Rwanda

April - May 2025

Persistent **funding gaps continue to challenge provision of essential refugee responses** in the health, shelter, WASH, and protection sectors.

A total of **1,714 Rwandan returnees from DRC were received** at Kijote and Nyarushishi transit centres, where they were documented and provided with essential services.

Across the country, **GBV prevention/response efforts reached 468 women and girls**, engaging 24 community activists and support groups, and connected with 3,354 individuals.

KEY STATISTICS

136,501 refugees and asylum seekers are in Rwanda as of 31 May 2025. Most are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (60.83%) and Burundi (38.34%).

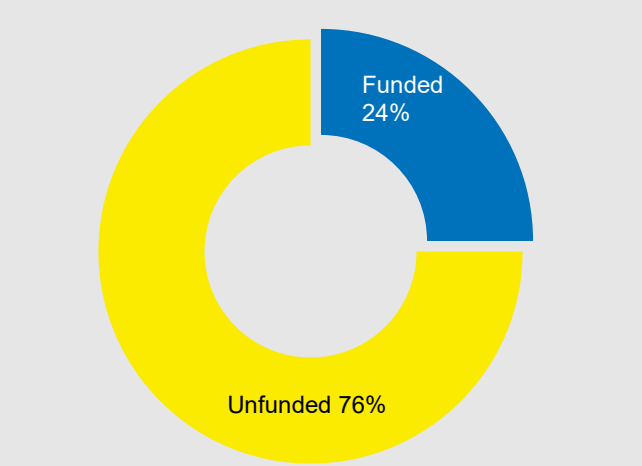
207 asylum seekers arrived in Rwanda between April and May 2025.

945 departed for resettlement and **461** departed through complementary pathways since the beginning of 2025.

FUNDING NEEDS

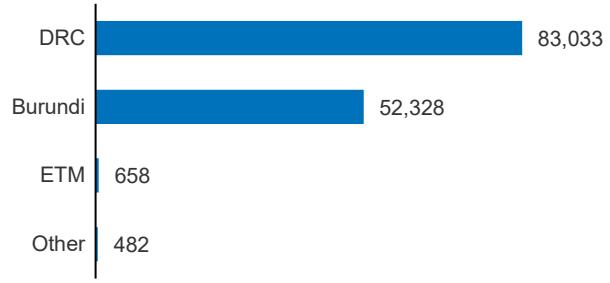
USD 84.8 million

requested for Rwanda in 2025



Rwandan returnees from DRC boarding buses before heading to Nyarushishi Transit Centre. © UNHCR/Eric Didier Karinganire

CURRENT POPULATION



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

Operational Context & Partners

The Government of Rwanda, through the Ministry in charge 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. As of May 2025, UNHCR works directly with nine 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.

PROTECTION

- During the reporting period, the Gikondo Community Centre in Kigali recorded 207 new arrivals, including 133 families. The majority were Burundians (50%), followed by Sudanese (36%), with the remaining 14% comprising individuals from other nationalities, including Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, South Sudan, Algeria, Yemen, Central African Republic, and Uganda.
- Across the country, GBV prevention and response efforts reached 468 women and girls through targeted programs, engaging 24 community activists and support groups, and connected with 3,354 individuals through broader prevention activities — with women and girls leading 80% of these initiatives.
- 19,366 children benefited from child-friendly spaces across refugee camps, which provided a safe and conducive environment for play, learning, and psychosocial support.
- UNHCR assisted vulnerable individuals, focusing on 10 families (20 individuals) from Burundi and Sudan in exceptionally vulnerable circumstances, one refugee with speech impairment, and one Ethiopian refugee. Assistance included exceptional Financial Assistance for accommodation, food, and transportation for relocation to camps, and support for sign language interpretation.

EDUCATION

Refugee students at Paysannat school near Mahama Refugee Camp © UNHCR

- At the end of the second term of the 2024/25 academic year, 9,184 refugee children were enrolled in ECD, 26,003 in primary, 13,398 in secondary schools including 525 attending schools of excellence and 986 in higher learning institutions. Additionally, 203 students with special needs were enrolled.
- As part of the Rwandan government's drive to increase the number of students in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) schools, 696 refugee students are currently enrolled in TVET schools.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- Health centres across all refugee camps conducted 40,790 medical consultations. 1,110 cases were referred to secondary and tertiary hospitals (885 and 225 respectively) for camp-based refugees. However, due to funding challenges, currently, UNHCR is only able to support referrals for emergencies and lifesaving interventions.
- 550 new births were recorded across refugee settings.
- 23,885 women accessed family planning services and received modern contraceptives.
- 70 teenage and young women pregnancies recorded in all the camps, proper management was provided and continuous messaging on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies was given.
- To combat malnutrition in young children, 8,182 children under 2 were supported through the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme, out of a target of 9,707.
- By the end of March, 31 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 143 with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) remained enrolled in treatment programs across all camps.
- 541 pregnant and 155 lactating women were newly enrolled in nutrition programs, bringing totals to 1,650 pregnant and 1054 lactating women — achieving 95% coverage for pregnant women and 88.3% for lactating women.

FOOD SECURITY

- UNHCR supports WFP's cash-based food assistance in Rwanda's refugee camps by identifying eligible refugees for targeted support. 90% of recipients were classified as highly vulnerable, receiving 5,600 RWF per month from WFP, while 4% were considered moderately vulnerable, receiving 2,800 RWF per month. In addition, asylum seekers at the Nkamira Transit Centre and returnees at the Kijote and Nyarushishi Transit Centres were provided with two daily meals by WFP.
- To bolster school feeding programs, UNHCR supplies briquettes to Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers in refugee camps. These briquettes serve as a sustainable cooking fuel, ensuring that children receive hot lunches as part of their daily care and education.

WATER AND SANITATION

- Refugees and asylum seekers in Mahama, Kiziba and Mugombwa camps continue to have access to clean water, with an average supply of 21.9 litres per person per day. However, challenges persist in Nyabiheke and Kigeme camps, where the water supply is 18 and 13 litres per day respectively, which remains below the minimum standard of 20 litres.

Congolese refugee woman washing clothes in Kiziba Refugee Camp.

- Sanitation coverage remains low in Congolese refugee camps, particularly for shower facilities, and in Kigeme camp, where both latrines and bathing facilities are insufficient.

SHELTER AND NFIS

- In April and May 2025, UNHCR rehabilitated 308 shelters across the camps, including 72 shelters in Mugombwa camp, 47 in Nyabiheke Camp, 67 in Kiziba Camp, 70 in Mahama, and 52 in Kigeme Camp. UNHCR also constructed 47 new semi-permanent shelters, including 19 in Kiziba Camp, 17 in Nyabiheke Camp, and 11 in Kigeme Camp. Additionally, UNHCR and ADRA constructed 137 new duplex shelters in Mahama extension sites. Shelter construction/rehabilitation activities targets the most vulnerable persons with the refugee population. For shelter rehabilitation, UNHCR provides the materials while the beneficiaries cover the labour costs.
- 59 terraces were constructed by UNHCR to protect shelters on high-risk areas, this includes: 46 terraces in Mugombwa camp, 7 terraces in Kigeme Camp and 6 terraces in Kiziba camp.
- ADRA completed the construction of 217 shelters in Mahama extension, which are now ready for occupation. This brings the total number of new shelters built under the EU budget to 517.
- In May, landslides and heavy rains affected 71 shelters in Kigeme Camp. Affected families will relocate to Mahama camp.

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- In April and May, UNHCR distributed a total of 217,026 Kgs of LPG across Mahama and Mugombwa refugee camps to reinforce clean cooking.
- Limited funding continues to hinder UNHCR's capacity to provide energy assistance to refugees in camps.

LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE

Samia Shaib, a Sudanese refugee, runs a phone charging business powered by a solar panel in Mahama Refugee Camp.

- UNHCR's partner, Caritas Rwanda, implemented a Mastercard Foundation-funded livelihoods project targeting Sudanese refugees in Mahama camp. To effectively address language barriers, Caritas recruited bilingual refugee staff, ensuring the program's delivery was inclusive and accessible.
- UNHCR strengthened its partnership with Kigali City through the integration of refugee artists into the "Agaseke" Cultural Center. The center provides a platform where refugee artists can exhibit and sell their products while showcasing their skills. Three dedicated spaces were allocated to integrated refugee artists from Kigali urban area, Mahama, and Kiziba camps.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- In 2025, UNHCR Rwanda received a submission resettlement quota of 1,019 individuals. By the end of May 2025, 511 were submitted and 945 departed for resettlement and 461 departed through complementary pathways.
- In April and May, Finland and France came on mission to interview refugees for resettlement consideration. Finland interviewed 181 refugees (including 36 from the ETM and 145 from DRC) and France interviewed 58 refugees, (including 38 from the ETM and 20 from DRC).

MISSIONS, AND EVENTS

- UNHCR Representative and the African Development Bank (AfDB) Country Manager conducted a joint field visit to Mahama camp on 19 May 2025. The visit aimed to give to the AfDB Country Manager firsthand understanding of the needs on the ground and to facilitate direct interaction with refugees. This initiative aligns with AfDB's commitment to expanding projects in refugee-hosting areas.
- UNHCR and MINEMA facilitated a JICA WASH mission to Mahama Camp on 29 April. The mission focused on assessing the impact of budget cuts, reviewing WASH infrastructure such as the Mahama Water Treatment Plant and waste management systems, and identifying opportunities for future collaboration in refugee WASH services. Following the visit, JICA committed to providing an advisory analysis outlining strategies to reduce the operational costs of the water treatment plant.
- In April 2025, Practical Action, UNHCR, MINEMA, GIZ and Energize Development conducted clean cooking awareness campaigns across all the Camps. During the campaigns, clean cooking demonstrations were conducted to showcase how natural air draft cookstoves can be adopted efficiently and effectively for different types of meals including meat, beans, rice and cassava leaves. Improved cookstoves will improve reduce indoor pollution and reduced deforestation.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the generous support from donors to the Rwanda operation, and for contributions to UNHCR's work across the region and globally—through both broadly earmarked and unearmarked funding.

2025 EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS to UNHCR Rwanda | USD

European Union 6.9 million
United States of America 3.3 million
Denmark 1.3 million
España con ACNUR 477 thousand
Private donors in Canada 176 thousand

OTHER SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS[1]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 6.9 million | Italy 5.1 million | Australia for UNHCR 3.2 million | Finland 3.2 million | Norway 2.8 million | UNO – Flüchtlingshilfe 2.5 million

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS[2]

Sweden 74.1 million | Norway 56.9 million | Denmark 37.8 million | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) 36.3 million | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 28.5 million | España con ACNUR 25.2 million | Switzerland 20.4 million | Republic of Korea 16.8 million | Japan for UNHCR 15.2 million | Australia 14.3 million | France 13.9 million | Ireland 13.6 million | Germany 10.8 million | Belgium 10.7 million | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 10.7 million

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[1] Due to their earmarking at the region or sub-region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for Rwanda. Where a donor has contributed $2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.
[2] Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contributed $10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.