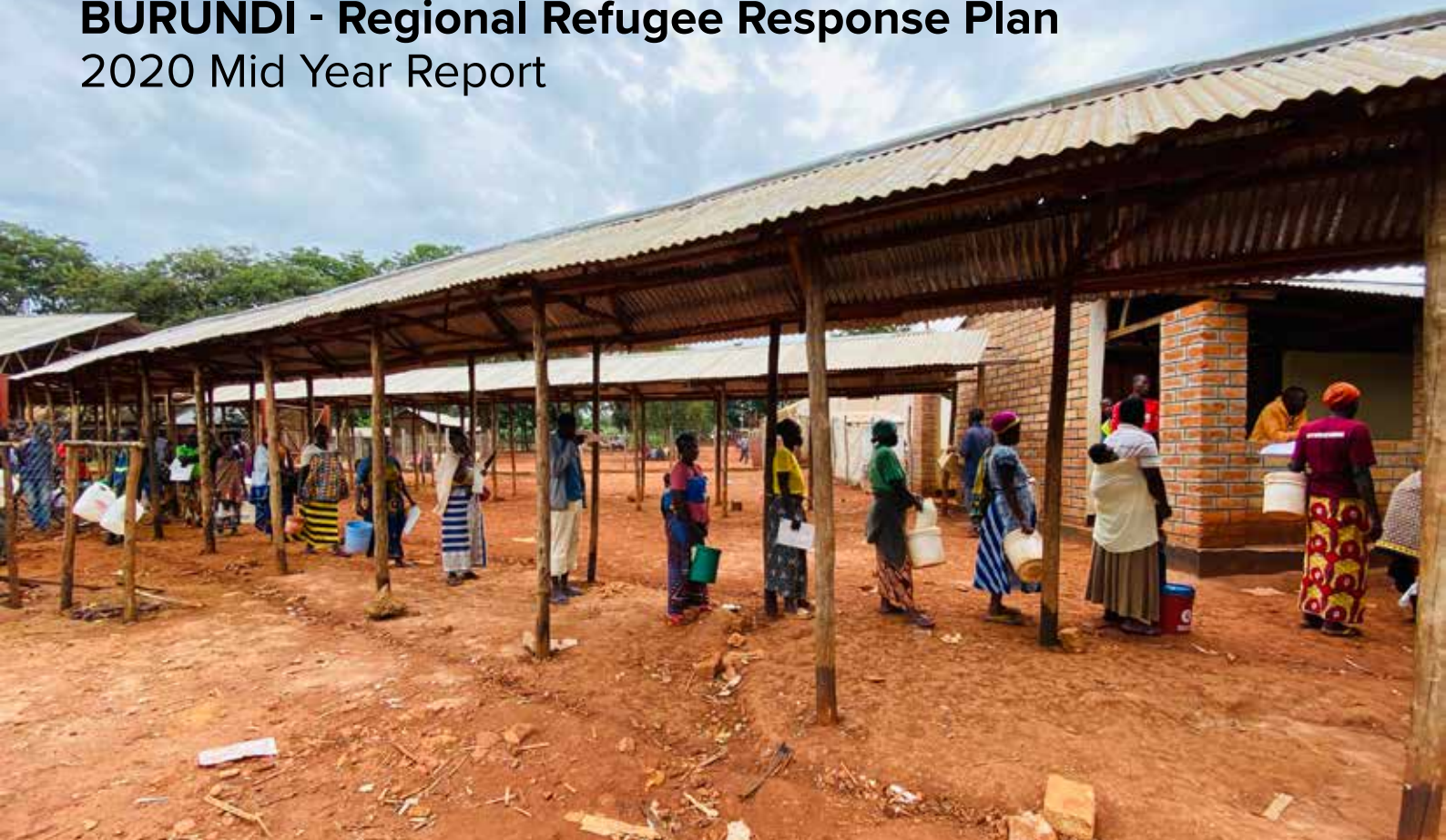


# BURUNDI - Regional Refugee Response Plan

## 2020 Mid Year Report



### REGIONAL SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 30 June 2020, over 333,000 Burundian refugees remained in exile in the four main refugee hosting countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The 2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) brings together 35 partners requesting USD 289.8 million to meet the life-saving and resilience needs of Burundian refugees in these countries in 2020. The Burundi situation continues to be severely underfunded; by 30 June 2020, agencies had received some USD 36 million, representing only 12 per cent of requirements.

A total of 3,247 Burundians entered asylum countries in the region between January and March 2020. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, and with the closure of borders in the region, no new arrivals have been registered. COVID-19 has exacerbated the already precarious condition of Burundian refugees in the region. Pressure on the mostly inadequate health and sanitation systems available to Burundians living in remote areas of countries of asylum increases the risk of an outbreak.

Despite significant underfunding, and the impact of COVID-19, RRRP partners were able to support Burundian refugees across a number of key sectors. Over 274,000 Burundian refugees have received food assistance in 2020, though food ration cuts were felt by several countries in the region due to funding constraints. 99.7% of SGBV survivors received appropriate support, while 51% of children with specific protection needs received individual case management. A total of 17,300 students were reached by distance learning programmes in Rwanda and Tanzania, however this only represented 24% of enrolled students.

*Photo Caption: Tanzania. Fighting COVID-19 at Nduta refugee camp. Burundian refugees queue and practice social distancing as they wait to collect soap at a distribution centre in Nduta camp, Tanzania. © UNHCR/ Winnie Itaeli Kweka*

### 2020 RESPONSE IN NUMBERS

# 333,702

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES AS OF 30 JUNE 2020



# USD 67.1M

FUNDING RECEIVED BY SEPT 2020, REPRESENTING 23% OF REQUIREMENTS

# 3,247

NEW BURUNDIAN REFUGEE ARRIVALS IN 2020

# 6,423

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES ASSISTED TO VOLUNTARILY RETURN IN 2020

# 35

UN, INTERNATIONAL NGO AND NATIONAL NGO PARTNERS INVOLVED

## THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

Despite heightened tensions during the May elections, there has not been any major forced displacement inside Burundi or across borders. In his inaugural speech on 18 June, the new President of Burundi urged people who had fled the country, including government critics, human rights activists and refugees to return home. UNHCR remains committed to facilitate the voluntary repatriation to Burundi as the primary durable solution for those refugees who indicate their desire to return. It remains, however, crucial to continue to provide international protection to refugees who are not seeking to return to Burundi at this time and to respect the right to seek asylum. The vast majority of returns have been from Tanzania, with smaller numbers assisted to return from Kenya and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Almost all returns from Rwanda and Uganda have so far been self-organized. By 30 June, a total of 6,423 Burundians had returned from Tanzania in 2020.

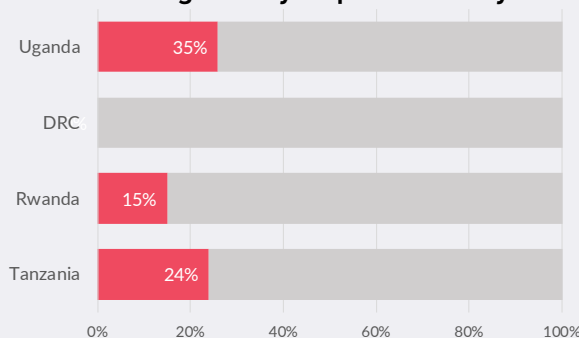
**USD 67.1M**

FUNDING RECEIVED FROM

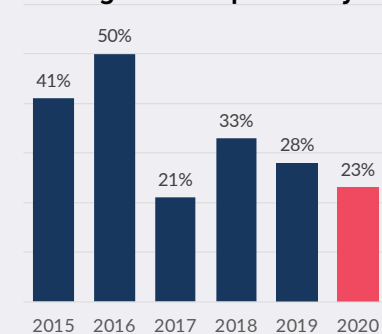
**USD 289.8M**

FUNDING REQUESTED IN 2020

Funding level by response country



Funding status in previous years

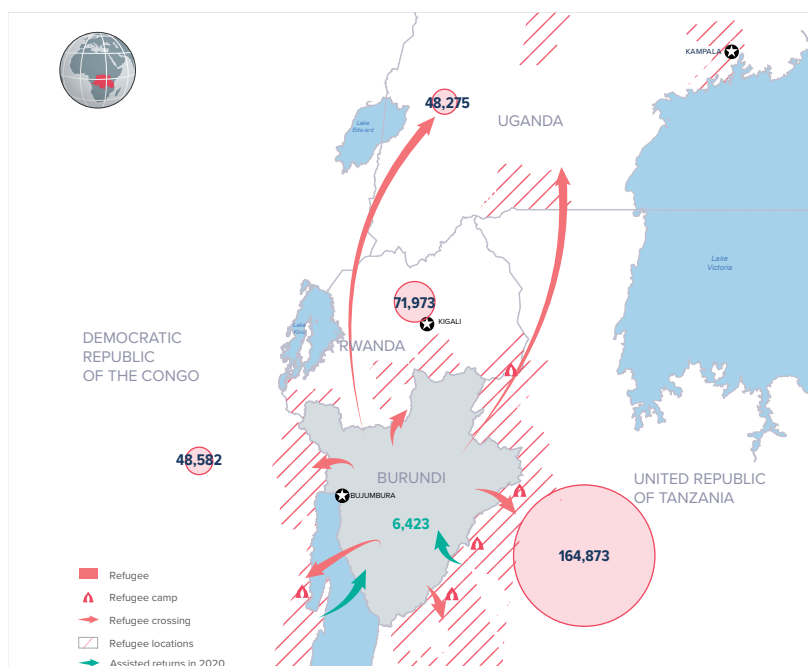


## 2020 RRRP FUNDING

By September 2020, RRRP partners received over USD 67 million against the 2020 plan and would like to thank the many donors who have contributed both flexible and earmarked funds this year. While regionally, 23 per cent of requirements have been received, at the country level, this varies from 35 per cent of requirements received in Uganda, to just 15 per cent of requirements received in Rwanda. Partners in the DRC have yet to report on funding status. A detailed breakdown of funding received by country and by partners is available online at the [Refugee Funding Tracker](#) (please navigate to the Burundi RRP and select 2020).

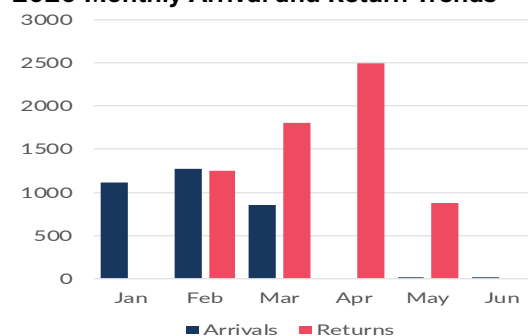
## BURUNDIAN REFUGEE POPULATION TRENDS

As of 30 June 2020, a total of 333,702 Burundian refugees remained in exile in the four main host countries. A total of 3,247 new arrivals were recorded in the first half of the year, compared to 4,398 in the same period in 2019 and 6,853 in the second half of 2019. The graph below highlights that the majority of refugees arrived in asylum countries in January to March before COVID-19 response restrictions limited movement across the region. Uganda received the most new arrivals (1,484), followed by the DRC (1,111) and Rwanda (645). Since 2018, Tanzania has largely closed its borders to new asylum-seekers from Burundi.



Between January and June 2020, some 6,423 refugees were assisted to return to Burundi from Tanzania, bringing the total since the start of the voluntary repatriation operation in 2017 to over 86,000. UNHCR has not promoted or encouraged returns to Burundi, but assisted those refugees who have indicated they made a free and informed choice to return voluntarily.

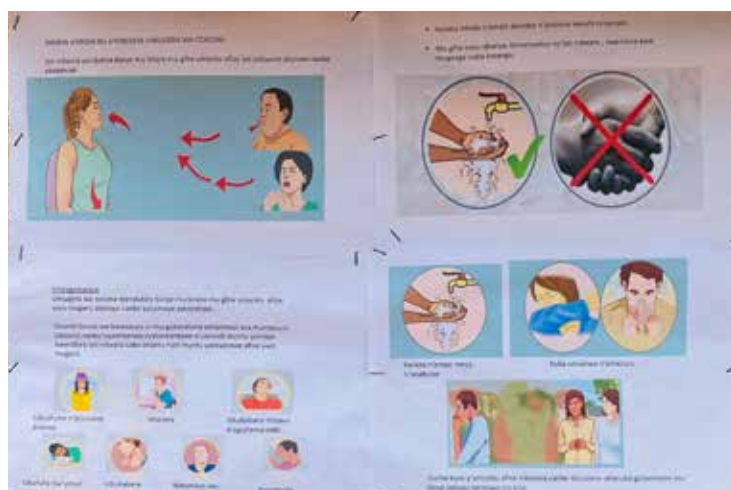
2020 Monthly Arrival and Return Trends



## COVID-19 PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges and exacerbated the already precarious condition of Burundian refugees in the region. Burundian refugees are at significant risk, as the large majority of the refugee population lives in densely populated camps with weak or inadequate shelter, health services and WASH infrastructures coupled with food ration cuts in several countries due to underfunding. The high mobility of refugees and the porous borders in several parts of the region put refugees in camps at a heightened risk of infection.

While access to refugee communities has generally been maintained throughout, including through movement waivers for RRRP partners, COVID-19 preventive measures, reduced physical presence and scaling down to essential services have had an impact on service delivery to refugees and host communities. COVID-19 response priorities are health, WASH, continuation of protection services and mitigation of the most severe socio-economic impacts through emergency cash assistance where possible. The situation has involved an increasing reliance on community-based structures and refugee workers/volunteers for child protection and persons with specific needs. In the new context, response partners have worked to identify and strengthen preferred and trusted channels to maintain proximity with refugees, ensuring the continuation of services and to facilitate community engagement. These efforts include ensuring refugees have access to service providers – including through remote channels – in order to access information, provide feedback and raise complaints. Preventing and reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19 among refugees, asylum-seekers and the host communities through risk communication, infection prevention and control measures across all sectoral activities continues to be a high priority. Capacity building of the health workforce, especially strengthening the role of community-based health workers also remains urgent.



Above: Tanzania. Fighting COVID-19 at Nduta refugee camp. Information posters on COVID-19 prevention and symptoms, is translated into Kirundi for Burundian refugees, at a distribution centre in Nduta camp, Tanzania.. © UNHCR/ Winnie Itaeli Kweka



**435**

Burundian refugees **tested for COVID-19** by 30 June 2020



**3**

Burundian refugees **tested positive for COVID-19**, with no deaths reported



**97%**

of Burundian refugees and host communities **reached with COVID-19 related messaging**



**20**

health centres supported or established for COVID-19 response, as well as **7 isolation centres & 4 quarantine centres**



**50%**

of health staff participated in **COVID-19 related trainings**



**2,241**

**additional handwashing facilities established** across Rwanda, Tanzania & Uganda



**24%\***

of Burundian refugee students reached with **remote learning** (e.g. radio lessons, study packs etc.)



**68,683\***

Burundian refugee households received **additional core relief items** and 6,142 households receiving cash / vouchers as part of the COVID-19 response

Note: Data from the DRC unavailable for all indicators at the time of publishing. \*\* Data unavailable for Uganda



**100%**

Burundian refugees **individually registered** in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda

**1,278**

identified **SGBV survivors assisted with appropriate support** (99.7%, against a target of 100%) maintained from 100% in 2019

**2,372**

Burundian refugee children with specific needs received **individual case management** (51%, against a target of 62%)

**13,802**

refugee children enrolled in **Early Childhood Development programmes** (52%, up from 38% in 2019)

**56,787**

refugee children enrolled in **primary school** (Gross Enrollment of 94% up from 88% in 2019)

**8,034**

refugee children enrolled in **secondary school** (Gross Enrollment of 36%, against a target of 33%) up from 21% in 2019

**274,929**

Burundian refugees received **food assistance** in 2020

**7,319**

refugee women **delivered babies with assistance** from qualified health personnel (96%, against a target of 95%) maintaining 95% achievement in 2019

*Note: Data from the DRC unavailable for all indicators at the time of publishing.*

## 2020 ACHIEVEMENTS AND GAPS

The following provides a mid-year update on the eight key sectors for the Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan.

### PROTECTION

Considering the challenges for mobility and outreach, the COVID-19 crisis prompted partners to redesign their programmes, putting a heightened focus on community-based responses.

RRRP partners continued efforts to prevent and respond to SGBV, even as COVID-19 restrictions impacted activities. 1,278 survivors of SGBV were provided with appropriate support, with the level of reporting and response maintained from 2019. Some 2,732 Burundian children with specific protection concerns (51 per cent) received individual case management, however this is down from 62% at the end of 2019. Moreover, there are only 42 case workers available, bringing the case worker to child (receiving case management) ratio up even higher from 1:54 at the end of 2019 to 1:56 in mid-2020 (against a standard of 1:25).

In Tanzania, RRRP partners successfully advocated with relevant counterparts for the issuance of birth certificates to refugee children (under the age of 5 years) born in Tanzania. This is a significant development, as birth certificates serve as a measure to prevent statelessness and facilitate children's access to education, health and other essential services. Another notable achievement was the completion of 5,768 assessments to ascertain the voluntariness of Burundian refugees who had indicated their wish to repatriate.

In Rwanda, RRRP partners identified the most vulnerable groups of refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas and provided them with a multi-purpose, one-time cash assistance grant.

In Uganda, RRRP partners provided psychological services to 331 Burundian refugees and psycho-social counseling through a hotline to 1,300 refugees. Women Centers offered skills training and other programmes to build confidence and resilience and provided a safe space for women to access information and develop social networks.

### EDUCATION

Regionally, the percentage of Burundian refugee children who were enrolled in all three levels of education increased in 2020, from 38% to 52% for ECD, from 88% to 93% for primary school, and from 21% to 36% for secondary schooling (gross enrollment rate). However, following school closures in March, only 24% of enrolled refugee learners overall were estimated to be reached by distance learning programmes.

In Tanzania, RRRP partners collaborated with a local radio station to establish radio education programmes for refugee schools in the camps, which expanded access to education for refugee children at large during the closure period. In Rwanda, the Government offered remote learning via radio,

TV and online learning programs, which some 60% of refugee children were able to participate in. In Uganda, a total of 11,041 home learning packages, developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), were distributed by RRP partners to refugee children in settlements hosting Burundian refugees.

Opportunities for tertiary education remain extremely limited for Burundian refugee youth, with just 383 tertiary students reported by mid-2019, representing less than 1% of refugees aged 18 to 28 years.

### FOOD SECURITY

Over 274,000 Burundian refugees received regular distributions of food assistance, of which 82% received the full ration, due mainly to new food cuts in Uganda and Tanzania. This is down from 98% of assisted refugees receiving the full ration in 2019.

In Rwanda and Tanzania, food distribution processes were modified to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Adjustments for general food distribution included a shift from group to individual household distribution, reduced frequency of food collection, distribution of prepackaged bags of food (cereals, pulses and CSB) to beneficiaries, and improvement of waiting shelters to facilitate social distancing.

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

A total of 7,319 women delivered babies with the assistance of qualified health personnel, representing 96% of births. This percentage varied slightly from country to country (e.g. 94% in Uganda to 99% in Rwanda); however, it is evident that RRRP partners were able to ensure women had access and felt comfortable delivering in health facilities, even while COVID-19 preparedness and response activities were underway.

While full nutrition data are unavailable at the time of publishing, stunting prevalence remains high among Burundian refugee children (6 to 59 months), at 51% in Tanzania and 26% in Rwanda.

### LIVELIHOODS & ENVIRONMENT

Despite increased focus on livelihoods in recent years, reprioritization in light of the COVID-19 response, and the general impact of the pandemic has heavily impacted employment and livelihood opportunities for Burundian refugees. Just 1,998 refugees received livelihoods inputs or training in the first half of 2020, representing 1.76% of the adult population (18 to 59 years), and down from 24,781 individuals supported in 2019.

COVID-19 has not only affected livelihoods, resulting in a loss of income, but reduced food assistance for refugees and an increase in food prices added to this challenge. A major achievement in Uganda was the cash-based response



Tanzania. Refugees read information on COVID-19 displayed in a distribution centre in Nduta camp, Tanzania. © UNHCR/Winnie Itaeli Kweka



**1,998**

refugees received **productive assets, training** and / or **business support** in 2020 (2% of refugees 18 - 59 years, down from 20% in 2020)



**940**

refugees **employed or self-employed** in Tanzania (1.5% of refugees 18 - 59 years, with updated data unavailable for other countries)



**48,189**

refugee households live in **semi-permanent shelter** in Rwanda and Tanzania (78%, against a target of 100%)



**34,827**

refugee households have a **household latrine** (Rwanda excluded) (55%, against a target of 66%) up from 38% in 2018



**24.5 L**

regional average **litres of water per person per day** (against a target and standard of 20L) down from 20.7L in 2019



**49,325**

refugee households have **energy saving stoves** (data unavailable for Uganda)



to urban refugees in Kampala, providing unrestricted cash transfers via mobile money to cover the cost of rent, NFIs and food. A rapidly adapted Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) was developed to support the cash response programme design, including specific MEBs for urban response vs. in the settlements.

Updated employment data is not yet available across the region, though anecdotal reporting indicates many refugees have lost employment or been unable to sustain self-employment.

### SHELTER AND NFIS

Full shelter coverage data is unavailable and will be reported on in the Year End Report, however by June 2020, over 13,000 refugee households benefitted from shelter repairs or upgrades, the majority in Tanzania. In Rwanda all refugee households received cash grants for non-food items.

### WASH

As resources were reallocated to strengthen COVID-19 prevention, RRRP partners were able to increase access to water across the region from an average of 20.7L per person per day in 2019 to 24.5L. All refugees in the camps in Rwanda and Tanzania received increased soap. Household latrine coverage increased in Uganda and Tanzania. In the refugee camps, infection prevention and control, through the installation and management of handwashing facilities in communal locations, and increased disinfection of communal latrines and bathing spaces was regularly carried

out.

### ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Efforts continue to conserve the environment in refugee hosting areas, with 13,318 tree seedlings planted by mid-2020. Over 49,000 refugee households in Rwanda and Tanzania have energy saving stoves and close to 23,000 received monthly fuel distributions. In Uganda, 558,289 tree seedlings were raised to meet the seedling requirements for the Burundian situation.

### REGIONAL COORDINATION

In close collaboration with host governments, UNHCR leads and coordinates the response to the Burundi refugee situation in each affected country following the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM). Technical meetings are organized by sector at the local level and in the respective capitals.

Regional coordination of the Burundi situation is undertaken by the UNHCR's Bureau for the East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes in Nairobi. Consultations on response priorities, joint advocacy and resource mobilization for the 2020 RRRP will continue to be areas of focus with RRRP partners at regional level. The Regional Child Protection Network (RCPN), coordinated by UNHCR, and the Education in Emergencies Network (EiEN), coordinated by UNHCR and Save The Children, are interagency networks



*Democratic Republic of the Congo. Cash for shelter. Burundian refugee proudly showing the progress she has made on the construction of her house. © UNHCR/ Sanne Biesmans*

# GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES/REFUGEE INCLUSION

Rwanda is committed to integrate refugee children into the national education system. RRRP partners and the Government have enrolled 95% of primary and secondary children into national schools. Refugee children study along with host community children in schools close to the camps and receive a recognized national certification when they complete their schooling. This has contributed to social integration and social cohesion. RRRP partners have supported the process by constructing additional classrooms in existing national schools in order to upgrade their absorption capacity. This has permitted refugees and national students to share the existing resources, follow the same curriculum with the same teachers and access the same certification.

In Rwanda, 11,487 urban refugees (91.5% of them from Burundi) and 2,000 students from the camps studying in boarding schools in urban areas were enrolled in the national Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI), which represents a cost-effective and sustainable approach to meet the health needs for targeted refugees.

Application of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) in Uganda places a strong focus on self-reliance of refugees and host communities and strengthening local service delivery for both. Partners continue to work with the government to pursue access, quality and inclusiveness of the national education and health systems; sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems; and inclusion of refugees into national development plans and national statistical systems

The Refugee Engagement Forum (REF), a novel national refugee platform which met once in the first half of 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic, brings together refugee leaders from all settlements and Kampala. This platform represents refugee voices in Uganda, ensuring that refugees play a central and vital role in the refugee response. The Government of Uganda has included refugees in its national and district development planning

convened in Nairobi with partners who are working across the region, to support cohesive, inter-agency child protection and education responses at the field-level through technical support, capacity-building, promotion of learning, joint analysis, and advocacy.

The coordination of cash transfers in each country is done through joint assessment, monitoring and a dedicated working group to determine the best transfer mechanisms and ensure linkages with different sectors.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Burundi Data Portal** - <https://data.unhcr.org/burundi> **Catherine Wiesner** Head of External Engagement [wiesner@unhcr.org](mailto:wiesner@unhcr.org); **Simone Schwartz-Delgado** Senior Inter-Agency Coordination Officer [schwartz@unhcr.org](mailto:schwartz@unhcr.org); **Kabami Kalumiya**, Reporting Officer [kalumiya@unhcr.org](mailto:kalumiya@unhcr.org); **Laura Swanson**, Info. Management Officer [swanson@unhcr.org](mailto:swanson@unhcr.org)

## REGIONAL RRP PARTNERS

- Adventist Development and Relief Agency
- Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène
- African Initiative for Relief and Development
- Alight
- Care and Assistance For Forced Migrants
- CARE International
- Caritas
- Church World Service
- Community Environmental Management and Development Organization
- Danish Refugee Council
- Food and Agriculture Organization
- Good Neighbours Tanzania
- Handicap International
- Help Age International
- Impact Initiatives
- International Organization for Migration
- International Rescue Committee
- Medical Teams International
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Oxfam
- Plan International
- Relief to Development Society
- Save the Children International
- Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service
- The Legal Aid Forum
- Uganda Red Cross Society
- United Nations Capital Development Fund
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- United Nations Children's Fund
- United Nations Population Fund
- UNWOMEN
- Water Mission
- Women Legal Aid Center
- World Food Programme
- World Health Organization
- World Vision International