

Rwanda

September 2023

The annual ID Biometric Exercise concluded in all camps in September. During the exercise a total of **over 6,000 refugees** were assisted with biometric capture, renewal of expired and lost IDs, issuing of new IDs, and other documentation related issues.

The new academic year started in Rwanda on September 25, UNHCR supported refugee students across the country to return to school by providing scholastic materials and school uniforms. In September, **294 Rwandan refugees returned home**, bringing the total to 1,301 so far in 2023. UNHCR provides cash assistance to Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from abroad but is currently **lacking funding to support more returns in 2023.**

KEY STATISTICS

135,733 refugees and asylum seekers are in

Rwanda as of 30 September 2023. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (61.4%) and Burundi (38%). 6,144 new asylum seekers from DRC are awaiting formal registration.

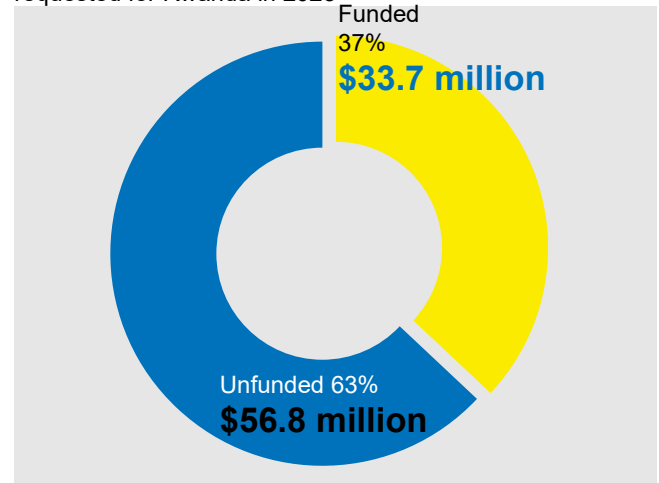
1,090 new asylum seekers from DRC arrived in Rwanda in September

5,696 refugees have departed for resettlement and **69** refugees on complementary pathways so far in 2023

FUNDING (AS OF 04 OCTOBER)

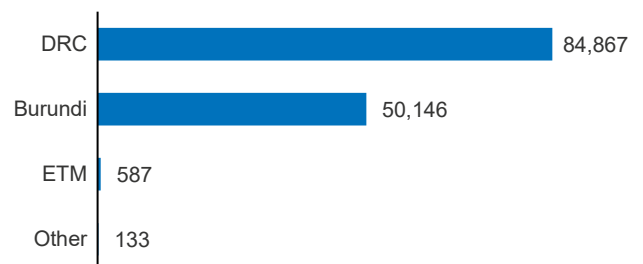
USD 90.5 million

requested for Rwanda in 2023



Kigeme refugee camp is home to 14,708 refugees and was established in 2012.

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 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, ministries, operational partners, and the private sector working with refugees in Rwanda.

Achievements



PROTECTION

- In September, UNHCR worked with the Government of Rwanda through the National Identification Agency (NIDA) and Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) to conduct a biometric enrolment exercise in Kiziba, Kigeme and Mugombwa camps. Through this process the biometrics of refugees were collected and refugee ID cards renewed, distributed or replaced. Refugee ID cards form an important means through which refugees can access national services in Rwanda. In September, the annual ID Biometric Exercise concluded in all camps. During the exercise a combined total of over 6,000 refugees were assisted with biometric capture, renewal of expired and lost IDs, correction and other documentation related issues.
- Registration of new asylum seekers from DRC continued in September in Mahama, Kiziba, Nyabiheke, Mugombwa and Kigeme refugee camps following the transfer of asylum seekers from Nkamira Transit Centre. In total, 1,004 asylum seekers were officially registered from among the new arrivals throughout the month. Registration will continue over the coming months to provide documentation to over 12,000 asylum seekers who have sought safety in Rwanda since November 2022.
- UNHCR and partners work to ensure that children, adolescents, and youth are protected from harm and that their rights are upheld. In September 2023, throughout the country, 74 best interest procedures were conducted for refugee children at risk.
- In Rwanda, the birth registration rate for refugee children below 5 years old currently stands at 95.7 percent, while refugee birth registration coverage irrespective of age stands at 91.6 percent. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and associated ministries to improve the birth registration rates as refugees are included within the national Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system. In September, 225 new births were registered from among the refugee and asylum seeker population in Rwanda.
- UNHCR works in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) to provide legal counselling and assistance. In September, UNHCR conducted a training on access to asylum for PFR which was attended by nine legal officers from throughout the country. Throughout the month, PFR provided legal representation to refugees in 39 criminal cases. In Huye, Mugombwa and Kigeme refugee camps, 91 refugees also received legal assistance.

- 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, 77 refugees made inquiries in Kigali around the themes of health, durable solutions and requesting assistance. In Nyamata and Bugesera district, UNHCR also provided counselling to 27 Burundian refugees living in urban areas.
- In Rwanda, UNHCR partners with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to support people with specific needs. In total, 4,363 individuals were provided with psychosocial support in September and 1,031 people with disabilities also received support.
- UNHCR in Rwanda provides 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 September, UNHCR provided such assistance to three families to help them find emergency shelter and food. In addition, UNHCR supported five families (composed of 9 Burundian, a Ugandan and a Yemeni individual) to move to Mahama refugee camp as they were no longer able to sustain their livelihoods in Kigali.
- On 23 September 2023, UNHCR organized a celebration of the International Day of Sign Language with deaf refugees, family and community leaders who attended a sign language class at Gikondo Community Centre. UNHCR also attended a celebration organized by Rwandan National Association of the Deaf Women in Huye.
- In September, Gikondo Community Centre in Kigali which UNHCR runs in partnership with PFR moved to a new location which provides more space and is better designed to facilitate community activities. On 21 September, urban refugees celebrated the International Day of Peace at Gikondo during which students who have been attending a sewing class over the last six months received their certificates. Celebrations for International Day of Peace were also held across Rwanda with sports competitions at the ETM and events across other refugee camps.
- UNHCR operates Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) across all refugee camps in Rwanda in partnership with SCI and Plan International where refugee youth and children can participate in recreational activities such as arts and crafts, reading, online digital platforms for learning, and sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball. In September, UNHCR collaborated with the SCORT Foundation in Mugombwa and Kigeme camps where they conducted refresher trainings for refugee youth football coaches who they had previously trained in 2018. In addition, one refugee from Mugombwa refugee camp was selected to attend training at Bayern Munich FC Rwanda academy in Kigali.
- As of the end of September, 587 refugees and asylum seekers were accommodated at the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda. In September, the community centre at the ETM was inaugurated during a visit of the Danish Minister for Immigration and Integration and a delegation of Danish politicians. The community centre will provide a space for a range of services and activities including psychosocial counselling, language classes and livelihood trainings. During September HI supported psychosocial counselling for 52 refugees and home visits for 134 refugees.

**EDUCATION**

- On September 12, the National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) released Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) and Ordinary Level (O'level) results. For refugee students, 88.8 percent of the 2,212 students who sat for the PLE exams passed and 89.4 percent out of 1,855 who sat for O'level exams succeeded.
- Following the announcement of the national exam results, 803 refugee students were identified as eligible to attend schools of national excellence by NESA. Despite this, only 250 scholarship places were available through Impact Hope, a national NGO. UNHCR took part in the selection committee for those places alongside MINEMA and World Vision in the different camp locations. The remaining 553 refugee students will be expected to continue their education in schools near camps due to lack of funding to support their attendance at the schools of excellence.
- The new academic year started in Rwanda on September 25, UNHCR has supported refugee students across the country to return to school in partnership with World Vision by providing scholastic materials and school uniforms.
- Nyamagabe District Education Office has initiated a plan to take over management of camp-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Kigeme camp starting from the new academic year of 2023/2024. The ECD school which was previously registered under UNHCR as a private school, will be integrated into the national system under Ministry of Education as a public school. Similarly, in Gatsibo district, the management of an ECD school in Nyabiheke camp has been integrated into the national system starting this year.
- A total of 2,645 asylum seeker children relocated from Nkamira Transit Centre to different refugee camps were enrolled into public schools in or nearby the camps as the new school year started. In addition, a total of 1,190 asylum seeker children who remain in Nkamira are attending curriculum and language orientation programme at transit centre due to a lack of space in nearby schools to integrate them into the national system. UNHCR and partners are currently operating a blended learning programme for these students in Nkamira while discussions about relocation of the students to other camps and integration into national schools continue.
- 93 ECD teachers in Mahama camp have been attending a sign language training course which started in June 2023 and is a three-hour per week training that will run for a year. The aim of this training is to develop and enhance the use of sign language skills to support the learning and integration of children with hearing and speech impairment into the mainstream classrooms.
- Following the call for application for the DAFI scholarship starting this academic year, a total of 330 refugee students applied. After thorough screening processes, 58 applicants were shortlisted for interviews which will help to select the final 40 new DAFI scholars for this year.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- UNHCR is managing eight camp-based health care facilities in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children 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 through district government health centres. In September, 20,802 primary health care consultations took place at the camp-based facilities making the ratio 42 consultations per day, per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities. At the ETM, 878 refugees received primary health care at the clinic in September, an average of 26 persons per day, while 31 refugees were referred to hospitals for treatment and two new babies were born.
- 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, 783 cases were referred to hospitals for further treatment.
- From 12 to 13 September, community health workers in Mahama camp participated and supported in indoor residual spraying campaign for malaria prevention conducted in collaboration with Kirehe District. Over 3,600 structures in the camp were sprayed with the aim of reducing malaria occurrences in the camp.
- In September, 8,144 refugee women accessed family planning services through primary health facilities in refugee camps. In addition, UNHCR continues to support 1,152/1,053 HIV/AIDS refugee patients living in camps.
- 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. 5,469 refugee children between 6-23 months and 2,748 pregnant/lactating refugee women are currently assisted through the supplementary feeding programme. In addition, 39 severely acute malnutrition and 191 moderately acute malnutrition refugee children are currently part of targeted therapeutic and supplementary feeding programs to improve their health and nutrition status.
- UNHCR supports the enrolment of urban based refugees in the national community-based health insurance scheme. Enrolment is normally done on an annual basis in line with the Rwandan financial year July – June. Nonetheless, in September an additional 215 refugees were submitted for enrolment in CBHI and details of 110 refugees updated.



FOOD SECURITY

- In support of the World Food Programme (WFP) cash assistance for food programme in refugee camps across Rwanda, UNHCR provided lists of refugees in the highly vulnerable and moderately vulnerable categories who are eligible to receive assistance. In total, 88 percent of refugees are classified as highly vulnerable and receive 10,000 RWF a month, while 6 percent of refugees are moderately vulnerable and receive 5,000 RWF a month.

- In support of school feeding programmes, UNHCR provides briquettes to ECD schools in refugee camps. For primary and secondary schools, the Government has the responsibility for school feeding and WFP also supports by contributing 90 percent of the cost of refugee school feeding directly to the Government of Rwanda.
- In September, UNHCR continued to provide three hot meals a day to refugees and asylum seekers accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda.



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 2023, water supply averaged 21.7 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Despite this, water supply remains a challenge in Nyabiheke and Kigeme.
- Water facilities and infrastructure across refugee camp remains old and in urgent need of maintenance across refugee camps in Rwanda. In particular, old latrine blocks require upgrading and wastewater drainage systems needs rehabilitating to meet basic standards.
- In September, UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, distributed 1,892.5 litres (L) of liquid soap for handwashing and other cleaning practices to stave off diarrheal diseases in all sites (Nyabiheke: 260L, Kiziba: 160L, Mahama: 421L, Mugombwa: 227.5L, Kigeme: 360L, Nkamira: 464L). Throughout the month, UNHCR also worked to remove sludge from septic tanks across the camps and dispose of garbage.
- In Nkamira, UNHCR is continuing the construction of latrines, showers and other WASH facilities to meet the needs of 7,200 hosted at the transit site. In September, the construction of 20 latrine drop holes and 20 shower stances was completed. The ongoing construction of 2 blocks latrines each 20 drop holes is at 55% of completion.



SHELTER AND NFIS

- In September, of 101 shelters across the camps, this includes: 39 shelters in Mahama camp, 17 shelters in Nyabiheke camp, 16 shelters in Mugombwa camp, 15 shelters in Kigeme camp, and 14 shelters in Kiziba camp. This brings the total number of shelters rehabilitated across the camps since the beginning of the year to 448 shelters. In Kigeme refugee camp, UNHCR organized Umuganda (community work) activities with the refugee community on 19 September where six shelters were constructed.
- During September, a total of 14 terraces were constructed by UNHCR and ADRA to protect shelters on high-risk areas, this includes: 10 terraces in Mugombwa camp and 4 terraces in Kigeme camp, which brings the total number of terraces constructed for the year to 94 terraces.

- In Kiziba refugee camp, UNHCR is collaborating with the Rwandan Red Cross to construct 300 kitchens near refugee shelters. During September the first 200 kitchens were completed and handed over to the refugee community for utilization.
- Following the fourth convoy transferring new asylum seekers from Nkamira transit centre to Mahama camp in September, UNHCR continued to conduct shelter allocation for the new arrivals in the camp. In total, 1,082 new arrivals were allocated shelters in September, this means that all asylum seekers transferred during the four convoys have now been allocated shelters.
- In September, no cash assistance for NFI's was distributed to refugees living in camps due to a lack of funding. In 2023, UNHCR had aimed to provide cash-based assistance to refugees living in camps on a quarterly basis to help them buy items such as soap, blankets, menstrual hygiene products and other household items. Due to the cuts in programmes, UNHCR remains concerned about the deterioration of refugee wellbeing and increase of negative coping mechanisms. Despite this, UNHCR continues to provide monthly cash assistance to refugees accommodated at the ETM.



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- UNHCR has continued to provide gas for clean cooking / energy in kind for refugees in Mahama refugee camp in the form of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and works with Good People International to provide the same in Mugombwa camp. LPG cookers emit 50 times fewer pollutants than cooking stoves fuelled by biomass such as mud stoves.
- 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 Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme camps. Despite this, due to a lack of funding no cash for energy was distributed in September. As a result, refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme camps continue to struggle to meet their energy needs.
- In September, UNHCR held a meeting with KoKo Rwanda to discuss piloting bioethanol cooking technology in Mahama refugee camp. Bioethanol offers many possibilities for energy provision to refugees in Rwanda and would also contribute to carbon emission reduction.



LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE

- Agriculture is one of the main sectors through which refugee self-reliance can be achieved in Rwanda. UNHCR is currently running three projects to develop refugee and Rwandan livelihoods and self-reliance through the Misizi (covering Mugombwa camp), Nyabicwamba (covering Nyabiheke Refugee Camp), and Mushishito (covering Kigeme Refugee Camp) marshlands. On 15 September, the Mayor of Gatsibo district officially launched the crop season A in Nyabicwamba marshland.
- In September, a total of 98 refugees and 46 Rwandans participated in livelihoods trainings such as ICT, tailoring and hairdressing at the ETM. In addition, 79 refugees participated in language classes in English, French, and/or Kinyarwanda.

- UNHCR in partnership with UNLEASH Innovation Lab has selected 98 out of 300 applications from refugee youth to take part in the Innovation Lab scheduled to take place in December 2023.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- For the year 2023, UNHCR Rwanda has received resettlement quota for 5,758 individuals to USA, Belgium, Norway, Canada, France, and Finland. By the end of September 2023, UNHCR has submitted 5,481 individuals are submitted to resettlement countries. 5,696 refugees have departed for resettlement and 69 refugees departed through complementary pathways. Among them 40 refugees from the ETM left on resettlement to Canada, France, Norway and the USA.
- In September, UNHCR supported resettlement missions from USA, Canada and Norway to Rwanda where they undertook interviews and processed refugee families for resettlement. In total 437 cases were interviewed by USCIS, 301 refugees by Canada and the Norway mission is ongoing where the plan is to interview 202 refugees.
- In total, 30,782 Burundian refugees have returned home from Rwanda since 2020 including 325 so far in 2023. In September, however, no return convoys were organized.
- In September, 294 Rwandan refugees returned back home, bringing the total to 1,301 so far in 2023. UNHCR provides cash assistance to Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from abroad. The reintegration grant is 250 USD per adult and 150 USD per child. When returnees initially arrive in Rwanda, they will receive 20 percent of the cash assistance value from UNHCR through Equity Bank while they are hosted in UNHCR transit centres. Upon their return to their location of origin, and verification and provision of national identity cards by NIDA, returnees will receive the remaining 80 percent of the cash assistance. UNHCR in Rwanda is currently lacking funding to support additional Rwandan returns in 2023.



MISSIONS, DELEGATIONS AND EVENTS

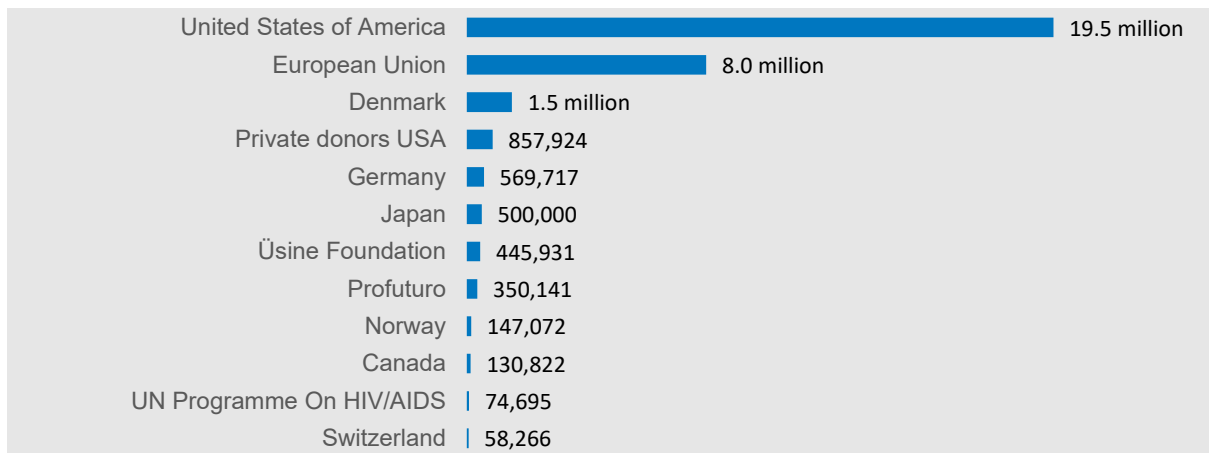
- In the week of 25 September, a joint regional FAO-UNHCR mission was conducted to explore opportunities for a flagship project linked to agriculture in refugee hosting areas. Following the mission, a joint project will be developed and presented at the upcoming Global Refugee Forum.
- On 27 September, the Danish Minister of Immigration and Integration and politicians from the Immigration and Integration Parliamentary committee visited the ETM where they inaugurated a community centre funded by Denmark. In addition on 28-29 September, the delegation visited Huye and Kigeme refugee camp where they met with refugee communities to learn more about the refugee situation in Rwanda.

- On 26 September, UNHCR participated in a workshop held by the UN Migration Working Group about how to develop a long-term strategy which ensures the inclusion of vulnerable migrants and forcibly displaced populations in national structures.

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

United States of America 51 million | Italy 8.8 million | Private donors Australia 6.9 million | Private donors Germany 4.4 million | Australia 3.9 million | Canada 3.9 million | Private donors USA 3.2 million | Finland 3.1 million | Private donors United Kingdom 2.4 million

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 69 million | Norway 63.1 million | Private donors Spain 43.2 million | Netherlands 36.3 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Private donors Japan 30 million | United Kingdom 28.9 million | France 26.7 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 23.5 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Private donors Italy 13.7 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

CONTACTS

Lilly Carlisle, External Relations Officer, UNHCR Rwanda,
 carlisle@unhcr.org: +250 788 350 295