



# UNHCR Monthly Protection Update Refugee Status Determination (RSD) October 2019

The Ugandan Government is responsible for Refugee Status Determination (RSD). UNHCR works with the Refugee Department within the Office of the Prime Minister and other partners to build and enhance the capacity of national RSD procedures.



The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC) session at Matanda Transit Centre

## Key Figures of the month

1,789	# of new asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk
6,427	# of new arrivals from DRC registered in settlements
1,575	# of new arrivals from South Sudan registered in settlements
470	# of new asylum seekers from Burundi registered in Nakivale settlement

## Key Achievement of 2019

17,188	# of asylum applications adjudicated by the REC
16,376	# of asylum applications granted
95%	% of recognition rate in the first instance
18	# of asylum appeals reviewed by the RAB
10	# of appeals set aside by the RAB

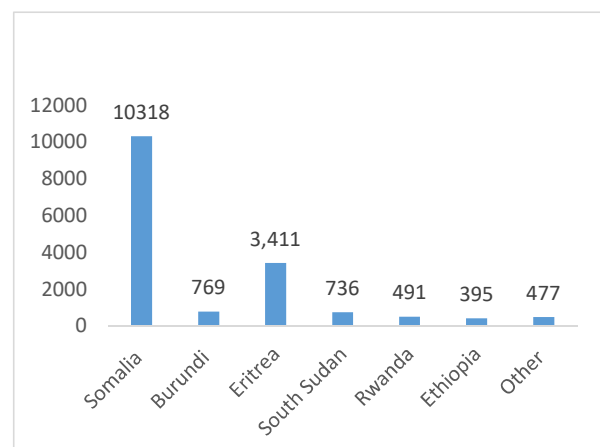
### NOTE:

As of writing, DRC nationals (who enter Uganda via designated border points) and South Sudanese are granted refugee status on prima facie basis in accordance with Section 25 of the Refugees Act

## Monthly Trend of Asylum Seekers

- During the reporting period, a total of 1,789 new asylum seekers were registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala including 1,097 Somalis and 370 Eritreans. The overall figure is slightly reduced compared to September 2019.
- 6,427 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were recorded in south west and mid-west of the country, which shows a slight decline compared to previous month. Most of them fled from ongoing insecurity and violence in North and South Kivu, and Ituri Provinces.
- 1,575 new arrivals from South Sudan were reported in West Nile districts. The figure indicates a reduction by about 500 individuals in comparison with September 2019. The reasons of their displacement included violence and insecurity, seeking family reunification as well as lack of access to humanitarian assistance and basic service.
- 470 Burundian asylum seekers were newly registered in Nakivale settlement owing to continuous insecurity caused by Imbonerakure militia.
- 767 Burundian asylum seekers were newly registered in Nakivale settlement owing to continuous insecurity caused by Imbonerakure militia.

## Country of origin of asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala in January – October 2019



### Refugee Status Determination

- The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC), during the session of 29-31 October at Nyakabande and Matanda Transit Centres, adjudicated 448 asylum applications of 1,130 individuals, largely concerning nationals of DRC. Approximately 87 % of applicants were granted refugee status.

### Strategy

UNHCR supports the Ugandan authorities with the assumption of responsibility for individual RSD with the following objectives:

- UNHCR supports the Ugandan authorities with the assumption of responsibility for individual RSD with the following objectives:
- To strengthen the capacity of the government to deliver a fair, credible and efficient RSD;
- To advocate for improvement of the national legislation and related by-laws on asylum in line with applicable international and regional standards; and
- To actively engage with the government to ensure access to asylum in face of mixed flows of refugees and migrants.

### Challenges

- **Limited capacity/resources to process asylum claims:** As of October 2019, there are 32,776 asylum seekers across the country, out of which approximately 55 % represents asylum applications filed in Kampala.
- **Lack of adequate space for initial screening:** The poor physical condition of the Refugee Desk hampers an initial screening of asylum seekers in Kampala effectively. The current set-up does not equip for proper file management but also significantly compromises the principle of confidentiality and privacy.
- **Insufficient quality of RSD interview/decision-making:** A combination of several factors such as limited number of interview officers and interpreters (in light of the current caseload), inadequate quality of interpretation service and limited capacity to handle complex cases undermines the quality of RSD decisions.
- **Gaps in law, and gaps between law and practice of asylum procedure:** The review process of the Refugees Act and its Regulations has been ongoing since 2015. Coupled with lack of proper application of certain provisions, there are several deficits such as limited authority of Refugee Appeals Board, lack of clear definition in certain terms as well as absence of the clear provision regulating the reception/admission procedure for asylum seekers in Kampala.
- **Increasing mixed migration flows:** The government has increasingly faced difficulties in recognizing the situation of refugees and refugees within migratory movements, which results in tightening an access to asylum procedure.

**Contact person:** Yusuke Hara, Associate RSD Officer, UNHCR ([hara@unhcr.org](mailto:hara@unhcr.org))