Kiziba Refugee Camp, Rwanda

July 2023

Kiziba is the oldest refugee camp in Rwanda and was established in 1996. It is currently host to **15,111** refugees and asylum seekers. **60%** of the population are under the age of **24 years old.**

Kiziba is located about 15 km outside Karongi town, in Karongi District, Western Province. In total, the camp covers **44** ha and is divided into ten community administrative units (quartiers).

UNHCR works with 12 different partners in Kiziba refugee camp to deliver assistance and services to the refugee population.

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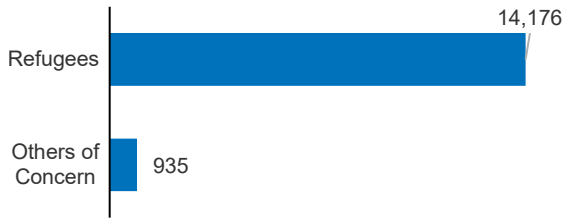

UNHCR STAFF BASED IN THE KARONGI FIELD OFFICE COVER THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN KIZIBA REFUGEE CAMP

Iribagiza Nakabonye, a Congolese refugee living in Kiziba camp, set up a cafeteria in the camp through a cash grant of $450 in 2018. After fleeing her country in DRC in 1996, the cafeteria has provided her a renewed sense of purpose and self-reliance.

“I used to sell vegetables at the market but wanted to do something bigger. Now I earn a regular income from cooking and selling the food to refugees and staff in the camp.”

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Main Activities

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- Kiziba refugee camp is managed by the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) represented by Camp Manager, Deputy Camp Manager and supported by the Directorate-General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE) staff and Police. Camp coordination is undertaken by MINEMA and UNHCR.
- Refugees in Kiziba refugee camp are highly dependent on humanitarian assistance, and very few individuals have access to employment opportunities. The available work opportunities are mostly in agriculture, construction, or domestic work sectors. Food in the camp is provided by World Food Programme.
- UNHCR works with 12 partners, both implementing and operational, across a variety of sectors in Kiziba refugee camp and Karongi District, namely with: World Food Programme (WFP) on food and nutrition; Save the Children International (SCI) on health and nutrition; Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) on logistics; Humanity & Inclusion (HI) on assistance for people with special needs and disabilities; Plan International (PI) on child protection and gender-based violence; World Vision International (WVI) on education and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); Caritas on livelihood; Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) on legal assistance, community-based protection and birth registration; Inkomoko on livelihood; Kepler on education; Red Cross on non-food items, livelihood and first aid); Practical Action on energy and environment; and Impact Hope on education.

Protection

- To ensure accountability to the refugee community, UNHCR and partners operate complaint and feedback mechanisms, including complaint boxes, a protection hotline, protection email, and protection desk in Kiziba refugee camp. The protection desk in Kiziba refugee camp operates three days per week to identify vulnerable refugees and protection cases, provide counselling, and refer refugees to relevant services. Most refugees who approach the protection desk enquire about resettlement opportunities, health services, request changes to their family composition (registering of births, deaths and marriages) and report protection concerns. In July, UNHCR provided counselling on seven cases received through the protection hotline, and 32 cases received at the protection desk.
- In Kiziba camp, community-based child protection mechanisms are applied to strengthen child protection throughout the camp. UNHCR staff and partners work to manage individual child protection cases by providing counselling and solutions on thier protection issues.
- In July 2023, UNHCR managed nine individual cases of children at risk, through a Best Interest Determination (BID) panel meeting, while 36 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) for resettlement and nine BIAs for separated children for protection intervention were conducted during the same period.
- Plan International conducted a training for 25 staff (10 female and 15 male) working with different partners on protection related issues in Kiziba camp and community volunteers on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), sexual reproductive health and rights, mental health and clinical psychosocial support in July. This was facilitated by UNHCR, HI and SCI.
- UNHCR protection staff and partners in Kiziba refugee camp work with Plan International to identify and support victims of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) and provide psycho-social support and medical referrals. The common forms of GBV cases reported include sexual assault, physical assault, psychological abuse, and denial of resources.

In July, UNHCR managed four new GBV cases and reached 922 persons (238 male, 684 female) with GBV prevention activities. Challenges in preventing and responding to GBV in the camp include a culture of silence, delays in legal procedures which encourage impunity among GBV perpetrators, and lack of sufficient funds to implement income generating activities for the socio-economic empowerment of women and girls.

- UNHCR's partner HI supports people with disabilities in Kiziba refugee camp by providing them with supportive devices and promoting their inclusion in different activities. In July 2023, HI provided 38 individuals with disabilities (21 male and 17 females) with basic functional rehabilitation services. In addition, 17 children (10 boys and seven girls) with physical and mental disabilities received supplementary feeding throughout the month.
- UNHCR maintains accurate data of refugees living in Kiziba refugee camp through regular registration of individuals and groups. This is ensured through the Continuous Registration Panel (CRP) operated by UNHCR, MINEMA and DGIE. In July, continuous registration of new birth was done for 36 new-born babies and three children were registered under regular birth registration at Rwankuba sector office.

Education

- Refugee children in Kiziba camp are integrated into the national education system. Schools in operation within the camp. As of the end of the academic year in July 2023, 1,086 children attended home-based Early Childhood Development (ECD) Programme, 3,035 children attended primary school, 1,077 students attended lower secondary school, and 292 were enrolled in upper secondary school. Overall school attendance stood at 97 percent.
- In July as schools took their summer break, all primary and secondary school teachers working at the school in Kiziba refugee camp participated in a training on data information management offered by the local district to improve their knowledge and capacity. The training was organized and facilitated by WVI in Kiziba camp.
- In 2015, UNHCR and Kepler, launched the Kepler University campus in Kiziba refugee camp to improve refugees' access to tertiary education. Currently,143 refugee students are enrolled in its blended learning program to earn a degree from Southern New Hampshire University.
- In partnership with WVI, UNHCR is supporting 56 students who performed well in national exams to attend boarding schools for high achievers across Rwanda. In addition, Impact Hope are providing scholarships for 25 students at the upper secondary level of education.

Health

- In Kiziba refugee camp, primary health care and medical screenings are provided by UNHCR and SCI. There is one health centre in the camp that also serves Rwandan community living in the surrounding areas. Refugee patients in need of further or specialized treatment are referred to district and national hospitals. The camp's health centre includes a maternity ward, laboratory, consultation rooms, pharmacy, and in-patient wards with a doctor, 14 nurses, and 14 refugee assistant nurses. In July 2023, 3,384 individuals received medical and health services, with 107 cases referred to hospitals (80 refugees and 27 Rwandans). In July 2023, Kiziba camp's health centre, received a new ambulance from the Red Cross International bringing the total number of ambulances in use to two for Kiziba camp.

Food Security and Nutrition

- WFP provides support to refugees through cash assistance for food, which is transferred to refugees monthly via bank cards, and sometimes via cash agents in the camp in cases where bank cards have errors.

- In July 2023, therapeutic feeding was provided to two Rwandans with severe acute malnutrition and eight refugees with moderate acute malnutrition. UNHCR in partnership with SCI also provided supplementary feeding to 458 children of 6 months of age, 293 pregnant women and lactating mothers, and 89 people living with HIV.

Water and Sanitation

- Water is distributed to refugees through several water points and water stands located within the camp. The available water supply is 30.1 l per person per day, which is well above the recommended minimum standard of 20 l per person per day.
- Kiziba camp has 744 drop holes of latrines which equates to 23 persons per drop hole (against the standard of 20 persons) and 338 shower rooms equating to 52 persons per shower room (against the standard of 50 persons); 92 hand washing stands have been built by the refugee community to promote hygiene in the camp. Two trucksdislodge latrines and empty garbage in Kiziba camp.
- Hygiene promotion sessions are regularly conducted throughout the camp by a group of 56 refugee volunteers and casual workers.

Shelter and NFIs

- Kiziba refugee camp covers 44 ha of land and has a total of 3,413 shelters which accommodate the camp population. In coordination with the shelter committee, UNHCR allocate vacant shelters to refugees based on the needs. Due to lack of space and shelters within Kiziba camp, the standard for shelter size (3 m x 4 m = 12 m²) and the number of persons per shelter (five maximum) is not respected and approximately 32% of all households do not live in adequate dwellings.
- UNHCR distributes shelter repair material to refugees to help them repair their own homes and create a sense of ownership. Where needed, UNHCR directly supports more vulnerable refugee populations in undertaking the construction and maintenance.
- To help refugees purchase non-food items, UNHCR distributed cash assistance to refugees living in Kiziba refugee camp on a regular basis. To facilitate this process, UNHCR works with Equity Bank who provide bank accounts for refugees in the camp through which they receive cash assistance from UNHCR, WFP and other partners. In July, alongside Equity Bank, UNHCR and WFP organized a bank registration exercise for 61 households with inactive, lost or damaged bank cards. In addition, UNHCR continues to provide support to refugee families about cash assistance delivery programmes. In July, 41 complaints were received about cash assistance programmes.

Energy and Environment

- Due to its location on hilly terrain, Kiziba refugee camp is susceptible to negative environmental impact and degradation such as soil erosion, rainwater runoff and creation of gullies. UNHCR, refugees and members of the host community plant trees through *Umuganda* (community work) organized once a month. Between February 2022 and July 2023, 11,923 seedlings were planted in Kiziba camp.
- In 2018, the Government of Rwanda banned the use of firewood. As a result, UNHCR distributes cash assistance for energy to refugees in Kiziba refugee camp on a monthly basis to help them buy fuel for cooking. Despite this, since June 2023, the distribution of cash for energy has been put on hold due to a lack of funds.

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

- As part of the livelihoods project which UNHCR runs in partnership with Caritas Rwanda to support refugees graduate from poverty, 419 refugees and Rwandans received cash grants in the first quarter of 2023 to support them in establishing small businesses. This

cash grant follows the distribution of a similar cash grant to 470 refugees and Rwandans during the first phase of the project in 2022. In July, UNHCR and Caritas continued to monitor the businesses who have been established through the project including 45 related to agriculture, 28 related to livestock, 85 related to trading and 14 providing services.

Durable Solutions

- Resettlement is currently the primary durable solution for refugees in Kiziba refugee camp. Between January and July 2023, UNHCR has submitted applications for 1,151 individuals for resettlement to Canada, France, Norway, and the USA. Moreover, between January and July 2023, an additional 1,357 refugees departed Kiziba camp for resettlement to third countries.
- To maintain continuous communication, manage resettlement expectations, and mitigate fraud, UNHCR continues to provide individual counselling to refugees, in-person and through the hotline. UNHCR also holds town hall meetings on monthly basis to provide refugees with structured messages about resettlement and answer queries raised by the community.
- Legal and policy provisions exist to facilitate the local integration of refugees throughout Rwanda, including in Kiziba 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.