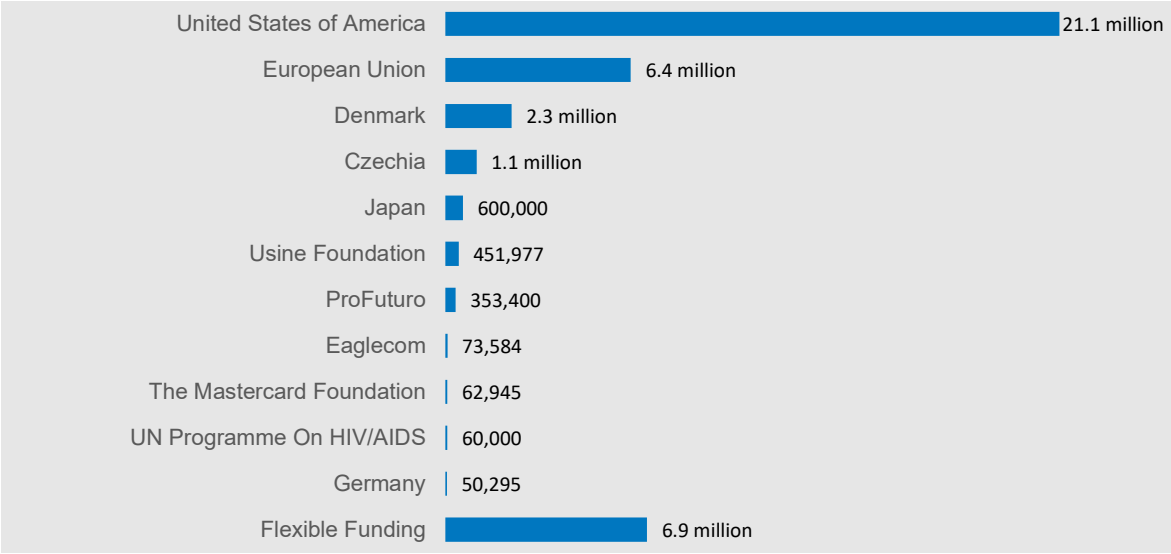
In September, a Danish mission visited Kiziba refugee camp to witness impact of the Denmark-funded Graduation Project implemented by UNHCR and Caritas.

- On 10 and 11 September, the UNHCR team comprising of Protection, Development and Program staff are attending the UNSDCF Results Framework Development workshop in Kigali organized by the United Nations Resident Coordinators Office. The objective of the workshop is to develop the UNSDCF results framework taking into consideration the Government priorities as defined in NST2 and the respective UN Agencies areas of focus.
- UNHCR organized a three-day capacity-building workshop for 28 Refugee-Led Organizations to assist them in planning their programs for 2025. The workshop included collaboration from Inkomoko, PFR, and MINEMA, continuing to foster localization and strengthening the organizations' capabilities to lead their own communities in seeking solutions.

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 other softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions.

OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Australia for UNHCR 8.3 million | Finland 6.6 million | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe 5.5 million | Italy 4.9 million | Norway 2.8 million | Private donors in Italy 2.2 million

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS

Sweden 90.6 million | Norway 58.9 million | España con ACNUR 49.8 million | Denmark 37.8 million | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) 36.3 million | France 33.6 million | Japan for UNHCR 30.4 million | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 28.5 million | Germany 25.1 million | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 22.8 million | Switzerland 19.2 million | Republic of Korea 18 million | Private donors in Italy 14.7 million | Belgium 14.2 million | Ireland 13.6 million | Private donors in the Netherlands 11.2 million | Australia 10.7 million | Sweden for UNHCR 10.3 million

CONTACT

Letitia Dragomir, External Relations Officer, UNHCR Rwanda
dragomir@unhcr.org: +250 788 368 423