Rwanda

March 2023

The 13th evacuation flight from Libya to the ETM Centre in Rwanda took place on the 9th of March. In total 150 asylum seekers were received in Rwanda bringing the current population of the ETM to 674 individuals.

Due to the ongoing conflict in the North-eastern part of the DRC, since November 2022, **UNHCR has received 5,876 asylum seekers from DRC in Rwanda.**

UNHCR hosted a field mission for the heads of the United Nations agencies in Rwanda, to the Kirehe District and Mahama Refugee Camp to showcase the situation of refugees and host communities in the district.

KEY STATISTICS

126,429 individuals are registered with UNHCR in Rwanda as of 31 March 2023. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (59.35%) and Burundi (40.02%).

91% of refugees in Rwanda live in refugee camps

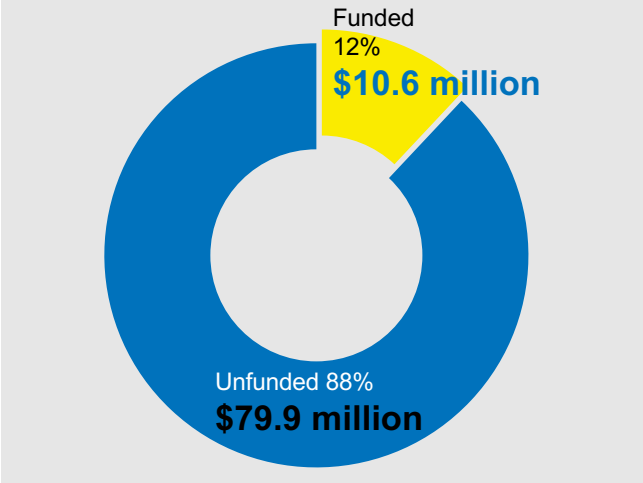
1,732 refugees have departed for resettlement &

19 departed through complementary pathways in 2023

FUNDING (AS OF 28 MARCH)

USD 90.5 million

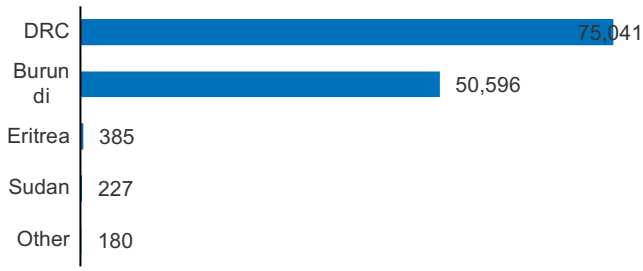
requested for Rwanda



Refugees in Kiziba camp take part in an awareness raising session about Gender Based Violence at the health centre

CURRENT POPULATION OF CONCERN

Countries of Origin



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

Operational Context & Partners

The Government of Rwanda (GoR), through 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 2023, UNHCR works directly with seven 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 and ministries.

Achievements

PROTECTION

- Due to fighting in North-Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), since November 2022, asylum seekers from the DRC began fleeing to Rwanda's western province. As of the end of March 2023, 5,876 Congolese individuals had fled to Rwanda. 1,775 of the asylum seekers are being accommodated in Mahama refugee camp and 4,101 asylum seekers are hosted in Nkamira Site. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and partners to provide food and non-food related items to all new asylum seekers and coordinate the emergency response. UNHCR also continues to identify gaps in the response and advocate for more resources or contributions to meet the needs of the new arrivals.

- UNHCR continued to support urban refugees and asylum seekers in Rwanda through various protection channels, where 92 individuals received protection services and counselling in the month of March. Through protection helplines in urban areas, UNHCR received approximately 121 inquiries from individuals who requested assistance. Most of the concerns raised were related to medical assistance, as well as Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI).

- UNHCR works with psychosocial partner, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to identify and manage refugee mental health conditions across all camps in Rwanda. UNHCR and HI work with mental health professionals (psychiatric nurses or psychiatrists) to address complex refugee mental health conditions, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and depression. In March, 563 refugees (195 male and 368 female) received mental health and psychosocial services in Mahama refugee camp, while 499 refugees in the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) centre were provided with an array of psychosocial rehabilitation services.

- As part of ongoing efforts to improve birth registration for refugee children and families, as well as prevention of statelessness, in March, UNHCR and the Government of Rwanda registered 53 new-born babies in refugee camps in Rwanda.

- The Government of Rwanda has been issuing refugee IDs to refugees since 2007 and reaffirmed their commitment through a pledge at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019 to issue refugee ID cards to all refugees aged 16 and above in Rwanda. In March, the Government through the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), the National Identification Agency (NIDA), the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE), together with UNHCR, provided 69 proof of registration

documents and issued 104 ID cards to refugees in Rwanda. Holding a refugee ID card facilitates refugee access to assistance and services, as well as access to employment opportunities.

- UNHCR and child protection partners in camps are committed to ensuring that children, adolescents, and youth are protected from harm and that their rights are upheld. During March, 23 child protection cases were documented and supported in five camps and two urban locations (Huye and Kigali). 13 child protection-related cases were closed once the protection needs of children were met, bringing the remaining total of child protection cases to 248 cases of children at risk that continue to receive support. As part of refugee protection case management, Best Interest Procedures (BIP), which includes child protection case management, as well as Best Interest Determination (BID), continue to be conducted for children at risk. In March, 36 BIPs were conducted for refugee children in Rwanda.

- Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) require specialized support services, including appropriate accommodation and family-based care, counselling, and assistance in accessing health, education, and other services (socialisation/recreation, vocational training, mental health services, family reunification, access to legal services, and case management), at a minimum. In March, as part of efforts to support UASC in refugee camps, a total of 499 UASC received monitoring visits, as well as 180 unaccompanied and separated children who are in an appropriate alternative care arrangement.

- Gender based violence (GBV) incidents among refugee populations continued to be reported. In March, UNHCR and GBV partner in camps recorded 37 new GBV incidents, that included rape, sexual assault, physical assault, and psychological and emotional abuse incidents. As of the end of March, UNHCR and partners are providing multi-sectoral support to affected individuals, including 191 individuals receiving psychosocial counselling, six receiving medical assistance, eight survivors referred to the police, ten referred for legal support, and eight child survivors were supported to return to school. At the same time, 5,192 (2,379 males and 2,813 females) individuals were also reached with GBV prevention activities, and 435 women and girls participated in targeted empowerment activities as part of GBV prevention programs.

Nyantabara Chantal, 32, and her six children fled violence in South Kivu and arrived in Rwanda early January.Since then, Chantal and her children have been hosted at the Nkamira Transit Site.

EDUCATION

- In Rwanda, refugee children are included within the national education system and can enroll at schools nearby the refugee camps. As of March, in Kigeme and Mugombwa refugee camps, 1,392 children are enrolled in Early Childhood Development (ECD), 4,674 students were also enrolled in primary schools, while 3,129 students were enrolled in secondary education. In Mahama, 4,607 children were enrolled in ECD centres with an average attendance of 98% (4,515). 12,534 refugee children were also enrolled in primary Paysannat L schools, with an average attendance of 96% (12,033). Finally, 4,598 refugee children were enrolled in secondary Paysannat L schools near the Mahama refugee camp, with an average attendance of 95% (4,368). All students receive hot meals as part of the school feeding program aimed at reducing malnutrition within school children.

- In response to the growing number of school age children in Nkamira, UNHCR, UNICEF and World Vision International (WVI) conducted a simple assessment of students to determine their 'appropriate' grade level pending the formal assessment and placement of students of by National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA). The assessment will support the role out of an education in emergency curriculum and the opening of informal schools at Nkamira in April. It was noted that majority of the children do not possess education certificates or credentials. Community sensitization has been ongoing to ensure that parents are aware of the assessments, the importance of education, and enrolling their children in the informal education curriculum.

- Children with disabilities face difficulties in learning and accessing quality specialized education, making them vulnerable to stigma, discrimination and in instances, segregation. These difficulties are exacerbated for children living in refugee camps. To combat this, UNHCR continues to work with partners to make specialized learning accessible to refugee children with disabilities. From Mugombwa and Kigeme refugee camp, for example, 29 children with different disabilities were enrolled and studied in different specialized schools in Rwanda. Similarly, UNHCR has supported 20 children with severe disabilities from Mahama camp to enroll in specialized schools while 43 children with disabilities were enrolled in ECD, and 173 children with disabilities were also enrolled in local primary and secondary schools.

HEALTH

- The Mahama II Health Centre has been licensed to operate as a medicalization health centre by the Rwandan Ministry of Health. The centre will now be able to offer and perform minor surgeries, C-sections and blood transfusion, and other comprehensive emergence obstetric care within the camp rather than having to refer patients to hospitals. Furthermore, the three health centres in the surrounding area will be under the supervision and support of the newly medicalized health centre. UNHCR is working with Government and partners in preparation for the official inauguration.

- UNHCR is managing eight camp-based health care facilities across refugee camps in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children and AHA at the ETM. These include four health centres (two in Mahama, one in Kiziba, one in Nyabiheke) and four health posts (one in Mugombwa, Kigeme, Nkamira and Gashora). Health centres in camps offer broad health care services, including laboratory tests and vaccinations, while health posts offer primary health care services. In addition, some services including the provision of TB and HIV medications are provided through district government health centres.

- UNHCR supports access to health care services for all refugees in Rwanda. In March, 23,563 primary consultations were conducted in all camp-based health facilities, averaging 44 consultations per day per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities. The health centres in camps also supported the delivery of 286 new-born babies with 98.7% of the births attended by skilled health workers. UNHCR also continued to refer refugees in need of emergency, life-saving care to district level hospitals. In total, 567 health cases were referred for secondary and tertiary level care and management in March.

- Access to contraception is a priority within the refugee response and UNHCR continues to work with health partners in camps to provide access to contraceptive services to reduce the risk of teenage or adolescent pregnancies, and the likelihood of maternal, new-born and child deaths. During March, UNHCR through the health partners provided 9,505 women of reproductive age with contraceptives. Currently, the contraceptive prevalence rate for refugee women in camps is recorded as 32%. UNHCR continues to work with partners to advocate for additional sensitization on sexual reproductive health.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

- Eligible refugees in all camps receive cash assistance for food from the World Food Program (WFP). As of the end of March 2023, 94 percent of the total refugees living in the camps are under targeted food assistance. As per agreed targeting criteria, 87 percent of refugees in Rwanda are classified as Highly Vulnerable and receive full (100%) food assistance, while 6 percent of refugees are currently classified as Moderately Vulnerable and receive 50 percent of the value of full food assistance. And 7 percent of refugees are classified as Least Vulnerable and do not receive any cash for food assistance.

- 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. As of the end of March, UNHCR and partners identified 56 Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 252 Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) cases and admitted these cases to targeted therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs for treatments in their respective refugee hosting sites. These new cases have resulted in the increase of the total SAM cases currently being monitored to 57 and the total MAM cases to 308. Additionally, UNHCR, through the respective health partners in refugee camps enrolled 1,604 and 1,117 pregnant and lactating women respectively in the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program to support with balanced macronutrient intake for healthier pregnancy and optimal perinatal outcomes. 1,173 HIV/AIDS patients also continued to be supported with nutritional feeding programmes.

WATER AND SANITATION

- In March, UNHCR facilitated a field assessment on the feasibility of solarization of water systems and health care facilities in Mugombwa refugee camp and Mahama refugee camp, as well as on water pumping system in Kigeme camp. The solarization of water may have anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal benefits that can further enhance the quality of water provision in refugee camps in Rwanda. The assessment for Nyabiheke camp is scheduled for some time in April.

- UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, provides water to refugees living in all refugee camps, reception, and transit centres across Rwanda, as well as the newly established Nkamira Site through

connections to the national water network where possible. In March 2023, water supply averaged 22.4 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Camps such as Nyabiheke and Kigeme continue to provide less than 17 litres of water supply, which is below the minimum water supply of 20 litres per person per day. Additionally, sanitation coverage, for example insufficient shower rooms, is observed to be low in camps. UNHCR continues to work with partners to seek support for the construction and maintenance of additional sanitation facilities.

- For Nyabiheke camp, the poor mechanical condition of the boreholes, alongside flooding at the treatments site, has significantly impacted the water supply. In March, a water pump for three boreholes were repaired to increase the quantity of water supplied in the camp. UNHCR is working with the WASH partner to identify long-term modalities to fix the water supply issues. In Kigeme refugee camp, the Rwandan Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) water supply continues to experience chronic production issues at the treatment plant. Investment is required to enhance production including water treatment.

- To curb the impact of poor hygiene related diseases and stave off COVID-19 in all refugee camps and transit locations, UNHCR through WASH partners provided a total of 2,145 litres of liquid soap, for handwashing and other cleaning practices in March. Furthermore, 1,780 cubic meters of sludge from latrines' septic tanks and 805 m3 of garbage was collected from refugee camps and disposed of to the respective waste dumpsites, in an effort to keep refugee camps clean.

- In Nkamira Transit Site, UNHCR ensured the provision of basic WASH services for over 4,000 asylum seekers. The access to clean water was maintained above the minimum standards (at 20.2 litres per person per day). Asylum seekers also continue to access sanitation facilities at latrines and shower stances with 65 persons per designated latrine drop hole, as well as 53 persons per shower stance.

SHELTER AND NFIS

- In March, UNHCR distributed cash assistance to refugees across all refugee camps to help them buy non-food items. This multipurpose cash assistance is distributed to refugees by UNHCR on a quarterly basis. In the first quarter of 2023, UNHCR provided cash assistance to 17,377 women and girls, to enable them to access sanitary material and hygienic soaps, in Congolese camps in Rwanda. In addition, cash assistance for core relief items was distributed to 25,974 refugee households across all refugee camps in Rwanda. UNHCR provides the cash equivalent for core relief items such as mattresses, blankets, plastic sheets, containers for water, cooking utensils and hygiene kits which helps refugees to meet their immediate basic needs and to rebuild their lives in dignity.

- In March, a total 11 shelters were rehabilitated across all the camps including, five in Kigeme camp, and six shelters in Mugombwa camp, bringing the total number shelters rehabilitated across the camps since the beginning of the year to 64 shelters. In addition, UNHCR also transformed the roofing for two shelters in Kigeme camp, and 14 shelters in Kiziba camp from old iron sheets to new iron sheet roofing, bringing the total number of refugee shelters rehabilitated through roofing works this year to 52.

- Additionally in March, the construction of seven terraces was also completed to protect shelters in high-risk areas in Mugombwa and Kigeme camps. This brings the total construction in 2023 to 26 terraces. In addition, three new semi-permanent shelters were constructed in Kigeme camp to meet

the needs of refugees residing in the camp, bringing the total number of new semi-permanent shelters constructed in Kigeme to six shelters.

- On 31 March the Government of Rwanda through MINEMA sent a letter to UNHCR requesting its support for the relocation of 743 refugee households from Kigeme refugee camp to Mahama camp due to shelter condition and risks of landslide. UNHCR and the camp manager have started the preparation for this exercise.

- In response to the influx of asylum seekers from DRC, UNHCR completed the construction of kitchen facilities to support the preparation of meals at Nkamira Transit Site. In addition, UNHCR continues to construct communal hangars at Nkamira to accommodate the growing population, in total 30 hangars have been completed and the construction of five additional hangars is ongoing.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- UNHCR continued to provide gas for clean cooking/ energy in kind for refugees in Mugombwa and Mahama 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, making them the ideal cooking energy for refugees in camps. In March 2023, approximately 14,811 cylinders of gas equalling 88,866 Kgs were distributed to refugees in Mahama camp.

- In 2018, UNHCR introduced a cash assistance programme to ensure refugees receive monthly cash payments that enable them to have the financial resources to purchase gas for cooking and other energy needs. In March 2023, UNHCR Rwanda supported refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme camps with cash for energy, while all refugees in the ETM centre also received cash assistance. This programme also contributes to improving environmental sustainability by reducing the need for firewood. To note that Mahama and Mugombwa camps are receiving energy in kind.

- In March, through the Practical Action Climate Resilient Farming project, 6,000 seedlings of Calliandra and 4,000 seedlings of avocados have been planted in the camp and host community surrounding Mahama camp. Furthermore, training on regenerative agriculture was also provided for 40 farmers in Mahama camp belonging to KUIMA the refugee farmers' cooperative and MACLfaco, the host community farmers' cooperative.

- UNHCR alongside implementing partners, also distributed and facilitated the planting of 4,426 alnus trees in and around Kigeme Camp, while 853 bamboos were planted at Akagera River buffer zone, as part of the World Water Week celebration, to promote and improve the protection of the Akagera River from soil erosion effects

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

- UNHCR in conjunction with MINEMA conducted a joint livelihood monitoring mission in all refugee hosting locations in Rwanda. The objective of the joint mission was to monitor the implementation of the livelihood and self-reliance programmes. Based on the assessments of the monitoring, a report will be drafted and discussed with partners, and the results will also support the mid-term review of the Graduation Strategy. The graduation strategy aims to graduate 4,000 refugees and host community

households (with 30-50% of host community) out of extreme poverty by the end of 2025 through the operationalization of the Government of Rwanda and UNHCR's Joint Strategy on economic inclusion of refugees and host communities (2021-24), as well as through the realization of pledges made at the GRF.

- Nyamagabe District received a USD 200,000 grant from Global Cities Fund through its Climate Action Window to implement a joint refugees-host community project under the title of 'Building Communities' Resilience to Climate Variability in Nyamagabe District' which will continue until January 2024.

- UNHCR worked with Inkomoko, an operational partner in the livelihood sector, to support the selection of refugees who will receive finance through affordable loans and entrepreneurship support in 2023. In Mugombwa camp, a total of 1,251 individuals were selected to be supported, with 458 individuals categorized under the business idea stage, 214 were categorized under having an existing business in the camp, while 579 individuals had businesses in the host community. Additionally, in Kigeme camp, Inkomoko trained 635 refugees in entrepreneurship and business management.

- In March, women artisans from Mahama refugee camp, specializing in making handcrafted materials such as woven baskets made a total of 2,710,000 Rwf. This was achieved through orders placed through UNHCR's brand Made51, as well direct sales to customers.

- At the ETM, UNHCR, in coordination with World Vision International, supported 120 refugees through livelihood activities including ICT, tailoring, and hair dressing courses, while 82 refugees also benefited from language courses where they learn English, French and Kinyarwanda in March.

- In March, Umutanguha Microfinance Limited, a local microfinance service provider based in Rwanda, that supports refugees with financial education trainings to capacitate and empower them on financial literacy, supported 15 refugees in Mahama camp with loans worth 16,100,000 Rwf and provided financial literacy training to 100 individuals.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- For the year 2023, UNHCR Rwanda has received resettlement quota for 4,313 individuals to USA, Norway, Canada, France, and Finland. By the end of March 2023, 1,803 individuals have been submitted to resettlement countries, including USA, Norway, Canada, and France. In addition, so far in 2023, 1,732 refugees have departed to USA, Norway, Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Australia, and New Zealand through resettlement and 19 refugees departed through complementary pathways largely as part of quotas provided in previous years.

- The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) conducted a case processing mission for 518 cases of 1,189 refugees in Rwanda, between the 10th of February to 21st of March. From the total interviews conducted, 99.6% of the individuals were accepted for resettlement to the USA.

- From the 20th to the 30th of March, Norway conducted a selection mission to the Congolese hosting refugee camps, as well as for refugees from the ETM, where 200 individuals were interviewed. UNHCR continued to provide logistical support to Norway during this mission. Canada also completed a selection mission in Kigali from 20th to 31st March. Approximately 680 individuals (including ETM cases) were interviewed. The outcomes / decisions for both missions are pending.

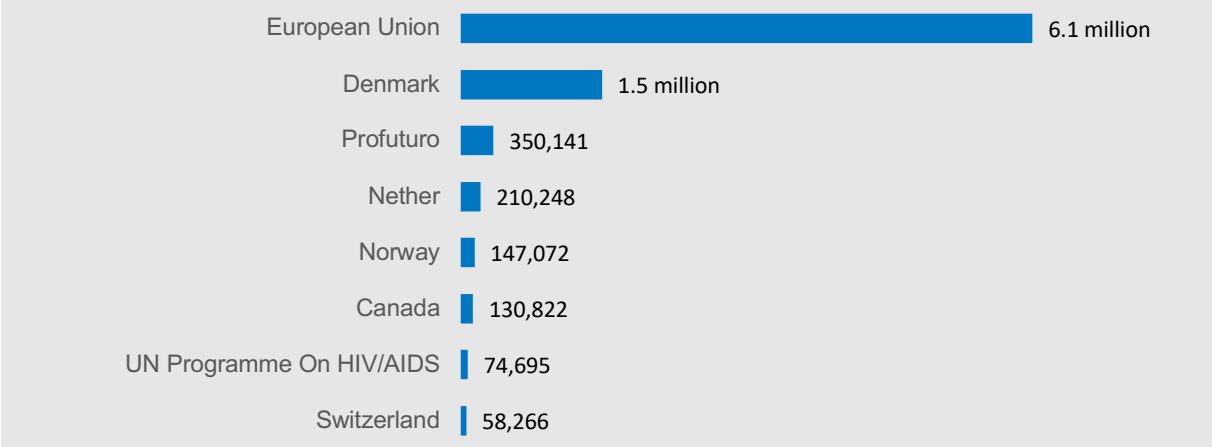
MISSIONS, DELEGATIONS AND EVENTS

- UNHCR successfully hosted a field mission for the heads of the United Nations agencies in Rwanda, to the Kirehe District and Mahama Refugee Camp between 28-30 March. The mission aimed to showcase the situation of refugees and host communities in the district, highlight the work of UNHCR, and encourage more UN agencies in Rwanda engage in the refugee response. During the visit, the team met with various stakeholders, including refugees, government officials, humanitarian partners, and community leaders. UNHCR and the UN country team reiterated their commitment to supporting refugees and host communities in Rwanda and called for continued international support to address the humanitarian needs in the region.

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 2023 | USD



BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions which contribute to the response in Rwanda and the region

Canada 3.9 million | Norway | Private donors

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 77.6 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

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