Mugombwa Refugee Camp, Rwanda

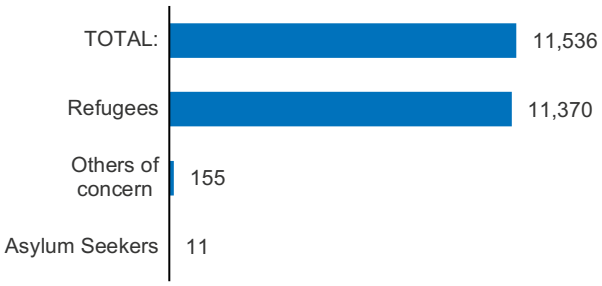
March 2023

11,536 refugees from DRC live in Mugombwa refugee camp which is located in the Gisagara District in Southern Province of Rwanda.

The camp was established in **2014 on 28 hectares of land.** The Government of Rwanda through MINEMA administer the camp and is responsible for security and protection of the refugees in coordination with UNHCR.

52.83% of the camp's population is under 18 years.

POPULATION OF CONCERN



Mugombwa Camp - Map

Desange, 19, fled to Rwanda from DRC in 2013. Growing up in a refugee camp was challenging but Desange was determined to improve her future through education. After excelling at her ordinary level secondary education exams, she was accepted into EFOTEC, one of the schools of excellance. in Rwanda. She is currently in her last year of high school studying Physics, Chemistry, and Biology and hopes to study medicine at university.

35 UNHCR STAFF BASED IN THE HUYE FIELD OFFICE COVER THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN MUGOMBWA REFUGEE CAMP

Main Activities

Camp coordination and camp management

- Mugombwa refugee camp is managed by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) represented by Camp Manager, Deputy Camp Manager and supported by immigration Directorate-General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) staff and Police. The camp is divided into eight quarters and each quartier consists of an average of five villages. In total there are 28 villages.
- The refugee camp has an executive committee which consists of eight members (four male and four female) led by a camp president and deputy-president. The executive committee is elected by community members for two years. Many religions exist in the Mugombwa camp, but majority of the population are Christian (Adventist).
- Each village has a village leader, elected by the village members and each quartier has also a quartier leader elected by the population residing in the respective quartiers. Village and quartier leaders play an important role in communicating issues facing the refugee community with UNHCR and partners.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, UNHCR works with six implementing and nine operational partners includes, Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR), Humanity Inclusion (HI), Plan International (PI), World Vision International (WVI), Save the children International (SCI), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Inkomoko, CARE International/ FREE Project, WVI/ PAC Project, GIZ/ ECOREF Project, Hope Impact, Practical Action, Off grid Box, GOOD PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL, and World Food Programme (WFP). Monthly operational and camp coordination meetings among UNHCR, partners and refugees' leaders take place to inform and advise future programming.
- Mugombwa refugee camp faces extreme environmental degradation due to its topographical nature. Land availability remains a major constraint, hampering the construction of shelter as well as sports and recreational facilities. Due to limited budget for rehabilitation and construction, there is a risk of land/mudslides due to steep slopes and intensity of rainfall. There is a need to plant more trees and establish strong drainage systems as well as having permanent shower rooms, retaining walls and stairs for sanitation facilities.
- UNHCR Huye field office is part of the Gisagara Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) which ties in many aspects of the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) to improve lives for both refugees and hosting communities (Rwanda). Jointly, UNHCR and Gisagara district have implemented several projects including smart agricultural in Misizi marshland.

Protection

- UNHCR's office in Huye delivers protection assistance and humanitarian support for Congolese refugees residing in Mugombwa camp. UNHCR works with authorities and humanitarian actors to ensure the rights of refugees are upheld. This includes monitoring to identify protection risks and responding through various means such as Continuous Registration Panel (CRP) sessions, home visits, providing legal assistance, advocacy aimed at prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV), and raising awareness on child protection issues.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, UNHCR and partners implement coordination mechanisms to ensure child protection, prevention, and response. UNHCR and Plan International have established a "Community Engagement Approach" building the capacity of refugee community mobilizers and strengthening existing community-based protection mechanisms to prevent and report the abuses, neglect, and exploitation of children.

- This community engagement approach also extends to prevention of SGBV. Through the establishment of SGBV committees, girls' committees, and anti-GBV clubs, as well as the recruitment of community mobilizers, UNHCR is encouraging the refugee community to take responsibility for reporting and documenting SGBV instances. The most prevalent types of SGBV for adults include psychological abuse, physical assault, denial of resources and opportunities, as well as rape.
- In line with community-based protection approaches and accountability to affected population, UNHCR implements complaint and feedback mechanisms through community-based protection partner (PFR) to ensure accountability to refugees in Mugombwa. UNHCR also runs a regular protection desk, individual counselling, hotlines, home visits, and mass meetings with the refugee community to receive complaint and provide timely feedback.
- In partnership with Humanity Inclusion (HI), UNHCR provides support to people with specific needs through community-based rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, supplementary feeding (SOSOMA) and occupational therapy to encourage functional independence. On average, 96 people with specific needs are supported every month.

Registration and Documentation

- UNHCR maintains accurate data of refugee residing in Mugombwa refugee through regular registration of individuals and groups. Refugees are registered individually and by household (biometric registration) and given a "Proof of Registration" by UNHCR. As of 31st March 2023, refugee population stands at 11,536 (6,472 female and 5,064 male).
- UNHCR also works closely with the Rwandan Government through MINEMA and NIDA to facilitate the issuance of new refugee identities to individuals of 16 years living in Mugombwa camp. Periodic campaigns take place to distribute new ID cards and replacement of the expired ones.

Education

- In Mugombwa refugee camp, most refugee children are enrolled and integrated within national schools located nearby to the camp. 758 students (389 female and 369 male) currently attend Early Childhood Development (Nursery), 2,139 students (1 063 female and 1,076 male) currently attend primary school and 1,999 (998 female and 1,001 male) secondary education. Small number of students (especially high performers) are sent to schools of excellence (boarding) and UNHCR supports the attendance of 18 children with disabilities to specialized schools. UNHCR supports education for refugees Mugombwa refugee camp in partnership with World Vision Rwanda.
- UNHCR support to refugee education includes paying tuition fees for students in schools of excellence and special needs education, providing scholastic supplies, didactic materials, school uniforms, school feeding fees (hot meals for secondary and porridge for ECD Children), psychosocial support to refugee children as well as registration fees to national exams.
- In Mugombwa camp, UNHCR also focuses on integrating digital education within the national schools in partnership with ProFuturo. Through the project, tablets have been distributed to upper primary to help to improve quality education to both refugee and Rwandan children.

Health

- One health centre is present in Mugombwa refugee camp and is managed by UNHCR and Save The Children (SCI). The health centre provides a range of primary health care services that include laboratory tests, anti-natal and post-natal care, and sexual and reproductive health care. The Ministry of Health also support the health centre with medical equipment.

- UNHCR and SCI facilitate the referrals of refugees in need of advanced secondary health care to districts hospital (KIBIRIZI Hospital) and tertiary referrals to other specialized hospitals (CHUB). A referral committee is in place to make these decisions based on the available budget to support lifesaving and emergency healthcare.
- Routine vaccination of children under five including measles and other mandatory child vaccinations are provided by UNHCR and SCI in Mugombwa refugee camp. The cumulative figure of children under five years vaccinated against Measles and Rubella from January-March 2023 is 118.
- As part of its public health services, UNHCR and SCI work with 22 community health workers to disseminate information and conduct health education throughout Mugombwa refugee camp.
- To ensure the health and wellbeing of the refugee population, UNHCR alongside WFP provides a variety of nutrition interventions in Mugombwa. These include supplementary feeding, outpatient program for severe malnutrition, anaemia reduction, HIV and TB treatment, nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women, and children from 6 to 23 months. Overall, 634 individuals have access to nutrition programme.

Food Security and Nutrition

- Since September 2017, WFP has used a Smartcard enabling refugees to access cash-based transfers for food assistance. The Smartcard is linked to each individual household's bank account. In 2022, food assistance is distributed through this methodology based on targeting criteria where the highly vulnerable receive 100%, moderately vulnerable receive 50%, and least vulnerable (3%) receive 0% of monthly cash assistance value. Currently, there are 10,741 individuals considered are highly vulnerable (93.48% of camp population), 477 individuals are considered moderately vulnerable (4.15% of the camp populations), while 272 individuals are considered least vulnerable (2.37% of the population) and do not receive any targeting assistance.
- To support the targeted food assistance, UNHCR operates a dedicated helpline in Mugombwa camp to receive refugee appeals for (re)inclusion in food assistance and ensure that refugees fulfilling the eligibility criteria are not erroneously excluded.

Water and Sanitation

- Drinking water in Mugombwa is supplied from three protected springs at Musave Valley with a total discharge of 4.04 l/sec. Water is pumped into the camp through electric pumps (diesel pumps is used in case of load shedding), and the average consumption is 25 litres per person per day.
- In terms of WASH facilities, Mugombwa refugee camp has 27 water points, 158 functional water taps, 10 water points, 47 blocks of dischargeable permanent latrines (with 470 drop holes including 94 drop holes with flush modern seat latrines which are friendly to people with disabilities), 32 blocks with 316 stances of permanent showers, 13 garbage collection points, and a dumping site.
- In terms of hygiene promotion, in Mugombwa camp UNHCR works with 14 refugee hygiene promoters to spread messages about best practices. On average each promoter is in contact with around 823 people per month. In addition, 225 litres of liquid soap are provided each month for handwashing best practice and general cleaning of sanitation facilities.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, an average of 85 m^3 of solid waste are transported to dumping site each month and 300 m^3 of liquid waste dislodged from dischargeable latrines.

Shelter and NFIs

- Since Mugombwa refugee camp's creation in 2014, UNHCR has constructed 1,702 semi-permanent shelters across eight quarters subdivided into 28 villages.
- Initially shelter surface was 15 sqm in Mugombwa camp although some shelters have been extended to take into consideration differing needs of refugee families giving the average of 25 sqm per shelter. Since January 2023, UNHCR through direct implementation have rehabilitated/repaired a total of 29 shelters in Mugombwa camp.
- As of March 2023, UNHCR has also constructed a total of 26 terraces to protect shelters in Mugombwa camp as mitigation measure for environmental degradation so far this year.
- A quarterly coordination meeting for shelter committee is conducted by UNHCR, MINEMA, refugee committee, ADRA and other partners as per needs to discuss and find solution of present problems.
- UNHCR provides the cash equivalent for non-food items such as sanitary pads, soaps, jerricans, kitchen sets to all refugees living in the camp. Distributions happen on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis subject to the budget availability. In March 2023, multi-purpose cash assistance for Q1 2023 was distributed to all refugee households in Mugombwa camp.

Energy and Environment

- In Mugombwa refugee camp, all households receive Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for cooking from UNHCR in cooperation with our partner ADRA. From May 2021 to 31 March 2023, 62,895 cylinders/ 377,370 kgs of LPG were distributed to the refugee community.
- In addition, briquettes are provided to early childhood development facilities in partnership with World Vision as an alternative to firewood to support the school feeding program and reduce deforestation.
- 798 refugee households have access to solar home systems for lighting in Mugombwa camp. The health centre and offices within the camp are connected to National Grid. The community centre is connected to Solar Energy.
- Tree Planting activities are implemented by refugees and Rwandan communities, UNHCR and World Vision. As of March 2023, 12,146 trees are planted in Mugombwa refugee camp including 860 eucalyptus, 3,567 alnus, 3,160 oranges, 140 citrus, 691 mangoes, 2,138 avocadoes and 1,680 bamboo trees. 2,327 fruit trees were also provided to the local Rwandan host community and schools (GS Mugombwa and EP Rushoki) in Mugombwa Cell. Environmental clubs among the refugee youth monitor their condition and upkeep.
- Environmental protection awareness is regularly conducted within community. UNHCR and World Vision International work with 45 refugee environmental protection promoters through mass community mobilizations and maintenance of planted trees throughout Mugombwa refugee camp.
- As of 31 March 2023, UNHCR and World Vision International have rehabilitated/ maintained more than 657 m of damaged access roads across different quarters of the camp, 628 m of water drainage systems and 522.5 m of retaining walls.

Livelihoods and economic inclusion

- In 2018, UNHCR and partners (including WFP and FAO) started work on the Misizi Marshland nearby Mugombwa camp in close cooperation with the local Gisagara District and Government of Rwanda (MINEMA). In line with the Global Compact for Refugees, the project aims increasing agricultural production while supporting peaceful coexistence between refugees and the Rwandan host community. In total, 60 Ha of land was provided by the district for farming. This has supported 1,427 households (1,127 Rwanda and 300 refugee) to farm

and form the ICYEREKEZO MISIZI cooperative. In 2022, over 209,383kg of maize was produced in season A (128,471kg consumed and 80,912kg sold), and 35,832kg of soyabean was also produced in season B (32,594kg was consumed and 3,238kg was sold).

- UNHCR supports refugees and Rwandan farmers working on Misizi Marshland to develop the marshland and provides agricultural tools and products. In addition, four drying facilities and two warehouses have been constructed.
- In addition, UNHCR has supported the construction of five poultry and five piggery sheds in the Misizi Marshlands. The diversification of income through animal husbandry has involved 46 refugee households and 104 Rwandans (households) from the local community.
- In coordination with partners in the livelihood sector (GIZ, Inkomoko, Give Directly, WVI, Plan International, Alight, HI), UNHCR also supports refugee entrepreneurs and businesses through start-up loans, seed funding, business/entrepreneurial development, financial literacy training, and access to vocational trainings to increase refugee self-reliance.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, as in the rest of Rwanda, UNHCR and partners support refugees through the process of 'graduating' from poverty and becoming less dependent on humanitarian aid. In partnership with World Vision, since November 2021, 248 refugees received cash grants of approximately $800 per person for their non-agricultural business activities, 14 received cash grant of approximatively $800 per person for their agricultural activities while each of 60 beneficiaries received the 1st instalment of $400 out $800 total planned for their agricultural activities. In addition, 15 youth were enrolled in 9 months TVET training, while 13 youth were supported to get start up tool kits where each youth received cash grant for start-up tool kits of approximatively $800. With the support from PAC project by World Vision, 48 refugee households of 303 members were supported with cash transfer for consumption.
- In addition, UNHCR is working with CARE International to support 31 refugees through TVET trainings and 19 refugees are being supported to become mobile support agents. Each of the 19 youth mobile money agents have now received their 1st instalment of 170,000 rwf out of 300,000 rwf planned to run their business.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR continues to identify and process cases from Mugombwa camp for resettlement mainly due to medical reasons.
- Legal and policy provisions exist to facilitate the local integration of refugees throughout Rwanda, including in Mugombwa camp. Despite this, requests to locally integrate are few and the majority occur due to marriage between refugees and Rwandan nationals. UNHCR remains available to support refugees pursue naturalisation through legal pathways.
- Refugees in Mugombwa camp primarily originate from Eastern DRC. Due to ongoing security concerns in their area of origin, UNHCR is neither promoting nor facilitating voluntary repatriation at the time being.

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