Kiziba Refugee Camp, Rwanda

October 2023

Kiziba is the oldest refugee camp in Rwanda and was established in 1996. It is currently host to **15,785** refugees and asylum seekers. Around **48 percent** of the population are under the age of 18 years old.

Kiziba is located about 15 km outside Karongi town, in Karongi District, Western Province. In total, the camp covers **44 hectares** and is divided into 10 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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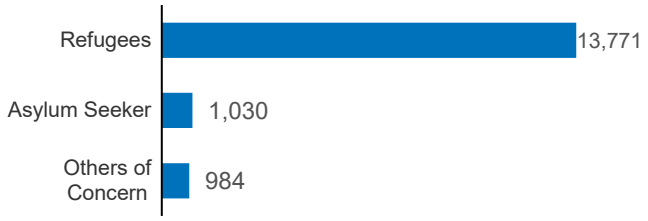

UNHCR STAFF BASED IN THE KARONGI FIELD OFFICE COVER THE NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN KIZIBA REFUGEE CAMP

A tailoring association in Kiziba refugee camp is supported by the Rwandan Red Cross. In October 2023, they were able to procure sewing machines and other equipment.

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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 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, including: 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, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); Caritas on livelihoods; Prison Fellowship Rwanda (PFR) on legal assistance, community-based protection and birth registration; Inkomoko on livelihoods; Kepler on education; Rwanda Red Cross on distribution of non-food items, livelihoods 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 October, UNHCR provided counselling on 19 cases received at the protection desk, and 13 cases received by the Continuous Registration Panel (CRP) operated by UNHCR, MINEMA and DGIE.
- 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 their protection issues.
- In October, UNHCR conducted 19 Best Interest Assessments (BIAs) as part of child protection case management. 52 Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UACs) also received material support including food, kitchen sets, and clothing as part of the assisted living programme. During the month UNHCR and Plan International conducted 29 home visits to children to assess their wellbeing and provide psychosocial support.
- In October, UNHCR and partners reached 1,209 youths through sports for protection activities with an increase in participation for football, basketball, and volleyball.
- UNHCR works with PI 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 October, UNHCR and PI assisted 6 newly reported GBV cases and continued to assist and monitor 31 previous cases.

- UNHCR's partner HI supports people with disabilities in Kiziba refugee camp by providing them with assistive devices and promoting their inclusion in different activities. In October, 97 individuals with disabilities (59 male and 38 female) received basic functional rehabilitation services. In addition, 26 children (17 boys and 9 girls) with physical and mental disabilities were supported with supplementary feeding. UNHCR, MINEMA, partners and the Elderly Committee in Kiziba camp celebrated the International Day of Older Persons, organized by HI.

Education

- In Kiziba camp, there is a primary school and secondary school and UNHCR works with World Vision to support refugee education. In November, MINEMA, UNHCR and WVI held a meeting with primary and secondary teachers. The meeting discussed preventing sexual harassment in schools, student performance, and general education challenges. The teachers also raised concerns about inadequate incentives (salaries) for teachers in Kiziba, which results in high teacher turnover and subsequently affects student performance.

Health

- In Kiziba camp, primary health care and medical screenings are provided by UNHCR through SCI. There is one health centre in the camp that also serves the 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, 12 nurses, and 14 refugee assistant nurses. In October, 3,455 individuals received medical and health services, with 131 people admitted to the in-person ward in the camp's health centre and 134 cases referred to hospitals (116 refugees and 18 Rwandans).

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 October, therapeutic feeding was provided to 1 refugee suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), and 13 refugees and 2 Rwandan with moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). UNHCR in partnership with SCI also provided supplementary feeding to 426 children of 6 months of age, 197 pregnant women and 127 lactating mothers, and 102 people living with HIV.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- Water is distributed to refugees through several water points and water stands located within the camp. The available water supply is 28 litres per person per day, which is well above the recommended minimum standard of 20 litres 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 trucks to dislodge latrines and empty garbage in Kiziba camp are available.
- Hygiene promotion sessions are regularly conducted throughout the camp by a group of 56 refugee volunteers and casual workers reaching 3,106 persons with educational messages (1,295 male and 1,811 female). WVI distributed 200 litres of liquid soap for

handwashing in public facilities, such as camp offices, schools, marketplace, health centre and community centre.

- In October, UNHCR conducted maintenance and repairs of WASH facilities within Kiziba camp. As a result, 11 m of access and water ways were maintained; 16 water taps, and 04 valves fixed; 5 water taps replaced; 06 water pipe leakages fixed; dislodging of latrines was conducted; and 39 blocks of communal latrines disinfected.

Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

- Kiziba refugee camp covers 44 hectares of land and has a total of 3,413 shelters which accommodate the camp population. In coordination with the shelter committee, UNHCR allocates 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 per cent 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.

Energy and Environment

- Due to its location on hilly terrain, Kiziba refugee camp is susceptible environmental degradation such as soil erosion, rainwater runoff and creation of gullies which is increasing because of climate change. UNHCR, refugees and members of the host community plant trees through Umuganda (community work) to mitigate against such a risk.
- 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 monthly to help them buy fuel for cooking. The cash assistance for energy has not been provided since June 2023 due to funding shortages.

Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion

- In October, Rwanda Red Cross provided 40,000,000 Rwf to 102 farmers and 76 tailors in Kiziba camp to support their livelihoods and businesses. The refugees have subsequently used the money to rent 10 hectares of land, procure manure, fertilizers, and high-quality seeds, and purchase sewing machines.

Durable Solutions

- Resettlement is currently the primary durable solution for refugees in Kiziba refugee camp. From January to October 2023, UNHCR has submitted applications for 1,669 individuals for resettlement to Canada, France, Norway, and the USA. Moreover, from January to October 2023, an additional 1,866 refugees departed Kiziba camp for resettlement to third countries.
- To maintain continuous communication, manage resettlement expectations, and mitigate fraud, UNHCR continue 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.