Kiziba Refugee Camp, Rwanda

November **2023**

Kiziba is the oldest refugee camp in Rwanda and was established in 1996. It is currently host to **15,793** refugees and asylum seekers. Around **46 percent** of the population are under the age of 18 years old.

Kiziba is located about 15 km outside Karongi town, in Karongi District, Western Province. In total, the camp covers **44 hectares** and is divided into 10 community administrative units (quartiers).

UNHCR works with **12 different partners** in Kiziba refugee camp to deliver assistance and services to the refugee population.

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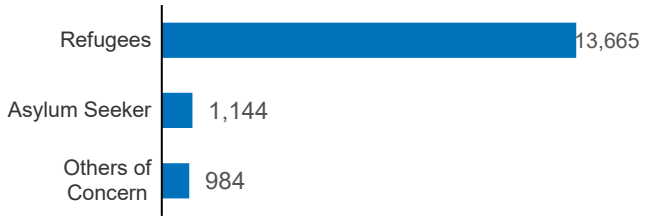

UNHCR STAFF BASED IN THE KARONGI FIELD OFFICE COVER THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN KIZIBA REFUGEE CAMP

UNHCR, PFR, and PLAN International address UMUBANO Primary School students on 29th of November during the 16 Days of Activism. The talk was on preventing GBV.

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Main Activities

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- Kiziba refugee camp is managed by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) represented by Camp Manager, Deputy Camp Manager and supported by the Directorate-General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) staff and Police. Camp coordination is undertaken by MINEMA and UNHCR.
- Refugees in Kiziba refugee camp are highly dependent on humanitarian assistance, and few individuals have access to employment opportunities. The available work opportunities are mostly in agriculture, construction, or domestic work sectors. Food in the camp is provided by World Food Programme.
- UNHCR works with 12 partners, both implementing and operational, across a variety of sectors in Kiziba refugee camp and Karongi District, including: World Food Programme (WFP) on food and nutrition; Save the Children International (SCI) on health and nutrition; Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) on logistics; Humanity & Inclusion (HI) on assistance for people with special needs and disabilities; Plan International (PI) on child protection and gender-based violence; World Vision International (WVI) on education, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); Caritas on livelihoods; Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) on legal assistance, community-based protection and birth registration; Inkomoko on livelihoods; Kepler on education; Rwanda Red Cross on distribution of non-food items, livelihoods and first aid; Practical Action on energy and environment; and Impact Hope on education.

Protection

- To ensure accountability to the refugee community, UNHCR and partners operate complaint and feedback mechanisms, including complaint boxes, a protection hotline, protection email, and protection desk in Kiziba refugee camp. The protection desk in Kiziba refugee camp operates three days per week to identify vulnerable refugees and protection cases, provide counselling, and refer refugees to relevant services. Most refugees who approach the protection desk enquire about resettlement opportunities, health services, request changes to their family composition (registering of births, deaths, and marriages) and report protection concerns. In November, UNHCR provided counselling on 16 cases received at the protection desk, and 17 cases received by the Continuous Registration Panel (CRP) operated by UNHCR, MINEMA and DGIE.
- In Kiziba camp, community-based child protection mechanisms are applied to strengthen child protection throughout the camp. UNHCR staff and partners work to manage individual child protection cases by providing counselling and solutions on their protection issues.
- In November, PI conducted 19 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) as part of child protection case management. 27 Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UACs) also received material support including food, kitchen sets, and clothing as part of the assisted living programme. During the month UNHCR and Plan International conducted 29 home visits to children to assess their wellbeing and provide psychosocial support.
- In November, UNHCR and partners reached 1,209 youths through sports for protection activities with an increase in participation for football, basketball, and volleyball.
- UNHCR works with PI to identify and support victims of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) and provide psycho-social support and medical referrals. The common forms of GBV cases reported include sexual assault, physical assault, psychological abuse, and denial of resources. In November, UNHCR and PI assisted 7 newly reported GBV cases and continued to provide assistance and monitor 54 previous cases.

- UNHCR's partner HI supports refugees with disabilities in Kiziba refugee camp by providing them with assistive devices and promoting their inclusion in different activities. In November, 99 individuals with disabilities (58 male and 41 female) received basic functional rehabilitation services. In addition, 28 children (18 boys and 10 girls) with physical and mental disabilities were supported with supplementary feeding.

Education

- In Kiziba camp, there is a primary school and secondary school. Currently, 957 children attend Early Childhood Development (ECD), 2,856 children attend primary school, 1,137 students attended lower secondary school, and 297 were enrolled in upper secondary school. Overall school attendance stood at 96 percent. UNHCR continues to advocate for the full integration of schools in Kiziba camp into the national education system.
- In November, World Vision International (WVI) distributed school 503 uniforms to ECD children.
- Kepler University also have a campus in Kiziba refugee camp which supports refugees' access to higher education. Currently, 135 refugee students are enrolled in its blended learning program to earn a degree from Southern New Hampshire University.

Health and Nutrition

- In Kiziba camp, primary health care and medical screenings are provided by UNHCR through SCI. There is one health centre in the camp that also serves Rwandan community living in the surrounding areas. Refugee patients in need of further or specialized treatment are referred to district and national hospitals. The camp's health centre includes a maternity ward, laboratory, consultation rooms, pharmacy, and in-patient wards with a doctor, 12 nurses, and 14 refugee assistant nurses. In November, 2,886 individuals received medical and health services, with 119 people admitted to the in-person ward in the camp's health centre and 124 cases referred to hospitals (98 refugees and 26 Rwandans).
- In November, therapeutic feeding was provided to 5 individuals (4 refugees and 1 Rwandan) suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 15 individuals (13 refugees and 2 Rwandans) with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). UNHCR in partnership with SCI also provided supplementary feeding to 339 children of 6 months of age, 13 pregnant women and 151 lactating mothers.

Food Security and Nutrition

- WFP provides support to refugees through cash assistance for food, which is transferred to refugees monthly via bank cards, and sometimes via cash agents in the camp in cases where bank cards have errors.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- Water is distributed to refugees through several water points and water stands located within Kiziba camp. The available water supply is 27.4 litres per person per day, which is well above the recommended minimum standard of 20 litres per person per day.
- Kiziba camp has 744 drop holes of latrines which equates to 23 persons per drop hole (against the standard of 20 persons) and 338 shower rooms equating to 52 persons per shower room (against the standard of 50 persons); 92 hand washing stands have been built by the refugee community to promote hygiene in the camp. Two trucks to dislodge latrines and empty garbage in Kiziba camp are available.
- Hygiene promotion sessions are regularly conducted throughout the camp by a group of 56 refugee volunteers and casual workers reaching 2,896 persons with educational messages (1,211 male and 1,685 female). In November, WVI distributed 220 litres of

liquid soap for handwashing in public facilities, such as camp offices, schools, marketplace, health centre and community centre.

- In November, UNHCR conducted maintenance and repairs of WASH facilities within Kiziba camp. As a result, 18 m of access and water ways were maintained; 8 water taps, and 04 valves fixed; 7 water taps replaced.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

- Kiziba refugee camp covers 44 hectares of land and has a total of 3,413 shelters which accommodate the camp population. In coordination with the shelter committee, UNHCR allocates vacant shelters to refugees based on the needs. Due to lack of space and shelters within Kiziba camp, the standard for shelter size (3 m x 4 m = 12 m²) and the number of persons per shelter (five maximum) is not respected and approximately 32 per cent of all households do not live in adequate dwellings.

- In November, a shelter coordination meeting was held to allocate houses vacated by refugees who had departed on resettlement to newly arrived asylum seekers. In total, 24 houses were allocated to 21 households who had been transferred to Kiziba from Nkamira Transit Centre. UNHCR and ADRA also provided 8 Shelters with construction materials for rehabilitation.

Energy and Environment

- Due to its location on hilly terrain, Kiziba refugee camp is susceptible environmental degradation such as soil erosion, rainwater runoff and creation of gullies which is increasing because of climate change. UNHCR, refugees and members of the host community plant trees through Umuganda (community work) to mitigate against such a risk.
- In 2018, the Government of Rwanda banned the use of firewood. As a result, UNHCR distributes cash assistance for energy to refugees in Kiziba refugee camp monthly to help them buy fuel for cooking. The cash assistance for energy has not been provided since June 2023 due to funding shortages.

Durable Solutions

- Resettlement is currently the primary durable solution for refugees in Kiziba refugee camp. From January to November 2023, UNHCR has submitted applications for 1,718 individuals for resettlement to Canada, France, Norway, and the USA. Moreover, from January to November 2023, 2,036 refugees departed Kiziba camp for resettlement to third countries.
- To maintain continuous communication, manage resettlement expectations, and mitigate fraud, UNHCR continue to provide individual counselling to refugees, in-person and through the hotline. UNHCR also holds town hall meetings on monthly basis to provide refugees with structured messages about resettlement and answer queries raised by the community.
- Legal and policy provisions exist to facilitate the local integration of refugees throughout Rwanda, including in Kiziba camp. Despite this, requests from refugees who have shown interest 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.