

# BURUNDI - Regional Refugee Response Plan 2021 Mid Year Report



Burundian refugee Venancia sits with her youngest daughter outside her home in Nduta refugee camp, Tanzania. © DRC/Christina John

## REGIONAL SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 30 June 2021, some 276,000 Burundian refugees were hosted in the four main asylum countries, with 43,200 refugees in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, 49,000 in **Rwanda**, 133,000 in **Tanzania** and 51,000 in **Uganda**. The 2021 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) includes an appeal for US\$ 222.6 million for 36 partners to meet the critical needs of Burundian refugees in these four main countries of asylum and it outlines the response in Burundi for returning refugees as articulated in the 2021 Burundi Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (JRRRP).

The relative stabilization in Burundi since the 2015 crisis and the mostly peaceful political transition in May 2020 offered new perspectives for solutions to this now protracted refugee situation and triggered increased interest of Burundian refugees to return home. Since January 2021, a total of 44,144 Burundian refugees have been assisted in their voluntary repatriation to Burundi, including 3,715 Burundian refugees from the DRC, 21,342 from Rwanda, and 20,116 refugees from Tanzania. In addition, hundreds of Burundian refugees, mainly from Uganda, undertook self-organized returns.

In the first half of 2021, Burundian refugees continued to face multiple protection risks, in particular gender-based violence (GBV) including survival sex and early marriages as a result of limited access to livelihoods, school closures, overcrowded shelters, lack of domestic energy supply and reduced humanitarian assistance. Refugee children (over 50% of the refugee population) were exposed to particular risks. The situation of unaccompanied and separated children was particularly concerning, as many suffered neglect and adolescents have increasingly resorted to negative coping mechanisms.

The fact that the RRRP remains underfunded with only 34.5 per cent of the resources required (as of 31 August) led to acute gaps, including food ration cuts, inadequate shelters, lack of medicines, deficient WASH infrastructure and insufficient livelihoods activities. The large majority of the refugee population remained dependent on humanitarian assistance. The COVID-19 pandemic further compounded the situation. In Tanzania, the lack of nationwide measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, impacted the health and safety of PoCs during repatriations. During the

## 2021 RESPONSE IN NUMBERS

**276,000**

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES AS  
OF 30 JUNE 2021



**USD 76.9M**

FUNDING RECEIVED BY SEPT 2021,  
REPRESENTING 34.5% OF REQUIREMENTS

**8**

NEW BURUNDIAN REFUGEE  
ARRIVALS IN 2021

**44,144**

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES ASSISTED TO  
VOLUNTARILY RETURN IN 2021

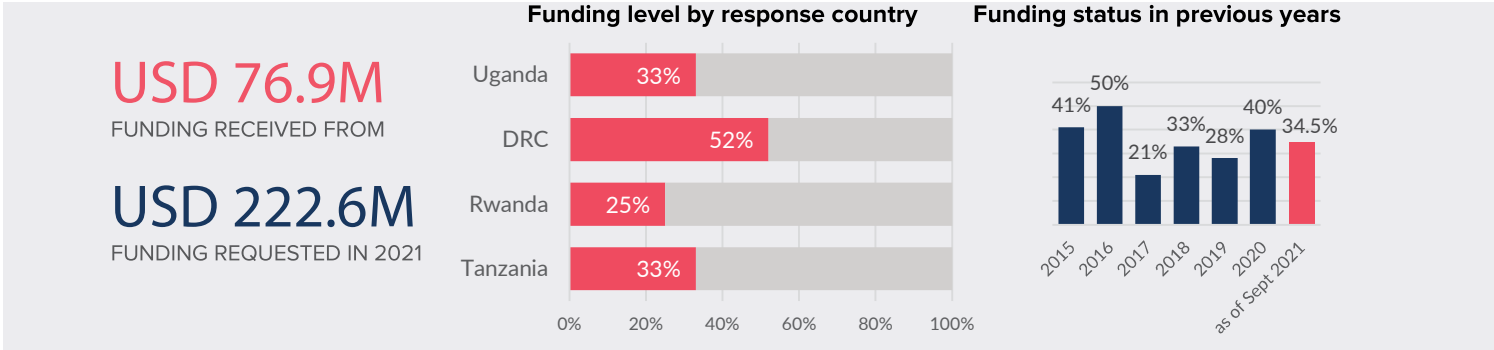
**36**

UN, INTERNATIONAL NGO AND  
NATIONAL NGO PARTNERS INVOLVED

## REGIONAL SITUATION OVERVIEW CONTINUED

first half of the year, 164 refugee returnees from Tanzania tested positive for COVID-19 upon entry into Burundi. RRP partners also faced enormous challenges in stabilizing existing programmes and in meeting the minimum standards of service provision, let alone investing in long-term and more sustainable interventions. Notably, severe underfunding compromised the quality of child protection and education, and the capacity to fully provide mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and ensure an effective GBV prevention and response.

Notwithstanding these challenges, RRP partners promoted an inclusive protection and solutions approach by advocating for refugee integration into national systems, such as education, health, environment, livelihoods, child protection and birth registration to access services along with the host communities. Despite the COVID-19 related challenges, the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda made progress in the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees. Rwanda developed a road map for the implementation of 17 Global Refugee Forum (GRF) pledges. Uganda continued to implement progressive refugee policies, including freedom of movement, right to work and establish a business, and access Government services such as education and healthcare, in addition to land for housing and cultivation.



In line with GCR/CRRF objectives, RRP partners supported Government policies to protect the asylum space; promoted refugee inclusion, resilience and self-reliance of refugees and host communities; and expanded solutions. Refugees were integrated in Uganda’s National Development Plan (NDP) III (2020/21-2024/25). At sectoral level, response plans were being implemented under the leadership of Government Ministries for education, health, water and environment. The sectoral response plan for jobs and livelihood was launched in the first half of 2021 and RRP partners are supporting the ministry to develop a Sustainable Energy Response Plan (SERP).

In Tanzania, however, the protection environment remained restrictive, with lack of access of Burundian asylum-seekers to asylum, reports of refoulement, strict encampment policy and very limited livelihood and self-reliance initiatives.

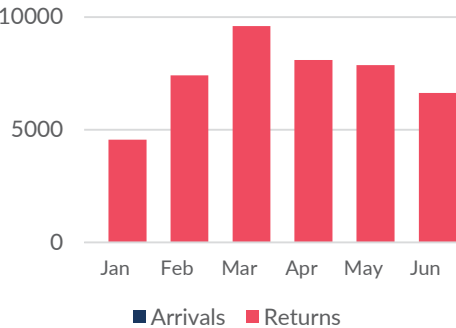
## BURUNDIAN REFUGEE POPULATION TRENDS

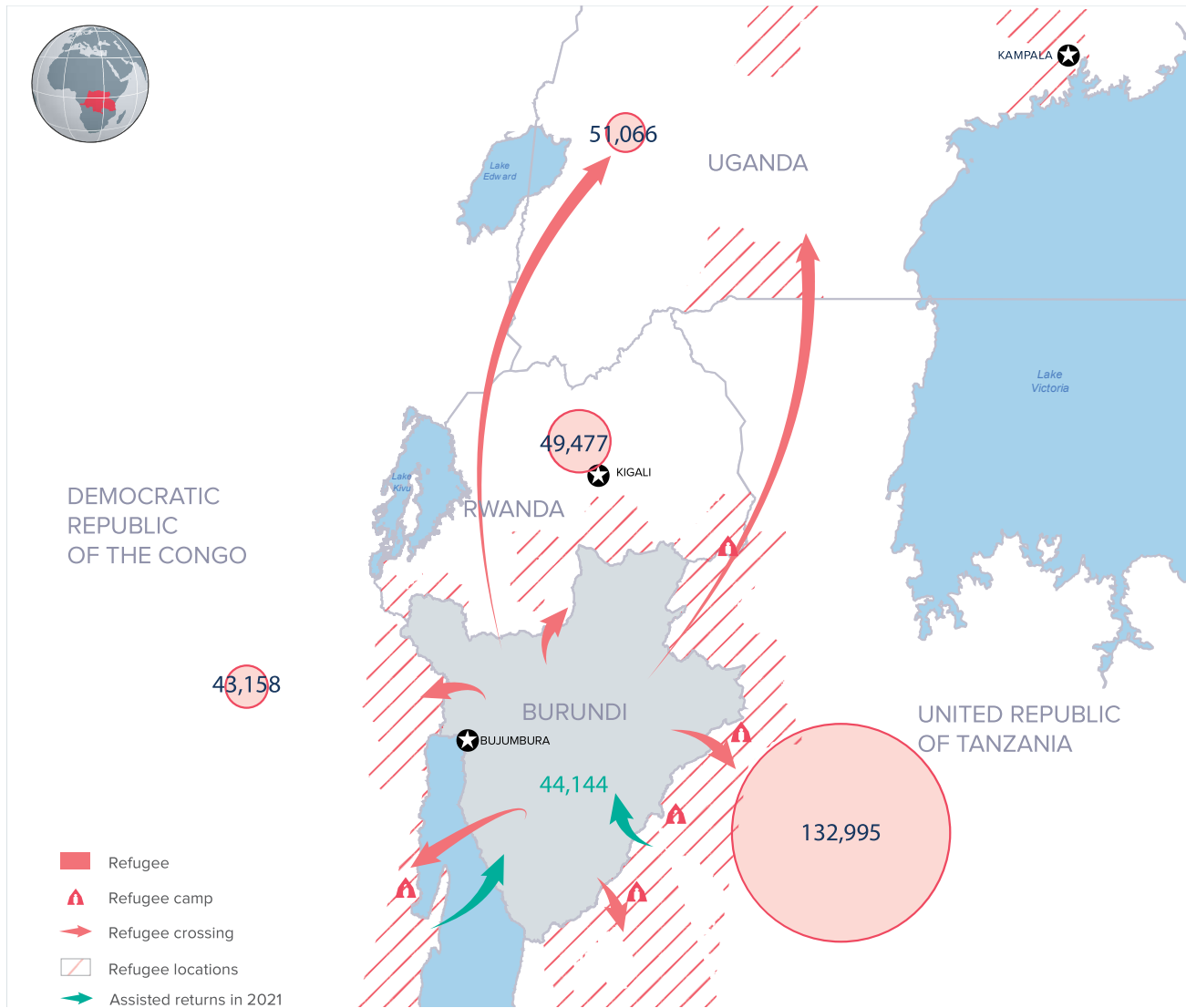
Despite heightened tensions in Burundi during the May 2020 elections, there was no major forced displacement inside **Burundi** or across borders. The new Government of Burundi urged refugees who had fled the country, including government critics and human rights activists, to return home. Since August 2020 and throughout the first half of 2021, an increasing number of voluntary returns have been facilitated from the asylum countries, and there were also self-organized returns, especially from **Uganda**.

**DRC:** As of 30 June 2021, a total of 43,158 Burundian refugees were still living in the DRC, most of whom reside in the province of South Kivu, where the Lusenda and Mulongwe refugee settlements are located. Access to Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement remained extremely challenging due to bad roads conditions and affected the socio-economic wellbeing of refugees and their host communities.

**Rwanda:** As of 30 June 2021, Rwanda hosted of 49,477 Burundian refugees. The vast majority, 37,606 refugees (76%), reside in Mahama camp, while 11,842 refugees live in urban areas, mainly in Kigali and Huye. 25 new Burundian refugees fled to Rwanda in the first half of the year. 21,342 Burundian refugees voluntarily repatriated and 27 were resettled to third countries.

### 2021 Monthly Arrival and Return Trends





**Tanzania:** As of 30 June 2021, Tanzania hosted 132,995 Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers residing in the three camps of Nduta (57,740), Nyarugusu (51,757), and Mtendeli (23,498). 20,116 Burundian refugees were assisted in their voluntary repatriation during the first half of 2021. There remains an accumulated backlog of over 12,000 applications from Burundian asylum-seekers pending refugee status determination by the National Eligibility Committee.

**Uganda:** By 30 June 2021, Uganda hosted 51,066 Burundian refugees. Most of them live in settlements in South Western Uganda mainly in the districts of Isingiro (52%), and in Kampala (6.3%). Despite the border closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020, 196 Burundian asylum-seekers arrived in the first half of 2021 and were given access to RSD procedures.

## 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS AND GAPS

### PROTECTION

In the first half of 2021, measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, food ration cuts, limited livelihood opportunities as well as inadequate humanitarian funding further exacerbated inequalities and heightened protection risks for refugees. Against this background, RRP partners increased efforts to strengthen community-based protection in the settlements through empowerment of refugees, provision of material support, trainings and sensitization. Complaints and feedback mechanisms, child protection as well as GBV prevention and response were also strengthened through community-based approaches and remote case management in all asylum countries.

In the **DRC**, a total of 26,131 registered Burundian refugees and 1,065 asylum-seekers were verified biometrically and 1,839 newborns registered. RRP partners also registered 34 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) during the

**85%**

Burundian refugees **individually registered** in the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, against an annual target of 100%

**1,132**

identified **SGBV survivors assisted with appropriate support**

**2,291**

Burundian refugee children with specific needs received **individual case management** (59%, against an annual target of 70%)

**20,465**

refugee children enrolled in **Early Childhood Development programmes** in the DRC, Rwanda & Tanzania (65%, against an annual target of 60%)

**53,562**

refugee children enrolled in **primary school** (gross enrolment of 96%, against an annual target of 94%)

**8,250**

refugee children enrolled in **secondary school** (gross enrolment of 20%, against an annual target of 38%)

**262,383**

Burundian refugees received **food assistance** in 2021 (95% of those in need of food assistance, against an annual target of 100%)

**7,375**

refugee women **delivered babies with assistance** from qualified health personnel (95%, against an annual target of 94%)

first six months of 2021, at the Lusenda camp, Mulongwe Settlement, Mongemonge Transit Centre and Kavimvira Transit Centre. All GBV survivors received psychosocial support as well as medical care on an individual basis. RRP partners furthermore enhanced the protection of refugee children in the refugee settlements and transit centres through individual case management, best interest determinations and family tracing. 69 children with specific protection risks were identified and received specific assistance, including psychosocial care.

In **Rwanda**, all Burundian refugees had access to registration and documentation. In the first half of 2021, a total of 1,896 Burundians were registered, including 1,365 newborns and 25 new arrivals. 1,402 refugee children in Mahama camp were assisted in obtaining birth certificates. Moreover, 195 individuals received legal assistance. 656 children benefited from individual case management, including 46 new cases, whereby issues related to neglect, physical and emotional abuse were addressed. 214 Best Interest Determinations were conducted, based on which children were assisted with appropriate care. During the first six months of 2021, a total of 195 GBV cases were reported. All survivors were assisted with multi-sectoral and survivor-centered case management services, including psychosocial support, medical services, material support, safety and security, and legal assistance. 13 staff and 264 refugees, including community-based committee members, participated in refresher training on GBV prevention and response. Community activists and other community-based structures raised awareness of GBV and child protection using social media and pre-recorded messages on megaphones. 40 youth volunteers at Mahama camp contributed to awareness-raising on COVID-19 and its preventive measures.

In **Tanzania**, a total of 835 GBV cases were reported in the first half of 2021. All GBV survivors received psychosocial counselling and case management services. Legal counselling was provided to 504 GBV survivors. Restrictions on livelihood activities and reduced assistance increased pressures on refugee families and risks of child labor and exploitation outside the camp. A community-based child protection mechanism was implemented through 80 community-based structures that contributed to creating awareness of refugee communities about protection risks faced by children and to strengthening the communities' role in protecting children. 88 Best Interest Determinations were made for unaccompanied and/or separated children in the context of cross-border family reunification and voluntary repatriation. 269 Best Interest Assessments were conducted with regard to separated children who were repatriating with their caregivers. RRP partners also equipped 1,250 adolescents (F: 815; M: 435) with practical skills and awareness of sexual and reproductive health.

In **Uganda**, the COVID-19 pandemic combined with food ration cuts worsened the well-being of refugees in Uganda

and had a serious impact on their protection and livelihoods. With the resurgence of COVID-19 cases, Uganda introduced a second national lockdown in June 2021 that further affected refugees harshly. Limited livelihood opportunities as well as scarce humanitarian funding further exacerbated inequalities and heightened protection risks for refugees. Teenage pregnancies increased, and children were more often exposed to GBV, child labour, family separation and severe forms of child neglect. During the reporting period, RRP partners responded to 2,541 new GBV incidents from 13 refugee hosting districts in Uganda, involving Burundian and other refugee populations. Rape was registered highest at 29%, followed by physical assault at 26%. Against this background, RRP partners increased efforts to strengthen community-based protection in the settlements through empowerment of refugees, provision of material support, trainings and sensitization. Complaints and feedback mechanisms, child protection as well as GBV prevention and response were also strengthened through community-based approaches and remote case management. 68 GBV survivors among Burundian refugees received appropriate multi-sectoral support. The incidents were driven by issues of power imbalance, school closure and economic hardship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. 25 Burundian refugee children were identified to be at risk and registered for case management services. RRP partners also provided psycho-social services to 323 Burundian refugees and targeted support to 13 refugees with specific needs. 109 Burundian refugees received legal assistance and legal aid services.

#### EDUCATION

The COVID-19 pandemic, funding shortfalls and school closures since March 2020 in DRC, Rwanda and Uganda resulted not only in loss of learning, but also led to increased protection risks, exacerbating vulnerabilities and persistent barriers to education, with girls disproportionately affected. Child labour resulting from economic hardship, represents another important barrier for refugee education, with parents asking their children to help with farming activities, instead of allowing them to go to school.

In the **DRC**, a total of 10,753 refugee children (65%) attended school. RRP partners provided cash assistance to allow students to cover the fees for the final exams at the end of the academic year. However, 5,753 school-aged Burundian refugees out of 16,506 (35%), mainly those living in the transit centers, were not able to attend school.

In **Rwanda**, refugee integration into the national school system is very advanced, with over 95% of refugee children studying in national schools. 85% of urban refugees and students in urban boarding schools were enrolled in the national Community Based Health Insurance (CBHI) plan. A total of 21,016 Burundian refugee children (85% of school-aged children) in the Mahama camp were enrolled in early childhood education, primary and secondary schools, following the national curriculum. 63 children with disabilities were in special need education schools outside



**15,546**

refugees received **productive assets, training** and / or **business support** (14% of refugees 18 - 59 years, against an annual target of 15%)



**624**

refugees **employed or self-employed** in the DRC, Rwanda & Tanzania (0.54% of refugees 18 - 59 years, against an annual target of 18%)



**42,362**

refugee households live in **semi-permanent shelter** in Rwanda, Tanzania & DRC (70% of total refugees households, against an annual target of 98%)



**33,376**

refugee households have a **household latrine** (Rwanda excluded) (43%, against an annual target of 75%)



**28.5 L**

regional average **litres of water per person per day** (against an annual target and standard of 20L)



**21,711**

refugee households in Rwanda, Tanzania & Uganda have **energy saving stoves** (28% against an annual target of 52%)



*Burundian refugees are registered and given identification documents at Kavimvira transit centre in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, before returning to their country of origin. © UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans*

the camp. 282 refugee youths were enrolled in different universities across the country through various scholarship programs. RRP partners provided refugee students with scholastic materials, uniforms, and access to the school feeding program. RRP partners also contributed to the upgrading of school infrastructure in Mahama camp, through the construction of a library, 18 early child development classrooms, a basketball and football/soccer playfields. The construction work of an ICT room, and 10 primary classrooms are ongoing. The main challenges to quality education were the insufficient number of classrooms, lack of science laboratories and libraries, and adequate latrines.

In **Tanzania**, a 43,009 (out of a total of 75,654) Burundian school aged refugee children were enrolled in early childhood development (ECD), primary and secondary schools (57% enrolment). In addition, 48 Burundian children with specific needs were enrolled in schools for their respective age and 94 Burundian refugees were admitted to higher education programmes in Tanzania. Based on an agreement with Vodafone, RRP partners undertook an innovative approach to improve the quality of education through the introduction of digital resources.

In **Uganda**, the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent school closure since March 2020 and up to the first half of 2021, rendered all children out of school. In response, RRP partners supported remote learning to 190,283 refugee and host community children through provision of radios and scholastic materials, developed by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), including for refugee children in settlements hosting Burundian refugees. Over 560 teachers (formal, assistants or volunteers) were trained in distance learning facilitation. RRP partners promoted home-based education and child protection by empowering parents to develop social, emotional, cognitive and physical wellbeing skills of their children. RRP partners also provided mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS) to 3,842 learners and 492 parents during individual home visits. In addition, 728 teachers received training or information on how to identify and refer children with protection issues during the COVID-19 emergency period.

## FOOD

The food ration cuts in **DRC** (reduction of the cash-for-food assistance from 12 USD to an average of 7.5 USD/person/month), in **Tanzania** (from 96% food rations at the beginning of the year to 68% at the end of 2020) and in **Uganda** (70% of the full ration since April 2020) coincided with the COVID-19 containment measures and limited refugees' livelihoods opportunities, resulting in increased vulnerability of refugees. The dire situation prompted some Burundian refugees in **DRC, Rwanda** and in **Tanzania** to opt for voluntary repatriation.



*Two Burundian refugees harvest vegetables in Kalemie, near the shores of Lake Tanganyika in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. © UNHCR /Aline Irakarama*

In the **DRC**, RRP partners provided cash or food assistance to 35,158 refugees in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement in the first half of 2021. Warm meals were provided to 2,086 refugees and asylum-seekers staying in the transit centres as well as to returnees. However, bad road conditions and flooding prevented RRP partners from providing assistance during the months of February and March 2021.

In **Rwanda**, despite the 60% ration cut, full support for supplementary nutrition activities and school meals was maintained. Based on a profiling exercise vulnerability levels in Mahama camp were assessed as high, with 75% categorized as highly vulnerable, 10% moderately vulnerable and 15% least vulnerable. In May 2021, RRP partners started targeting of food assistance by prioritizing highly vulnerable refugees who received 80% of the food assistance package. Since June 2021, 85% of the targeted refugees (45,801) in Mahama camp, received cash-based assistance to allow refugees to buy food of their choice and contributing to the local economy.

In **Tanzania**, despite the 32% ration cut, food assistance was maintained at 100% for 23,500 Burundians refugees belonging to the most vulnerable segment of the population. In addition, 13,000 Burundian children, pregnant and lactating women were supported under the blanket supplementary feeding program which targets the most vulnerable groups.

In **Uganda**, as a result of sharpened ration cuts, shrinking livelihoods, depletion of assets/savings and the effects of COVID-19, the proportion of food insecure refugees increased from 33 per cent in December 2020 to 42 per cent in April 2021. The proportion of households with insufficient food consumption was 41.5 per cent among settlement-based refugees, compared to 13.9 per cent among nationals in host communities. 64 per cent of settlement-based refugee households used medium or high food-based coping strategies, which was double compared to host community households (32 per cent). 40,609 Burundian refugees received monthly food assistance in the settlements and Kampala either in-kind or through cash transfers. RRP partners continued financial literacy trainings in the settlements hosting Burundian refugees, targeting refugees and asylum-seekers who receive assistance through cash-based transfers. In the first half of 2021, a total of 86,582 refugees from 54,509 households had completed training.

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Among health interventions, RRRP partners prioritized COVID-19 prevention measures in all asylum countries. In Rwanda and in Uganda, refugees were included in the national COVID-19 vaccination plans.

In the **DRC**, two COVID-19 preparedness and response plans for Lusenda and Mulongwe were put in place, and 11 quarantine sites and three isolation sites set up in 2020 remained operational. Additional nursing staff, community volunteers and hygiene promoters were recruited and trained. RRP partners also provided access to primary and secondary health care to 38,372 Burundian refugees living in Lusenda camp, Mulongwe settlement, as well as those in the transit centers. RRP partners furthermore screened 4,188 children, including 2,476 infants, as well as 1,968 pregnant and breastfeeding women, and identified and treated 1,482 cases of acute malnutrition.

In **Rwanda**, 81% of Burundian refugees in urban areas (a total of 7,795 persons) were enrolled in the national Community-Based Health Insurance (CBHI), allowing them to access national health services across the country. In Mahama camp, two health facilities provided primary health care to refugees and the host community free of charge.

73,415 consultations for primary health care were recorded. 2,092 refugees were referred to secondary and tertiary levels for specialized medical care. Refugees were included in the COVID-19 vaccination plan. 155 COVID-19 cases were identified in Mahama camp from 21,071 tests conducted (0.7% positivity rate). Medical and nutrition screening was conducted to identify refugees with malnutrition. Identified children were provided therapeutic and supplementary food. The prevalence of anemia among children aged 6-59 months and women of reproductive-aged (15-49) was 27.25% and 2.8%, up from 26% and 1.4% in 2020.

In **Tanzania**, prevention and response measures for COVID-19 were continued in the context of the Kigoma Contingency Plan, which included awareness campaigns, disease surveillance and control, handwashing facilities, establishment of temporary isolation centers, training of rapid response teams, distribution of masks and improving WASH facilities. The high mobility of people, porous borders, inadequate health services in the camps, and insufficient levels of sanitation and hygiene exposed the refugee camps to high risks of infection. RRP partners provided a total of 235,125 medical consultations were provided in the first half of 2021, of which 7% were for the host community. 7,478 Burundian refugee patients were provided with care at health facilities in the refugee camps, and 264 refugees were referred to secondary and tertiary level medical care.

In **Uganda**, RRP partners implemented a series of activities in support of the Ministry of Health's COVID-19 Response Plan. Institutional quarantine and treatment centres were established across refugee-hosting districts and support provided to district health facilities to improve health service delivery for refugees and host community members. RRP partners further carried out COVID-19 infection, prevention and control activities across settlements. Refugees have also been included in the COVID-19 vaccine deployment plan. RRP partners continued to support the national health care system as well as health facilities and referral services in and around settlements hosting Burundian refugees. As a result, equitable access and quality of health services for refugees and host communities improved despite resource constraints and challenges related to the pandemic.

#### LIVELIHOODS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Despite the commitment of RRRP partners to strengthen self-reliance of refugees and enhance the protection of the environment, livelihoods activities were severely impacted by resource constraints and the COVID-19 restrictive measures. As a result, Burundian refugees in the DRC received insufficient seeds to use their plots of land despite dire needs; only 18.81% of refugees were engaged in livelihoods activities in Rwanda; just 1.38% of refugee households



*Burundian refugee Vanencia harvests vegetables from her keyhole garden in Nduta refugee camp, Tanzania..*  
© DRC/Christina John



in Tanzania had access to alternative and or renewable energy; and in Uganda Burundian refugees could not be included in any income-generating activities.

In the **DRC**, RRP partners continued to promote the self-reliance of Burundian refugees in the Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement by enabling refugees to undertake farming activities. Local authorities have made additional land available to refugees living in Mulongwe enabling them to increase their agricultural activities. 8,428 refugees received tool kits and seeds, as well as technical support in agriculture, breeding and fishing activities. Eight additional poultry-breeder associations were formed. 158 Burundian refugees and 60 members of the host community benefitted from vocational training, including embroidery, electronics and masonry to enable them to start a business and become more self-reliant upon completion of the training. RRP partners also purchased biomass briquettes made by Burundian refugees and distributed them to refugees in South Kivu as an environment-friendly alternative to firewood. However, due to funding shortfalls, the number of briquettes purchased by RRP partners was reduced by nearly 50%.

In **Rwanda**, RRP partners promoted the social inclusion of refugees into national livelihood strategies. 1,458 Burundian refugees in Mahama camp and in urban areas were trained in business skills through video, interactive voice response, individual consulting and phone coaching. RRP partners provided business loans to 34 refugees and COVID-19 unconditional cash grants to 3,185 urban refugee households (47 USD per family) to help them cope with the pandemic. As part of the reforestation plan in Mahama camp, RRP partners disinfected all trees attacked by whiteflies. Refugee cooperatives were supported with seeds and tools and assisted with the start of a beekeeping project. All Burundian refugees in Mahama camp had access to cooking gas.

In **Tanzania**, RRP partners provided productive assets, training and/or business support in cash or kind to 2,278 Burundian refugees. Due to the fact that the authorities discouraged the establishment of businesses, few vocational skills trainings (VST) courses received start-up inputs or home learning kits, which limited self-employment opportunities. RRP partners supported 3,015 Burundian women in leadership positions. 157 adolescents received ICT and e-learning courses in the refugee camps to improve their skills and enhance opportunities for gainful employment upon repatriation. RRP partners also provided production kits or inputs for vegetable gardening to 679 refugees, which contributed to enhanced household dietary diversity and nutrition.

To increase forest protection and rehabilitation, 405,000 tree seedlings were raised for planting in the camp and host community (333,017 tree seedlings in the host community). UNHCR and partners continued environmental awareness meetings, radio programs and home visits to ensure refugees and host communities are informed about good practices to prevent further environmental degradation. Firewood remains the main source of cooking fuel for about 97% of the households. However, as firewood is not readily available in the camps, refugees must search for firewood in the nearby host community forests, exposing women and girls to GBV risks. To address this issues, RRP partners provided 3451 refugees with firewood for cooking and 80 households were supplied with biomass charcoal briquettes as alternative energy source for cooking.

In **Uganda**, the strict COVID-19 prevention measures affected refugees' livelihoods, resulting in a loss of income for many Burundian refugees. Reduced food assistance exacerbated the situation. At the same time, a gap remained in transitioning to more sustainable livelihoods options. The Government's Jobs and Livelihoods Integrated Response Plan for refugees and host communities was launched and a national steering committee instituted with the aim to shift from short-term to sustainable livelihood opportunities and economic inclusion. The Response Plan is expected to increase investment in income-generating activities, access to savings and credit, access to sustainable employment opportunities and to strengthen engagement of local government and private sector in the delivery of services to refugees and host communities (e.g. agriculture extension and registration of small businesses). By the end of June 2021,150ha (out of planned 300ha) of trees were planted for restoration of degraded Central Forest Reserves by the National Forest Authority (NFA). In addition, NFA raised over 5 million assorted tree seedlings for planting across the operation during the rainy season, and 1.9 million seedlings had been distributed for planting by mid-year.

## **SHELTER AND NFIS**

RRP partners supported the upgrading of housing for refugees to varying extents in all asylum countries. Core relief items and hygienic supplies were also provided.

In the **DRC**, RRP partners continued to improve shelter and infrastructure in the camps and transit centers. 34 refugee families received assistance to construct family shelters and were provided with core relief items. 15 community shelters and two family shelters for persons with specific needs were rehabilitated. A warehouse was built in Kavimvira transit center.

In **Rwanda**, all refugee families in Mahama camp live in semi-permanent shelters. All 12,345 new arrivals were initially provided with emergency shelter. As of June 2021, 562 (out of 2,194 shelters in need of repair) had been rehabilitated with the support of the refugee community. UNHCR used cash-based interventions as a modality to provide non-food assistance to the refugees in the Mahama camp. 97% of the total population had access to bank accounts and hence received cash assistance for domestic items (the rest 3% were pending reactivation and received in-kind assistance). All girls and women of reproductive age received cash or in-kind assistance to meet their sanitary and hygiene items needs. Many families opted to prioritize the assistance to purchase food.

In **Tanzania**, as of June 2021, 76% of Burundian refugees lived in adequate shelters. RRP partners prioritized the improvement of existing transitional shelters for 179 refugees to ensure their safety and protection against harsh weather conditions. Some of the camp infrastructure was upgraded and generator bases, guard posts and electrical connections and installations were completed in the three refugee camps. RRP partners provide core relief items to 23,854 Burundian households. In addition, 112,284 refugees received hygienic supplies, and soap distribution was maintained at 500 grams/person/month as part of the COVID-19 prevention measures.

In **Uganda**, ongoing repair and maintenance of communal shelters at operational transit facilities and reception centres continued to ensure adequate living conditions. Six Burundian refugees received shelter kits to enable them to construct their emergency shelter. Overall, gaps and challenges in provision of shelters for persons with specific needs remain. Another critical challenge relating to household shelter is the limited supply of renewable construction materials, with a resultant impact on the environment.

### WASH

In the context of the COVID-19 response, RRP partners support reinforced WASH interventions. Against a target of 20 liters of water per person per day, the average was 19.6 L in DRC, 21.7 L in Rwanda, 37.5 L in Tanzania and 17.6 L in Uganda.

In the **DRC**, regular health campaigns were organized to promote good hygiene practices and prevent the spread of COVID-19, reaching a total of 11,948 refugees. RRP partners reinforced handwashing points and temperature checks at all entry points of the refugee sites. Five boreholes constructed in 2020 were made operational.

In **Rwanda**, in the context of COVID-19 prevention measures, handwashing facilities were constructed across the villages in the camp, and refugees were mobilized for frequent handwashing exercises. The construction of durable hand washing on latrines' blocks and in public places was still ongoing. 430 stands out of 516 stands constructed are operational. Standards of access to sanitation and hygiene services in the Mahama camp were met at the rate of 12.9 refugees per drop hole or shower room for both latrines and showers. Latrines were modified to be accessible by persons with disabilities. Hygiene promotion activities were conducted to raise awareness of proper sanitation and good hygiene practices. Due to high rainwater runoff and insufficient drainage systems, rainwater management has been an issue.

In **Tanzania**, as only 67% of refugee families had access to household latrines, 1,031 new latrines were constructed in the first half of 2021. 1,450 water taps were replaced while other sanitary facilities such as communal washing slabs, improved drainage at tap stands and institutional sanitation facilities were constructed or rehabilitated. All schools were provided with handwashing facilities, reaching/exceeding the standard of 100 pupils per handwashing station. Hygiene awareness sessions were conducted for refugees in schools and communal areas to encourage them to contribute to environmental cleanliness.

In **Uganda**, in response to the pandemic, pumping hours were increased in settlements hosting Burundian refugees. Water attendants were placed at water collection points in the settlements to enforce social distancing and pass on COVID-19 messages. Soap distribution was doubled from 250g/person/month to 500g/person/month and sensitization on hygiene increased. 99.5 per cent of the daily water demand was supplied through permanent water schemes, whilst only parts of the settlements with recent arrivals of asylum-seekers relied on water trucking. Access to sanitation and hygiene services for refugees and host communities in Uganda remained inadequate with 67% of Burundian refugees having access to households' latrines by mid-2021.



## 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); **Anna Minuto**, Snr. Information Management Officer [minuto@unhcr.org](mailto:minuto@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