

# Mugombwa Refugee Camp, Rwanda

30 September 2022

**11,389** refugees from DRC live in Mugombwa refugee camp which is located in Gisagara District in Southern Province of Rwanda.

The camp was established in **2014 on 28 hectares of land**. The Government of Rwanda through MINEMA administer the camp and is responsible for security and protection of the refugees in coordination with UNHCR.

**54.50%** of the camp's population is under 18 years.

## POPULATION OF CONCERN



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency



Mugombwa Camp - Map



A basketball court is located next to the health post in Mugombwa camp.

**35 UNHCR STAFF BASED IN THE HUYE FIELD OFFICE COVER THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN MUGOMBWA REFUGEE CAMP**

## Main Activities

### Camp coordination and camp management

- Mugombwa refugee camp is managed by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) represented by camp manager, deputy camp manager and supported by immigration (DGIE) staff and Police. The camp is divided into eight quarters and each quartier consists of an average of 5 villages. In total there are 28 villages.
- The refugee camp has executive committees consists of eight members (4 males & 4 females) led by a camp president and deputy-president. The executive committees are elected by community members for two years. Many religions exist in the Mugombwa camp, but majority of the population are Christian (Adventist).
- Each village has a village leader, elected by the village members and each quartier has also a quartier leader elected by the population residing in the respective quartiers. Village and quartier leaders play an important role in communicating issues facing the refugee community with UNHCR and partners.
- In Mugombwa RC, UNHCR works with 14 implementing and operational partners includes: Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR), ALIGHT, Legal Aid forum (LAF), Humanity Inclusion (HI), Plan International (PI), World Vision International (WVI), African Humanitarian Agency (AHA), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), GIZ, Give Directly, INKOMOKO, World Food program (WFP). Monthly operational and camp coordination meetings among UNHCR, partners and refugees' leaders take place to inform and advise future programming.
- Mugombwa refugee camp faces extreme environmental degradation due to its topographical nature. Land availability remains a major constraint, hampering the construction of shelter as well as sports and recreational facilities. Due to limited budget for rehabilitation and construction, there is a risk of land/mudslides due to steep slopes and intensity of rainfall. There is a need to plant more trees and establish strong drainage systems as well as having permanent shower rooms, retaining walls and stairs for sanitation facilities.
- UNHCR HUYE field office is part of the GISAGARA Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) which ties in many aspects of the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR) to improve lives for both refugees and hosting communities (Rwanda). Jointly, UNHCR and GISAGARA district have implemented several projects including smart agricultural in Misizi marshland.

### Protection

- UNHCR Huye delivers protection assistance and humanitarian support for Congolese refugees residing in Mugombwa camp. UNHCR works with authorities and humanitarian actors to ensure the rights of refugees are upheld. This includes monitoring to identify protection risks and responding through various means such as Continuous Registration Panel (CRP) sessions, home visits and providing legal assistance, advocacy aimed at prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV), as well as raising awareness on child protection.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, UNHCR and partners implement coordination mechanisms to ensure child protection, prevention and response. UNHCR and Plan International have established a "Community Engagement Approach" building the capacity of refugee community mobilizers and strengthening existing community-based protection mechanisms to prevent and report the abuses, neglect, and exploitation of children.
- This community engagement approach also extends to prevention of SGBV. Through the establishment of SGBV committees, girls' committees, and anti-GBV clubs, as

well as the recruitment of community mobilizers, UNHCR is encouraging the refugee community to take responsibility for reporting and documenting SGVC instances. The most prevalent types of SGBV for adults include psychological abuse, physical assault, denial of resources and opportunities, as well as rape.

- In line with community-based protection approaches and accountability to affected population, UNHCR implements complaint and feedback mechanism through community-based protection partner (PFR) to ensure accountability to refugees in Mugombwa. UNHCR also runs a regular protection desk, individual counselling, hotlines, home visits, and mass meetings with the refugee community to receive complaint and provide timely feedback.
- In partnership with Humanity Inclusion (HI), UNHCR provides support to people with specific needs through community-based rehabilitation services for children with disabilities, supplementary feeding (SOSOMA) and occupational therapy to encourage functional independence. On average, 96 people with specific needs are supported every month.
- Since May 2021, UNHCR and WFP, in consultation with MINEMA, have distributed food assistance through cash based on a targeted criterion. To support this, UNHCR operates a dedicated helpline in Mugombwa camp to receive refugee appeals for (re)inclusion in food assistance and ensure that refugees fulfilling the eligibility criteria are not erroneously excluded. Currently, there are 10,685 individuals considered highly vulnerable (93.81% of camp population), 415 individuals are considered moderately vulnerable (3.64% of the camp populations) while 290 individuals are considered least vulnerable (2.55% of the population) and do not receive any targeting assistance.

### Registration and Documentation

- UNHCR maintains accurate data of refugee residing in Mugombwa refugee through regular registration of individuals and groups. Refugees are registered individually and by household (biometric registration) and given a “**Proof of Registration**” by UNHCR. As of September 2022, refugee population stands at **11,389** (Female:6,388 & Male:5,001).
- UNHCR also works closely with the Rwandan Government through MINEMA and NIDA to facilitate the issuance of new refugee identities to individuals of 16 years living in Mugombwa camp. Periodic campaigns take place to distribute new ID cards and replacement of the expired ones.

### Education

- In Mugombwa refugee camp, the majority of refugee children are enrolled and integrated within national schools located nearby to the camp. **770 students** (Female:400 & Male:370) currently attend Early Childhood Development (Nursery), **2,169 students** (Female:1,076 & Male:1,093) currently attend primary school and **2,034** (Female:1,016 & Male:1,018) secondary education. Small number of students (especially high performers) are sent to schools of excellence (boarding) and UNHCR supports the attendance of 6 children with disabilities to specialized schools. UNHCR supports education for refugees Kigeme refugee camp in partnership with World Vision Rwanda.
- UNHCR support to refugee education includes paying tuition fees for students in schools of excellence and special needs education, providing scholastic supplies, didactic materials, school uniforms, school feeding fees (hot meals for secondary and porridge for ECD Children), psychosocial support to refugee children as well as registration fees to national exams.
- In Mugombwa camp, UNHCR also focuses on integrating digital education within the national schools in partnership with ProFuturo. Through the project tablets have been

distributed to upper primary to help to improve quality education to both refugee and Rwandan children.

## Health

- One health center is present in Mugombwa refugee camp and is managed by UNHCR and African Humanitarian Agency (AHA). The health centre provides a range of primary health care services that include laboratory tests, anti-natal and post-natal care and sexual and reproductive health care. The Ministry of Health also support the health centre with medical equipment.
- UNHCR and AHA facilitate the referrals of refugees in need of advanced secondary health care to districts hospital (KIBIRIZI Hospital) and tertiary referrals to other specialized hospitals (CHUB, CHUK and others in Kigali). A referral committee is in place to make these decisions based on the budget available to support lifesaving and emergency healthcare.
- Routine vaccination of children under five including measles and other mandatory child vaccinations as well as COVID-19 vaccination are provided by UNHCR and AHA in Mugombwa refugee camp. The cumulative figures of children under five vaccinated from January 2022 till now stand at 944 (155 for measles at 9 months and 143 at 15 months). 3,700 refugees were vaccinated against COVID 19.
- As part of its public health services, UNHCR and AHA work with **22 Community health workers** to disseminate information and conduct health education throughout Mugombwa refugee camp.
- In order to ensure the health and wellbeing of the refugee population, UNHCR alongside WFP provides a variety of nutrition interventions in Kigeme. These include supplementary feeding, outpatient program for severe malnutrition, anaemia reduction, HIV and TB treatment, nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women, and children from 6 to 23 months.

## Food Security and Nutrition

- Since September 2017, WFP has used a Smartcard enabling refugees to access cash-based transfers for food assistance. The Smartcard is linked to each individual household's bank account. In 2022, food assistance is distributed through this methodology based on targeting criteria where the highly vulnerable (91%) receives 100%, moderately vulnerable (5%) receives 50%, and least vulnerable (3%) receives 0% of monthly cash assistance value.
- Through its school feeding program, WFP has been providing hot-meals to refugees and Rwandans enrolled in the local schools. In October, however, this provision has been integrated within the national system whereby WFP will be topping-up the Rwandan Governments contribution for refugee children's food in school. For Rwandan students, the government has been providing 37.3% (56 RWF per day/child) and parent tops-up 62.6 % (94 RWF per day/ child). With the new policy, the Government will be providing 90% and WFP tops up 10% for refugee students.

## Water and Sanitation

- Drinking water in Mugombwa is supplied from three protected springs at Musave Valley with a total discharge of 5.13 l/sec. Water is pumped into the camp through electric pumps (diesel pumps is used in case of load shedding), and the average consumption is **25 litres per person per day**.

- In terms of WASH facilities Mugombwa RC, has 27 water points, 158 functional water taps, 10 water points, 47 blocks of dischargeable permanent latrines (with 470 drop holes including 94 drop holes with flush modern seat latrines which are friendly to people with disabilities), 32 blocks with 316 stances of permanent showers, 13 garbage collection points and 1 dumping site.
- In terms of hygiene promotion, in Mugombwa camp UNHCR works with 12 refugee hygiene promoters to spread messages about best practices, on average each promoter is in contact with around 946 people per month. In addition, 633 litres of liquid soap are provided each month for handwashing best practice and general cleaning of sanitation facilities.

### Shelter and NFIs

- Since Mugombwa refugee camp creation in 2014, UNHCR has constructed **1,702 semi-permanent shelters** across 8 quarters subdivided into 28 Villages.
- Initially shelter surface was 15 Sqm in Mugombwa camp although some shelters have been extended to take into consideration differing needs of refugee families giving the average of 25Sqm per shelter. Since January 2022, UNHCR through direct implementation have rehabilitated/repared a total of **103 shelters** in Mugombwa camp.
- As of September 2022, a total of **74 terraces** have been constructed to protect shelters in Mugombwa camp as mitigation measure for environmental degradation.
- A monthly coordination meeting for Shelter/WASH committee is conducted by UNHCR, MINEMA, refugee committee and partners to discuss and find solution of present problems.
- UNHCR provides the cash equivalent for non-food items such as sanitary pads, soaps, jerricans, kitchen sets to all refugees living in the camp. Distributions happen on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis.
- In 2022, UNHCR and partners have rehabilitated 152 m of damaged road leading into the refugee camp. In addition, 430m of road were maintained across different quarters of the camp.

### Energy and Environment

- In Mugombwa refugee camp, all households receive LPG gas for cooking from UNHCR in cooperation with our partner ADRA. An average of **2,838 LPG Cylinders of 6kgs** each equivalent to **17,028 Kgs** are distributed to refugee families on monthly basis.
- In addition, briquettes are used as alternatives to firewood in school feeding program to reduce deforestation. An average of **11,000 Kgs** is consumed on monthly basis.
- 798 refugee households have access to solar home systems for lighting in Mugombwa camp. The health centre and offices within the camp are connected to National Grid. The community center is connected to Solar Energy.
- Environmental protection activities are implemented by the refugee and Rwandan communities, UNHCR and World Vision. Since January 2022, **2,840 fruits trees** have been planted in and around the camp and **470 bamboo trees** in degraded areas.

### Livelihoods and economic inclusion

- In 2018, UNHCR and partners (including WFP and FAO) started work on the Misizi Marshland nearby Mugombwa camp in close cooperation with the local Gisagara District and Government of Rwanda (MINEMA). In line with the Global Compact for

Refugees, the project aims increasing agricultural production while supporting peaceful coexistence between refugees and the Rwandan host community. In total, **60 Ha of land** was provided by the district for farming. This has supported 1,427 households (1,127 Rwanda and 300 refugee) to farm and form the ICYEREKEZO MISIZI cooperative. In 2022, over **209,383 Kg of Maize** (128,471Kg consumed and 80,912Kg sold) was produced in season A (2021-2022) and **35,832Kg of soyabean** (32,594Kg consumed and 3,238Kg sold) in season B.

- UNHCR supports refugees and Rwandan farmers working on Misizi Marshland to develop the marshland and provides agricultural tools and products. In addition, four drying facilities and two warehouses have been constructed.
- In addition, UNHCR has supported the construction of five poultry and five piggery sheds in the Misizi Marshlands. The diversification of income through animal husbandry has involved 150 refugee and Rwandans from the local community.
- In coordination with partners in the livelihood sector (GIZ, Inkomoko, Give Directly, WVI, Plan International, Alight, HI) UNHCR also supports refugee entrepreneurs and businesses through start-up loans, seed funding, business/entrepreneurial development, financial literacy training, and access to vocational trainings in order to increase refugee self-reliance. Since 2018, 240 refugees living in Mugombwa have been supported by partners with cash grants for their businesses.
- In Mugombwa refugee camp, as in the rest of Rwanda, UNHCR and partners support refugees through the process of 'graduating' from poverty and becoming less dependent on humanitarian aid. In partnership with World Vision, since November 2021, 38 refugees received cash grants of approximately \$800 for their businesses. In addition, 15 youth were enrolled in 9 months TVET training. In addition, UNHCR is working with CARE International to support 50 refugees through TVET trainings and 19 refugees to become mobile support agents.

### Durable Solutions

- In 2022, UNHCR has processed **21 resettlement cases comprised of 56 refugees** from Mugombwa camp. Mostly resettlement cases have been presented due to medical reasons.
- Legal and policy provisions exist to facilitate the local integration of refugees throughout Rwanda, including in Kigeme camp. Despite this, requests 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.
- Refugees in Kigeme camp primarily originate from Eastern DRC. Due to ongoing security concerns in their area of origin, UNHCR is neither promoting nor facilitating voluntary repatriation at the time being.

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