



UNHCR Monthly Protection Update Refugee Status Determination (RSD) July 2019

The Ugandan Government is responsible for Refugee Status Determination (RSD). UNHCR works with the Refugee Department within the Office of the Prime Minister and other partners to build and enhance the capacity of national RSD procedures.



The REC session at Nyakabande Transit Centre

Key Figures of the month

1,875	# of new asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk
11,010	# of new arrivals from DRC registered in settlements
2,152	# of new arrivals from South Sudan registered in settlements
696	# of new asylum seekers from Burundi registered in Nakivale settlement

Key Achievement of 2019

12,170	# of asylum applications adjudicated by the REC
11,576	# of asylum applications granted
95%	% of recognition rate in the first instance
25	# of asylum appeals reviewed by the RAB
14	# of appeals set aside by the RAB

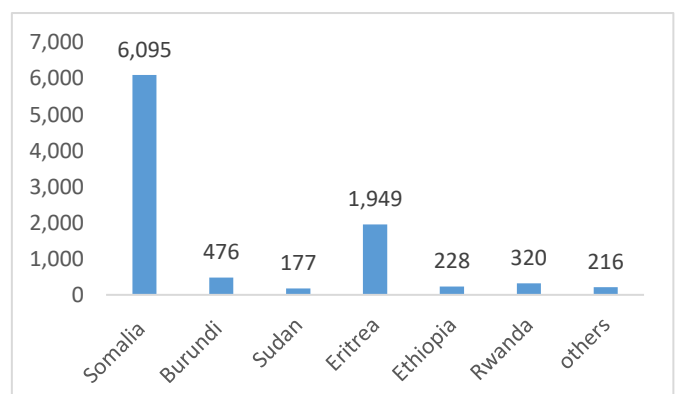
NOTE:

As of writing, DRC nationals (*who enter Uganda via designated border points*) and South Sudanese are granted refugee status on prima facie basis in accordance with Section 25 of the Refugees Act

Monthly Trend of Asylum Seekers

- 1,875 new asylum seekers were registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala including 1,247 Somalis and 357 Eritreans. The figure, particularly of Somali and Rwandan, is increased compared to June 2019.
- 11,010 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were recorded in South West and Mid-West of the country, which shows the significantly higher number than previous month. The majority of them fled from ongoing insecurity and violence in North and South Kivu, and Ituri Provinces.
- 2,152 new arrivals from South Sudan were reported in West Nile settlements of the country. The figure indicates a considerable reduction in comparison with June 2019. The reasons of their displacement included violence and insecurity, human rights violations, as well as lack of access to humanitarian assistance and basic services.
- 696 Burundian asylum seekers were newly registered in Nakivale settlement owing to continuous insecurity caused by the Imbonerakure.

Country of origin of asylum seekers registered at Refugee Desk in Kampala in January – July 2019



Refugee Status Determination

- The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC), during the session of 2-4 July 2019 at Nykabande and Matanda Transit Centres, adjudicated 126 asylum applications of 329 individuals, largely concerning nationals of DRC. About 94% of applicants were granted refugee status.
- The REC, during session of 23-26 July in Jinja, adjudicated 191 asylum applications of 335 individuals, largely concerning nationals of Eritrea and Ethiopian origin. Approximately 54 % of applicants were granted refugee status.

Strategy

UNHCR supports the Ugandan authorities with the assumption of responsibility for individual RSD with the following objectives:

- To strengthen the capacity of the government to deliver a fair, credible and efficient RSD
- To advocate for improvement of the national legislation and related by-laws on asylum in line with applicable international and regional standards
- To actively engage with the government to ensure access to asylum procedures in face of mixed flows of refugees and migrants.

Challenges

- Limited capacity to process asylum claims: As of July 2019, there are 26,743 asylum seekers across the country, out of which almost 75 % represents applications filed in Kampala. The analysis of backlog is ongoing, which will help develop a strategy for its reduction.
- Lack of adequate space for initial screening: The poor physical condition of the Refugee Desk hampers the effective initial screening of asylum seekers in Kampala. The current set-up is not well equipped for proper file management and also significantly compromises the principle of confidentiality and privacy.
- Insufficient quality of RSD interview/decision-making: A combination of several factors such as limited number of interview officers and interpreters (considering the current caseload), inadequate quality of interpretation services and

limited capacity to handle complex cases undermines the quality of RSD decisions.

- Gaps in law, and gaps between law and practice of asylum procedure: The review process of the Refugees Act and its Regulations has been ongoing since 2015. Coupled with lack of proper application of certain provisions, there are several deficits such as limited authority of Refugee Appeals Board, lack of clear definition in certain terms as well as absence of the clear provision regulating the reception/admission procedure for asylum seekers in Kampala.
- Increasing mixed migration flows: The government has increasingly faced difficulties in recognizing the situation of refugees and asylum seekers within migratory movements, which results in tightening access to asylum procedure.

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