



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.

Key Figures of the month

1,977	# of new asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk
6,599	# of new arrivals from DRC registered in settlements
2,005	# of new arrivals from South Sudan registered in settlements
767	# of new asylum seekers from Burundi registered in Nakivale settlement

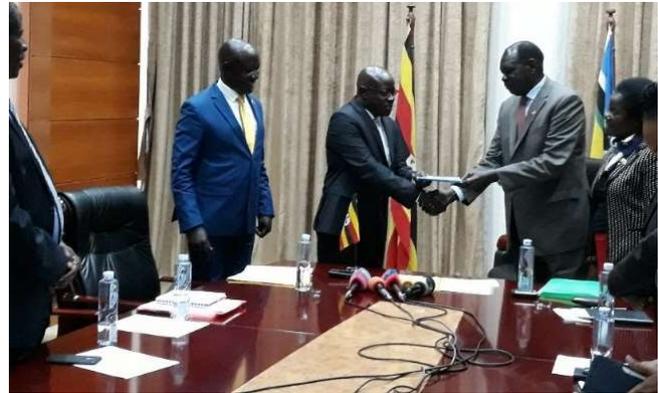
Key Achievement of 2019

16,742	# of asylum applications adjudicated by the REC
15,987	# of asylum applications granted
95%	% of recognition rate in the first instance
18	# of asylum appeals reviewed by the RAB
10	# 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

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

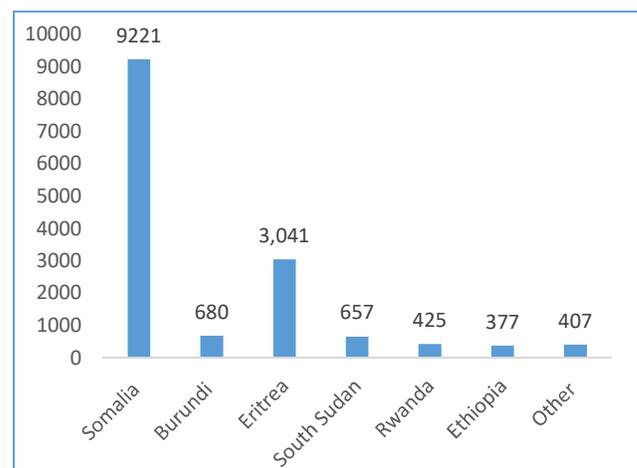


The Inaugural session of the Refugee Appeals Board (RAB)

Monthly Trend of Asylum Seekers

- During the reporting period, a total of 1,977 new asylum seekers were registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala including 1,139 Somalis and 304 Eritreans. The overall figure is slightly increased compared to August 2019.
- 6,599 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were recorded in south west and mid-west of the country, which shows a decline by over 2,000 individuals compared to previous month. Most of them fled from ongoing insecurity and violence in North and South Kivu, and Ituri provinces.
- 2,005 new arrivals from South Sudan were reported in West Nile districts. The figure indicates an increase by about 900 individuals in comparison with August 2019. The reasons of their displacement included violence and insecurity, seeking family reunification as well as lack of access to humanitarian assistance and basic service.
- 767 Burundian asylum seekers were newly registered in Nakivale settlement owing to continuous insecurity caused by Imbonerakure militia.

Country of origin of asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala in January - September 2019



Refugee Status Determination

- The Refugee Eligibility Committee (REC), during the session of 24-27 September in Jinja adjudicated, 1,028 asylum applications of 2,716 individuals, largely concerning nationals of Somalia. Approximately 94 % of applicants were granted refugee status.
- On 4th September 2019, the Minister for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees held an inaugural session of the Refugee Appeals Board. Four out of five members including Mr. Gordon Lakidi Oloya (chairperson), Mr. Charles Wadenya, and Ms. Animu Angupale, along with Minister of State Minister for Relief and Disaster Preparedness, Acting Commissioner for Refugees and RAB members of the previous mandate, attended the meeting.



Capacity development:

- UNHCR sponsored the participation of two OPM representatives in the regional conference of International Association of Refugee and Migration Judges. The conference took place in Cape Town, South Africa during 1 -6 September, provided an opportunity to discuss the contemporary challenges of practicing refugee law at the international, regional and domestic levels.
- UNHCR organized a seminar with OPM Refugee Status Interview Officers (RSIOs) on 13 September to discuss challenges of interview in asylum adjudication. The seminar focused on how to improve the quality of interview pertaining to aspects of internal flight or relocation alternative and family reunification. This initiative aims at supporting the competency building/development of RSIOs on a monthly basis.

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 in face of mixed flows of refugees and migrants.

Challenges

- Limited capacity to process asylum claims: As of September 2019, there are 27,369 asylum seekers across the country, out of which approximately 60 % represents asylum 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 an initial screening of asylum seekers in Kampala effectively. The current set-up does not equip for proper file management but 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 (in light of the current caseload), inadequate quality of interpretation service 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 refugees within migratory movements, which results in tightening an access to asylum procedure.

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