

Rwanda

November 2023

46 refugee students who were previously supported by **UNHCR's DAFI scholarship** programme graduated from different universities in Rwanda in November.

In Kiziba refugee camp, **42 refugees and 2 Rwandans** received the second instalment of a cash grant to help them start businesses. In total, **422 entrepreneurs** are supported through this programme which UNHCR implements in partnership with Caritas Rwanda through funding from Denmark.

On **November 16**, UNHCR organized the 15th evacuation flight from Libya to the ETM in Rwanda comprising **169 asylum-seekers**. In total, there were 609 refugees and asylum seekers at the ETM at the end of November while **1,340** have been resettled to third countries since 2019.

KEY STATISTICS

134,930 refugees and asylum seekers are in

Rwanda as of 30 November 2023. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (62%) and Burundi (37%).

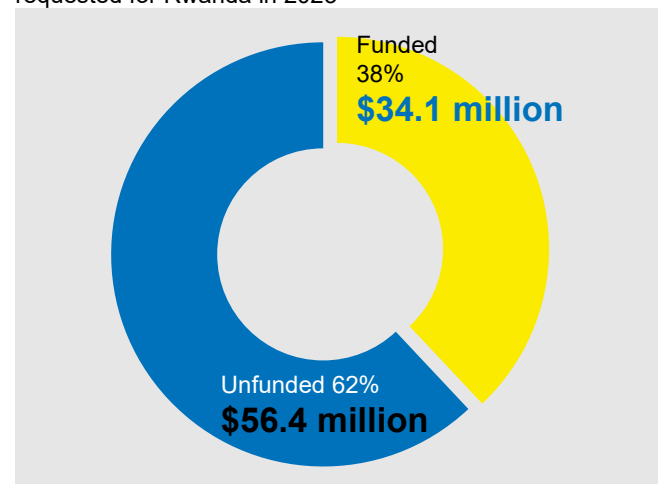
302 asylum seekers from DRC arrived in Rwanda in November

6,908 refugees have been submitted for resettlement in 2023

FUNDING (AS OF 30 NOVEMBER)

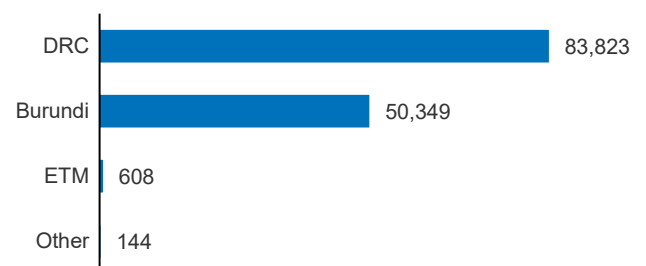
USD 90.5 million

requested for Rwanda in 2023



Refugees and Rwandans complete a three-month sign language course held at Gikondo community centre in Kigali.

CURRENT POPULATION



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

Operational Context & Partners

The Government of Rwanda (GoR), through the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), leads the refugee response in Rwanda in coordination with UNHCR. In addition, a range of UN Agencies, NGOs, operational and development partners participate in sector working groups at both country and district levels. In 2023, UNHCR works directly with seven NGO partners in implementing key activities to assist both the refugee population and Rwandan host communities. To further strengthen the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR maintains close collaboration with key government institutions, ministries, operational partners, and the private sector working with refugees in Rwanda.



PROTECTION

- In November, 302 new asylum seekers fled from DRC to Rwanda and were initially accommodated at Nkamira Transit centre. As of the end of the month, Nkamira hosted 4,392 individuals, while 9,105 asylum seekers have been transferred to existing refugee camps in Rwanda including 116 asylum seekers to Kiziba during November.
- UNHCR continues the registration of new asylum seekers to provide documentation to the 13,643 asylum seekers who have sought safety in Rwanda since November 2022. 1,880 asylum seekers were registered during November and following approval from the Government of Rwanda, UNHCR started to issue proof of registration documents to the asylum seekers.
- In November, UNHCR conducted an outreach mission to Bugasera to engage with refugees living in the district. During the community meeting issues of resettlement, legal assistance, and Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) were flagged to UNHCR's protection staff.
- 34 percent of the refugee population were born in Rwanda. Among Burundians, the birth registration rate stands at 94% compared to 91% among Congolese. In addition, the birth registration rate for refugee children below 5 years old currently stands at 96 percent, while refugee birth registration coverage irrespective of age stands at 92 percent. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and associated ministries to improve the birth registration rates as refugees are included within the national Civil Registration and Vital Statistics system.
- In November, UNHCR continued to work closely with the Government of Rwanda, specifically Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration to issue refugee ID cards to refugees over 16 years old. In Nyabiheke refugee camp, for example, 40 IDs were issued to refugees.
- UNHCR works in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) to provide legal counselling and assistance, including on access to asylum. In November, 53 criminal cases were assisted before the courts and 5 civil cases on matters such as divorce and unfair dismissal. In addition, legal counselling continued to be provided in all refugee camps. In Nyabiheke camp, for example, 53 refugees were provided with legal assistance on matters related to correction of errors on ID cards, correction of marital status, and assisting refugees in criminal and civil proceedings.
- Between 20-30 November, UNHCR conducted detention monitoring visits to 378 refugees who are detained in different correction facilities across the country. This took place following an authorization issued by the Commissioner General of Rwanda Correction Services through MINAFFET for UNHCR staff to visit refugees and asylum seekers in detention to check on their needs and wellbeing.
- To continue to fulfil its mandate, UNHCR has established various channels to facilitate communication with refugees such as help lines, SMS, WhatsApp, email, face-to-face counselling, and community meetings. In November, 161 refugees made inquiries in Kigali with 52 percent of requests concerning

CBHI and 13 percent on resettlement. In addition, the protection desk in Kiziba refugee camp counselled 16 refugees on a variety of issues.

- In Rwanda, UNHCR partners with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to support people with specific needs. 1,713 people with disabilities continued to receive support in November and 2,502 individuals benefited from mental health and psychosocial support. In Nyabiheke refugee camp, 12 persons with disabilities, for example, were supported to get assistive devices.
- UNHCR in Rwanda provides urgent financial assistance to refugees living in urban areas in exceptional cases to help them meet their basic needs such as paying rent and buying food. In November, UNHCR provided such assistance to five Burundian refugee families. UNHCR also support six Sudanese asylum seekers move from Kigali to Mahama as they were unable to sustain a living in an urban environment.
- On 25 November, UNHCR in partnership with Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) and the Rwandan Women's Deaf Association held a graduation ceremony for refugees and Rwandans who completed the three-month sign language course held at Gikondo Community Centre.
- In November, UNHCR marked 16 Days of Activism in all refugee camps. In Kiziba refugee camp, for example, on 29 and 30 November, UNHCR and partners conducted awareness sessions about teenage pregnancies and domestic violence with secondary school students. Sessions on the relevant Rwandan laws on GBV, reporting mechanisms and preventative measures to combat GBV were also arranged.
- UNHCR operates Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) across all refugee camps in Rwanda in partnership with SCI and Plan International where refugee youth and children can participate in recreational activities such as arts and crafts, reading, online digital platforms for learning, and sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball. In Kiziba refugee camp, for example, 1,209 refugee youth participated in sports activities such as football, basketball, volleyball and taekwondo.
- On November 16, 169 asylum seekers were evacuated from Libya to the Emergency Transit Mechanism (ETM) in Rwanda. UNHCR received the convoy and has started to register and conduct refugee status determination procedures for the new arrivals. As of the end of the month, 609 refugees and asylum seekers were accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda. During November, 340 individuals benefited from psychosocial support at the centre.



UNHCR celebrates the graduation of 46 refugee students from the DAFI scholarship programme.



EDUCATION

- In partnership with World Vision, UNHCR trained 24 newly recruited Early Childhood Development (ECD) teachers in Nkamira Transit Centre on skills needed to meet the development and learning needs of children aged three to six and prepare them for primary school. Currently there are 57 teachers (24 ECD, 20 Primary, and 13 Secondary) selected from among the asylum seeker community supporting over 900 school-going students (484 males and 431 females) in Nkamira Transit Centre.
- Following the selection of 40 refugee students as part of UNHCR's DAFI scholarship programme in October, UNHCR organized an orientation session for the students in partnership with at Université Libre de Kigali (ULK) and World Vision to help prepare them for starting university.
- In November, 46 refugee students who were previously supported by UNHCR's DAFI scholarship programme graduated from different universities in Rwanda. On 29 November, UNHCR organization a celebration for them in partnership with World Vision.
- UNHCR continues to partner with ProFuturo to deliver a connected learning curriculum in refugee hosting schools in Rwanda. In November, 5 ProFuturo coaches and the project manager attended an online refresher training on the platform.
- To support refugee education, UNHCR partners with World Vision to provide scholastic materials. In November, in Kiziba refugee camp, 503 school uniforms were distributed to refugee children attending ECD.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

- UNHCR is managing eight camp-based health care facilities in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children and Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) at the ETM. The health centres and posts offer a broad range of primary health care services, including laboratory tests and vaccinations. In addition, some services including the provision of TB and HIV medications are provided through district government health centres. In November, 21,439 primary health care consultations took place at the camp-based facilities making the ratio 42 consultations per day, per clinician. The local Rwandan host community also have access to these health facilities.
- At the ETM, 690 primary health consultations took place at the clinic in November, an average of 23 persons per day. 18 refugees were referred to hospitals for treatment and one new baby was born. UNHCR and AHA also provided for supplementary nutrition for 26 children under two and 67 adults with special nutrition needs.
- Due to funding challenges, UNHCR is currently only able to support the referrals of refugees to secondary and tertiary healthcare in emergency or lifesaving cases. Other refugees in need of elective healthcare including routine or minor surgeries are having to be put on a waiting list. In November, 558 cases were referred to hospitals for further treatment.
- Between 27 November and 1 December, the Government of Rwanda conducted a maternal and child health campaign. As part of this, 51,491 refugees including 16,563 children under-five received deworming tablets and vitamin A.
- In November, in partnership with Save the Children, UNHCR trained 49 mother to mother support groups in Mahama refugee camp on maternal, infant and young child nutrition. In addition, 60 health and nutrition staff including were trained on Kangaroo mother care in Mahama camp. This will help them to educate mothers on how to prevent hypothermia among new-born babies.

- In November 9,485 refugee women accessed family planning services through primary health facilities in refugee camps. In addition, UNHCR continues to support 1,154 (HIV) and 1,055 (AIDS) refugee patients living in camps.
- To support the nutrition of refugees and prevent malnutrition, UNHCR and partners conduct regular nutrition screenings and provide support for vulnerable refugees especially infants, children under the age of six, mothers and refugees with chronic diseases. 5,498 refugee children between 6-23 months and 2,709 pregnant/lactating refugee women are currently assisted through the supplementary feeding programme. In addition, 33 severely acute malnutrition and 122 moderately acute malnutrition refugee children were newly admitted into nutrition programmes for treatment. UNHCR has observed an increase of malnutrition cases over the last month.



FOOD SECURITY

- In support of the World Food Programme (WFP) cash assistance for food programme in refugee camps across Rwanda, UNHCR provided lists of refugees in the highly vulnerable and moderately vulnerable categories who are eligible to receive assistance. In total, 88 percent of refugees are classified as highly vulnerable, while 6 percent of refugees are moderately vulnerable. In November, the amount of food assistance distributed by WFP reduced due to lack of funding to 8,500 RWF for the highly vulnerable and 4,250 RWF for the least vulnerable. All new asylum seekers from DRC relocated to existing camps are enrolled in the highly vulnerable category for three months to enable them to receive the full food assistance value. Asylum seekers in Nkamira Transit Centre receive two meals a day from WFP.
- In support of school feeding programmes, UNHCR provides briquettes to ECD schools in refugee camps. For primary and secondary schools, the Government has the responsibility for school feeding and WFP also supports by contributing 90 percent of the cost of refugee school feeding directly to the Government of Rwanda.
- In November, UNHCR continued to provide three hot meals a day to refugees and asylum seekers accommodated at the ETM in Rwanda.



WATER AND SANITATION

- UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, provides water to refugees living in all refugee camps, reception, and transit centres across Rwanda. In November, water supply averaged 19.6.8 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Despite this, water supply remains a challenge in Nyabiheke and Kigeme.
- In November, UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, distributed 2,328 litres (L) of liquid soap for handwashing and other cleaning practices to stave off diarrheal diseases in all sites (Nyabiheke: 225L, Kiziba: 220L, Mahama: 440L, Mugombwa: 220L, Kigeme: 320L, Nkamira: 903L). Throughout the month, UNHCR also worked to remove sludge from septic tanks across the camps and dispose of garbage.
- In Kiziba refugee camp, UNHCR and World Vision fixed 31 handwashing facilities for communal latrines in November. Maintenance of latrine doors and stairs was also conducted. In addition, in Mahama refugee camp, 219 latrine doors were replaced as well as other maintenance work such as fixing septic tanks and repairing roofs. These activities are designed to enhance the hygiene of

WASH facilities and create a safer environment for the refugee population especially women and girls.

- In Nkamira, UNHCR is continuing the construction of latrines, showers and other WASH facilities to meet the needs of 7,200 asylum seekers who can be hosted at the transit centre. Currently there are 63 persons per latrine drop hole and 54 persons per shower stance. The construction of 2 blocks latrines with 20 drop holes each and a shower block with 20 shower stances is ongoing. In addition, UNHCR in partnership with World Vision completed the upgrade of the water connection between Nkamira and the national grid during the month.



SHELTER AND NFIS



A new shelter is constructed in Nyabiheke refugee camp.

- In November, UNHCR and ADRA rehabilitated a total of 35 shelters across the camps, this includes: 13 shelters in Kigeme camp, 8 shelters in Kiziba camp, 5 shelters in Mugombwa camp, 5 shelters in Mahama camp, and 4 shelters in Nyabiheke camp. This brings the total number of shelters rehabilitated across the camps since the beginning of the year to 573 shelters.
- During November, the roofing elements for 14 shelters in Kigeme camp were transformed from old iron sheets to new iron sheet roofing by UNHCR and ADRA, bringing the total number of shelters transformed in 2023 to 247 shelters. In addition, UNHCR and ADRA constructed 7 new semi-permanent shelters in Kigeme camp, bringing the total number of new shelters constructed for the year to 33 shelters.
- UNHCR continued to conduct shelter allocations for the asylum seekers who have been relocated from Nkamira Transit centre to Mahama camp. In total, 991 asylum seekers were allocated shelters in November. In addition, in Kiziba refugee camp, 24 shelters whose occupants departed for resettlement were re-allocated to newly arrived families who were previously hosted by other families in the camp.
- In November, no cash assistance for NFI's was distributed to refugees living in camps due to a lack of funding. In 2023, UNHCR had aimed to provide cash-based assistance to refugees living in camps on a quarterly basis to help them buy items such as soap, blankets, menstrual hygiene products and other household items. Due to the cuts in programmes, UNHCR remains concerned about the deterioration of refugee wellbeing and increase of negative coping mechanisms. Despite this, UNHCR continues to provide monthly cash assistance to refugees accommodated at the ETM.
- A bank registration exercise was conducted by UNHCR and Equity Bank in Nyabiheke, Kiziba and Mahama refugee camps in November. In Nyabiheke camp, 270 were assisted with bank registration, while 756 households were registered in Mahama camp to enable them to receive cash assistance in the future.



ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- UNHCR has continued to provide gas for clean cooking / energy in kind for refugees in Mahama refugee camp in the form of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and works with Good People International to provide the same in Mugombwa camp. LPG cookers emit 50 times fewer pollutants than cooking stoves fuelled by biomass such as mud stoves. In total, the equivalent of 93,120 kgs of LPG was distributed in Mahama camp during November.
- UNHCR distributes cash assistance for energy to refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke and Kigeme refugee camps to ensure refugees have the financial resources to purchase gas for cooking and other energy needs. Despite this, due to a lack of funding, no cash for energy was distributed in November. As a result, refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme camps continue to struggle to meet their energy needs.
- In Mahama refugee camp, in partnership with WVI, UNHCR worked with refugee communities on environmental conservation projects. In total, 8,677 Senna Spectabilis and were planted inside the camp as agroforestry trees and 67 bamboos at Akagera River buffer zone to protect the river from soil erosion effects.



LIVELIHOODS AND SELF RELIANCE

- Agriculture is one of the main sectors through which refugee self-reliance can be achieved in Rwanda. UNHCR is currently running three projects to develop refugee and Rwandan host community livelihoods and self-reliance through the Misizi (covering Mugombwa camp), Nyabicwamba (covering Nyabiheke Refugee Camp), and Mushishito (covering Kigeme Refugee Camp) marshlands. In November, refugee and Rwandan farmers continued to monitor the progress of their crops which were planted the previous month in all three marshland locations.
- In November, a total of 85 refugees and 82 Rwandans participated in livelihoods trainings such as ICT, tailoring, hairdressing, and language classes at the ETM.
- In partnership with Caritas Rwanda, UNHCR continues to support refugee businesses and entrepreneurs who have received cash grants in 2022 and 2023. In Kiziba refugee camp, 422 entrepreneurs are supported through this programme and in November, the second instalment of the cash grant was distributed to 43 refugees and 2 Rwandans.



DURABLE SOLUTIONS

- In 2023, UNHCR Rwanda has received resettlement quota for 5,758 individuals. By the end of November, 6,154 individuals are submitted to resettlement countries. In addition, 6,908 refugees have departed for resettlement and 105 refugees departed through complementary pathways. Among them 89 refugees from the ETM left on resettlement to Canada, Norway and the USA.
- In total, 30,782 Burundian refugees have returned home from Rwanda since 2020 including 325 so far in 2023. In November, however, no Burundian returns happened. 204 Burundians, however, have expressed their intention to return home, including 107 refugees from Mahama camp.
- In November, 4 Rwandan refugees returned back home, bringing the total to 1,470 so far in 2023. UNHCR provides cash assistance to Rwandan refugees returning to Rwanda from abroad. The reintegration grant is 250 USD per adult and 150 USD per child. When returnees initially arrive in Rwanda, they will receive 20 percent of the cash assistance value from UNHCR through Equity Bank

while they are hosted in UNHCR transit centres. Upon their return to their location of origin, and verification and provision of national identity cards by NIDA, returnees will receive the remaining 80 percent of the cash assistance. UNHCR in Rwanda is currently lacking funding to support additional Rwandan returns in 2023.



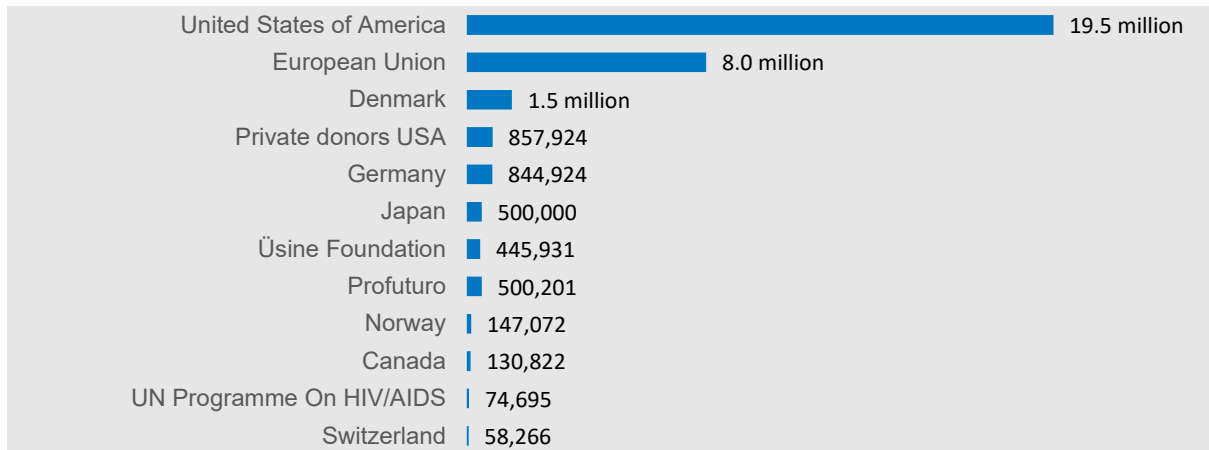
MISSIONS, DELEGATIONS AND EVENTS

- On 7 November, the Minister of Emergency Management, UNHCR Country Representative, western province governor and the acting Mayor of Karongi visited Kiziba camp. During the mission they visited the health center, the secondary school and water supply system in Kiziba camp, as well as meeting with members of the refugee executive committee.
- On 7 November, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Rwanda visited Nkamira Transit Centre. The purpose of the visit was to get first-hand knowledge of the situation of asylum seekers fleeing Eastern DRC.
- On November 2023, UNHCR Representative to the African Union visited ETM Gashora. The team received briefings by UNHCR and MINEMA, visited interventions of partners and interacted with some refugees to hear their experiences.
- Between 9 to 14 November, UNHCR conducted a joint mission with International Trade Centre to support in designing their agriculture programme which will support Rwandan and refugee farmers in Kabarore and Kirehe districts.
- On 13 November, UNHCR, together with MINEMA and the World Bank held the third session of a Discussion Series on Development Responses, entitled “Access to Finance for Refugees: Financial Inclusion and How to Get there, from Rwanda and the Region”. Two academics, Dr. Julie Zollmann from Tufts University and Michelle Hassan joined about 50 participants in discussing the benefits and pitfalls often experienced when designing refugee financial products, and lessons learned from previous studies on financial inclusion of refugees in Rwanda.
- On 16 November, UNHCR Representative attend an event in Mahama refugee camp organized by Practical Action to launch a solar-powered irrigation project in the camp which supports climate resilient farming.
- On 16 November 2023, the Minister of Emergency Management accompanied by UNHCR Deputy Representative visited the ETM to learn more about the services and assistance provided to refugees and asylum seekers evacuated from Libya.
- On 28 November, UNHCR partnered with Mashariki Film Festival to showcase two films made by refugees as part of their annual film festival held in Kigali. The films – ‘Bahati’ and ‘Born refugee but never think like refugee’ – were followed by a panel discussion on the theme of how filmmaking can support refugee and displaced communities.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the Rwanda operation as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes regionally and globally with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS to UNHCR Rwanda in 2023 | USD



BROADLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of broadly earmarked contributions which contribute to the response in Rwanda and the region

United States of America 51 million | Italy 8.8 million | Private donors Australia 6.9 million | Private donors Germany 6.1 million | Australia 3.9 million | Canada 3.9 million | Private donors USA 3.4 million | Finland 3.1 million | Private donors United Kingdom 2.8 million

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 69 million | Norway 63.1 million | Private donors Spain 61.9 million | United Kingdom 41 million | Private donors Japan 40.1 million | Netherlands 36.3 million | Denmark 35.6 million | France 26.7 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 23.5 million | Germany 22.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Private donors Italy 13.7 million | Private donors Sweden 12 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million | Private donors USA 10.8 million

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