

BURUNDI SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL UPDATE 24

15 - 31 March 2016

KEY FIGURES

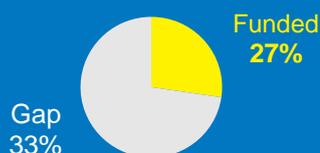
256,752

New Burundian refugees in the neighbouring countries since the beginning of April 2015

FUNDING

USD 175.1 million

requested for the situation for January-December 2016.



PRIORITIES

Tanzania: Resolve the land issue in Mtendeli to free up space and expand water and shelter accordingly

Rwanda: Enhance psycho-social counselling response for new arrivals

DRC: Replace plastic sheeting in all semi-durable shelters

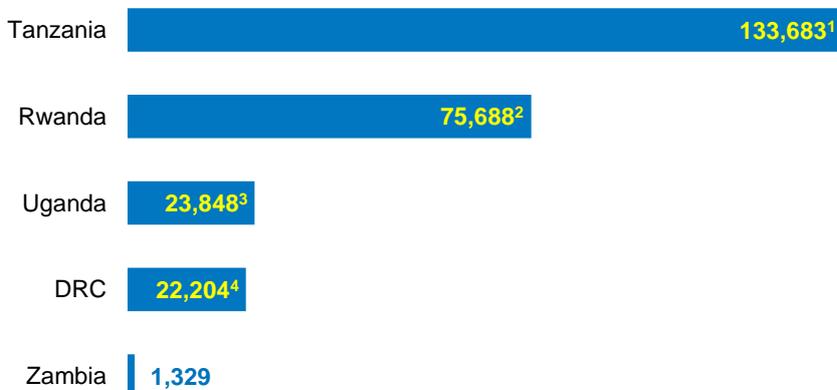
Uganda: Carry out malaria prevention and awareness raising activities

HIGHLIGHTS

- In Burundi, UNHCR continued to monitor returns and carry out its refugee response programmes. However, freedom of movement is becoming increasingly restricted, limiting access to persons of concern.
- In Rwanda, the Government, UNHCR and its partners successfully facilitated the organisation of the triennial refugee representative elections, which took place from 22 to 23 March.
- In Tanzania, relocations from Nyarugusu to Mtendeli are planned to resume in April but the camp cannot be used at full capacity until further land and water issues are resolved.
- Refugees reported increased difficulty in leaving the country and continued human rights violations such as sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), intimidation, killings and forced recruitment by *Imbonerakure* militia. Across the region, the daily rate of arrivals decreased during the second half of March, even though the situation in Burundi remained volatile.

Population of concern

A total of **256,752** people of concern as of 31 March



¹ | Nyarugusu: 75,409 | Nduta: 52,952 | Mtendeli: 5,322 |

² | Mahama: 47,908 | Urban (Kigali + Huye): 27,780 |

³ | Nakivale: 18,052 | Urban (Kampala): 4,889 | Other: 907 |

⁴ | Lusenda: 16,004 | Out of camp: 6,200 |

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS



Protection

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- On average, the daily number of arrivals stood at 20 persons per day. Lusenda camp is expected to reach full capacity by mid-2016, and can currently host up to 2,000 additional refugees. Should the need arise, Lusenda will be extended beyond the most recently developed annex (Lulinda) to host additional refugees.

Achievements and impact

- On 31 March, the *Comité National pour les Réfugiés* (CNR) organised the **election of refugee leaders**. A temporary committee, tasked to act as a mediator between the various stakeholders in Lusenda had been set up when the camp was established in July 2015. Given Lusenda's growth since, it was deemed necessary to vote for new representatives, who will serve a renewable one year term.

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- The **security situation** in the Uvira and Fizi territories deteriorated. In the Ruzizi plain, where the town of Uvira is located, MONUSCO reported a number of kidnappings, at the hands of a militia group called the Karakara. On National Road n°5 which connects Uvira to Lusenda camp, ambushes by unidentified elements, targeting humanitarians who were transporting cash were reported, one of which resulted in the death of a staff member. Additionally, on 13 March, MSF Holland's base in Baraka (Fizi territory), which provides healthcare to some 200,000 people living in the area was attacked by armed elements who stole valuables; prompting the evacuation of international staff. The base was the target of similar attacks in 2015.
- From 15-18 March, a **security exercise** aimed at testing Lusenda camp's early warning system took place involving MONUSCO, the DR Congolese army (FARDC), the Congolese National Police and refugee community guards. Awareness-raising sessions on security issues were organised in efforts to further improve preparedness, in the event of an attack against the camp for instance.

RWANDA

- On average, the daily number of arrivals stood at 24 persons, down from 48 during the first half of the month. The majority of arrivals are males aged between 18 and 35 years old. Reasons for flight included abstaining from voting and demonstrating against President Nkurunziza's third term, a refusal to join the *Imbonerakure*, membership of a political party other than the CNDD-FDD and generalised insecurity.

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- As of January 2016, all **relocation requests from Kigali to Mahama camp** had been addressed but from February onwards, demand spiked, following the statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pertaining to the relocation of Burundians, misinterpreted by many urban refugees as an opportunity for resettlement, for the inhabitants of Mahama. Given shelter constraints in Mahama camp, it became necessary to prioritise the most vulnerable cases. Since 22 March, case by case assessments are organised in order to better understand urban refugees' motivations for relocation. Among those received, the majority expressed the wish to find more attractive livelihoods opportunities in Mahama. UNHCR has clearly explained to the Government of Rwanda, the political, operational, logistical and financial challenges surrounding its request for relocation of Burundian refugees.

UGANDA

- On average, the daily number of arrivals stood at 33 persons, down from 81 during the first half of the month. Refugees reported facing problems using official crossing points, especially when not in the possession of valid identification. Furthermore, arrivals reported that armed groups continue to commit looting, killings, SGBV and youth kidnappings.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

- On average, the daily number of arrivals stood at 115 persons, down from 126 during the first half of the month, the majority being women, children and elderly persons. Information obtained at entry points indicates that asylum seekers have been using alternative routes because increasingly restrictive measures are being adopted to limit movement out of Burundi. New arrivals cited forced recruitment, threats and intimidation by *Imbonerakure* militia as reasons for flight, especially in provinces bordering Tanzania.

Achievements and impact

- On 31 March, the second **reunification** convoy from Nyarugusu was received at Nduta camp, enabling the reunification of 867 refugees (261 families) with their relatives.
- To enhance **SGBV response** in Nduta and Mtendeli camps, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) formed and trained Prevention and Advocacy teams. Current activities include community dialogue sessions, outreach and awareness raising. In April, the Engagement of Men in Accountable Practices (EMAP) programme, targeting men and boys will be rolled out. This will serve to address the urgent need of working with refugees of both sexes and all age groups, to increase community engagement in prevention and survivor centred response. In Mtendeli, the SGBV training centre was opened will be put to use as of April. Requests from partners to include staff and incentive workers in SGBV training sessions are on the rise, a positive development towards ensuring SGBV is mainstreamed through all sectors.

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- **Relocations from Nyarugusu to Mtendeli** are planned to resume in April. The water network expansion and shelter construction in Mtendeli has been hindered by local farmers encroaching on land allocated to the camp. UNHCR is working with the district authorities to resolve this issue and ensure that Mtendeli's maximum capacity (50,000 vs. 15,000 currently) can be attained. In addition to the expected relocation of 3,000 refugees per week, Mtendeli will receive new arrivals from the border. For its part, Nduta camp is expected to fill up in the next two weeks (55,000), creating additional pressure on Mtendeli for the land issue to be resolved.
- To address the issue of **underreported SGBV**, IRC and its partners increased outreach and information activities aimed at providing access to services, including at entry points. Despite ongoing efforts, underreporting remains a key challenge, one that is exacerbated by regular threats from the families of perpetrators aimed at deterring survivors. In Nduta and Mtendeli, reports of further abuse against survivors of domestic violence were received after couples underwent mediation counselling. In response, IRC committed to providing more comprehensive information on the nature of the service to ensure that only fully informed cases are referred to the Women's Legal Aid Centre (WLAC) NGO, for counselling.
- Of further concern to SGBV actors in Nduta and Mtendeli is the illegal production and **overconsumption of alcohol**. An inter-agency task force was established to address the issue, and is composed of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), IRC, MSF Switzerland, the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service (TCRS), UNHCR and WLAC as well as the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Feedback from focus group discussions conducted in both camps indicated that the majority of refugees acknowledge the risks of alcohol abuse and its correlation with higher incidences of SGBV. There was generalised support for the introduction of measures clearly regulating the sale and consumption of alcohol. The task force will focus on coordinating with the MHA on matters relating to existing legislation and its application to refugees, raising awareness on the effects of alcohol consumption and carrying out prevention activities with refugee representatives and youth.

Education

DRC

Achievements and impact

- To mitigate the effects of displacement on students who have fallen behind or in need of consistent follow-up in the classroom, the Norwegian Refugee Council has implemented a **remedial education** project since the beginning of the year, which is due to end in April. The project has benefited a total 2,110 children including Burundian refugees and students from the host community.

TANZANIA

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- The **lack of equipment and space** for new classrooms in Mtendeli and Nduta continues to pose a serious challenge. To address the issue in Mtendeli, IRC provided 42 desks and scholastic materials during the reporting period and further distributions are planned for early April. Furthermore, DRC completed the foundations for a second school. In Nduta, where 13,000 students are without a desk, UNHCR is working with Caritas to allocate funds towards the most urgent classrooms. Refugees' education prospects are deeply affected by overcrowding, which not only has repercussions on the learning process but on protection and sanitation as well. In light of this, and to ensure interventions have a lasting impact, UNHCR and its partners continue to appeal to the Government to reconsider its current national policy, which authorises only the use permanent structures for schooling.

- At a systemic level, the SGBV and Child Protection working groups are working to find solutions to reduce the trend of low female teacher and student **attendance** in higher level classes, caused by practises such as early marriage and pressure to remain at home for household chores.



Health

RWANDA

Achievements and impact

- The **overall health situation** in Mahama camp improved since mid-March, notably with an average of only 2 suspected typhoid fever cases per day and no referrals or deaths. In light of this, the typhoid response strategy has been reviewed. Indoor residual spraying against malaria was completed with an 85 percent success rate, the remaining 15 percent accounted for by barriers such as the presence of sick persons or newborn children. As regards infrastructure, the American Refugee Committee (ARC) finalized the construction of a distribution pharmacy. Despite these achievements, gaps remain, especially with regards to medical NFIs, and family planning. However, WHO staff who have until now assisted with epidemiology surveillance on a daily basis in Mahama will no longer be doing so as the situation is stable enough to be handled by health partners operating with support from UNHCR.

UGANDA

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- The leading cause of morbidity remained **malaria**, which accounted for 41 percent of consultations. Medical Teams International (MTI) and UNHCR conducted an assessment, which revealed that the use of mosquito nets was alarmingly low in certain parts of the settlement. A quarter of a million insecticide-treated nets donated by the United States President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) to Uganda will be distributed country wide, including in Nakivale. The distribution will be accompanied by outreach programmes and awareness-raising and is expected to effectively buttress existing response.



Shelter and NFIs

RWANDA

Challenges, identified needs and remaining gaps

- On 25 March, unbeknownst to humanitarian actors in Mahama camp, police and military personnel searched houses of persons living in the host community for NFIs originally distributed to refugees. Indeed, a number of reports by various humanitarian actors have pointed to the fact that NFIs distributed were being sold or bartered. Furthermore, and more alarmingly, was the break-in of the Adventist Relief and Development Agency's (ADRA) warehouse two weeks ago. This search operation highlighted the challenges that refugees, host communities and humanitarian actors face, relating to the nature of in kind assistance and its effects on **peaceful coexistence** and the local economy. Initial reports testified to local inhabitants' dissatisfaction at being found guilty of a consensual transaction, and of a practice they claimed had not been prohibited. Notwithstanding, they also claimed to have been the victims of petty theft by refugees. In the past, UNHCR and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR) have visited the local community and informed its residents of the ban on buying relief items. Whether the search was linked to non-adherence or ulterior motives is not clear for the time being. UNHCR is monitoring the situation for any signs of hostility towards the refugee community or vice-versa.



Camp Coordination and Camp Management

RWANDA

Achievements and impact

- With the support of MIDIMAR, humanitarian actors in Mahama camp facilitated the organization of the triennial **refugee elections**. Originally scheduled to take place by 31 December 2015, the elections were held on 22-23 March 2016, as a result of the relocation exercise (from tents to semi-permanent shelters), which slowed the process. In total, 231 refugee representatives were elected across the three administrative levels that form Mahama camp. Humanitarian actors aimed to ensure equal sex representation but only 31 percent of positions were secured by women. Two factors can be ascribed to these results. Firstly, a low (30%) benchmark for female

representation was established by ministerial order, interpreted by many as an instruction. Secondly, positions in two out of the three administrative levels required a university degree. Added to this was the fact that certain eligible women were already employed as incentive staff (receiving modest financial support from agencies) and unwilling to engage in camp leadership simultaneously. The refugee representative body is a core component of camp management. It coordinates with agencies and the Government on matters relating to programme implementation, grievance mechanisms and security. The body also provides refugees with administrative and representational support. Elected members requested office space in all 24 'villages' that constitute the camp, stationary, means of communication and in-kind material support. Elections took place in a fair and transparent manner and the newly elected representatives benefited from a comprehensive induction and leadership training.

Community Empowerment and Self-Management

DRC

Achievements and impact

- FAO donated gardening equipment and seeds to facilitate the set-up of **vegetable gardens** in fields obtained from the local community by the NGO Action d'Espoir (ADE). Resources available will allow ADE to assist 22 out of the 39 'villages' that constitute Lusenda to go through with the set-up process. While land is available for the remaining villages, additional resources are required to expand accordingly.



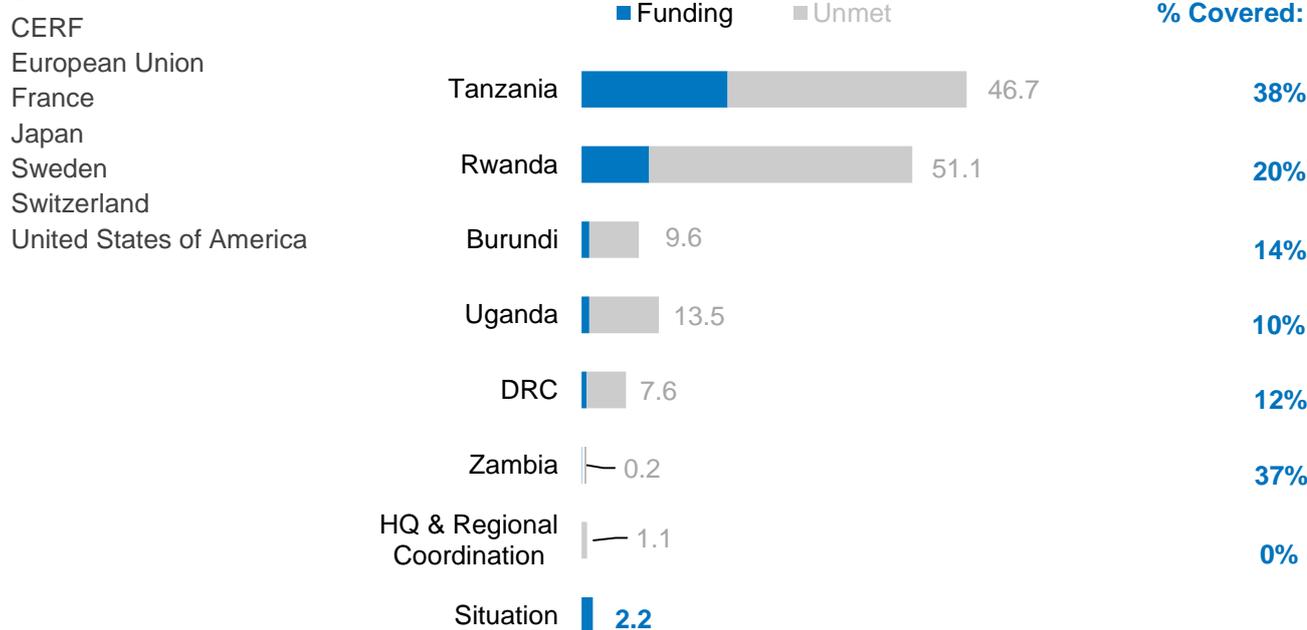
Tanzania/Pamela 7, Nduta refugee camp, Kibondo, Tanzania © UNHCR/Sebastian Rich/February 2016

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

On 22 December 2015, UNHCR released a Supplementary Budget Appeal for the Burundi Situation, which includes needs for Burundi, the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda from January to December 2016. UNHCR's total financial requirements for the Burundi Situation currently amounts to USD **175.1 million**. This includes USD 154 million for the response in the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda from January to December 2016, as presented in the Regional Refugee Response Plan launched on 15 December. UNHCR is very grateful for the financial support provided by donors, particularly those who have contributed to UNHCR activities with unearmarked and broadly earmarked funds, as well as for those who have already contributed to the Burundi situation. **The organization's overall needs for this situation are currently funded at 27%.**

A total **USD 47.8 million** has been funded:

Donors:



Contacts:

Mr. Ulysses Grant, Reporting Associate, grantu@unhcr.org Tel: +41 (0) 22 739 8730

Ms. Mandy Felicia Owusu, Senior Desk Officer, owusu@unhcr.org Tel: +41 (0) 22 739 8465

Ms. Wendy Rappeport, Senior External Relations Officer, rappepor@unhcr.org Tel: +41 (0) 22 739 8993



Burundi Situation

Displacement of Burundians into neighbouring countries since April 2015

as of 31 March 2016

