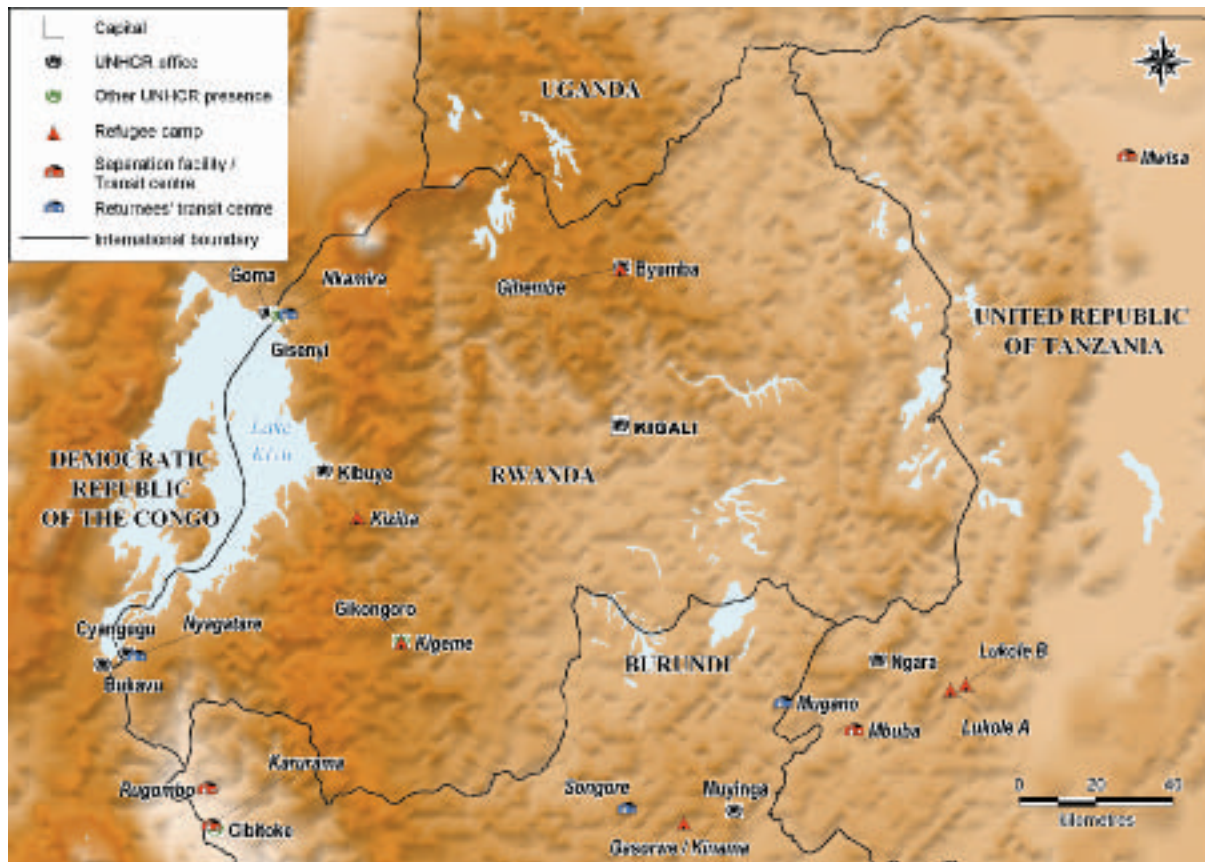


# Rwanda



## Main objectives

- Continue the resettlement of Congolese and Burundian refugees in camps and urban areas for whom neither repatriation nor local integration are viable options.
- Support the Government of Rwanda in its efforts to develop a national asylum system.
- Assist the newly-established National Council for Refugees (NCR) and support government efforts to conduct registration and refugee status determination.
- Provide protection and material assistance to all camp-based refugees as well as limited humanitarian assistance to urban refugees in Kigali.
- Raise awareness amongst the refugee community of sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation.
- Under the Great Lakes Initiative for HIV/AIDS (GLIA) increase efforts to sensitize refugees to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and provide financial support to respond to needs.

- Promote voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees with due consideration of the possibility of invoking the ceased circumstances clause.
- Monitor reintegration of Rwandan returnees, with special attention to vulnerable persons.
- Provide support to Rwandan returnees in cooperation with other UN agencies, notably UNDP and FAO, under the UNDAF framework for Rwanda, in implementing the "4Rs" strategy (Repatriation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction).

Planning figures		
Population	Jan 2005	Dec 2005
DRC (refugees)	31,475	7,000
Returnees	30,000	20,000
Asylum-seekers	2,931	0
Burundi (refugees)	1,363	673
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,769</b>	<b>27,673</b>

**Total requirements: USD 5,526,342**

## Working environment

### Recent developments

Rwanda underwent major political changes in 2003 when the transition period established in the 1993 Arusha accords drew to an end. With the passing of a new constitution and presidential and parliamentary elections, Rwanda entered a more stable phase. It was in this context that UNHCR handed over responsibilities for registration and refugee status determination to the Government of Rwanda. The NCR assumed its functions in early 2004 and the Government is now setting up a national asylum system in cooperation with UNHCR. In this context UNHCR has promoted the voluntary return of Rwandan refugees from neighbouring countries.

In 2003 UNHCR and Rwanda signed seven legal framework agreements on the return of refugees (Tripartite Agreements) with Zambia, Uganda, the Republic of the Congo, Namibia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In 2004, UNHCR has moved towards the operational stage of these framework agreements. Voluntary repatriation programmes will continue in 2005 to ensure that all Rwandan refugees have the opportunity to decide whether or not they want to return with UNHCR's assistance.

Diplomatic relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda have deteriorated over the past 12 months. The situation worsened significantly in May and June 2004 when a crisis in Bukavu caused some 3,000 Congolese to flee to Rwanda. The subsequent closure of the border had a negative impact on the Rwandan economy. It is possible that such situations may arise again in the run-up to the general elections in DRC expected in 2005.

### Constraints

In 2004, the tenth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide and the process of reconciliation were commemorated in solemn ceremonies in April. However, UNHCR noted a growing reluctance among Rwandan refugees to return home for

various reasons. Some claimed to be put off by the difficult economic situation. Others were not convinced that it is safe to return. It is highly likely that some who might have been involved in the genocide are resorting to coercive strategies in order to discourage other Rwandan refugees from returning. In general, the flow of returnees decreased in 2004.

Continued incursions by ex-FAR/*Interahamwe* onto Rwandan territory have led to insecurity in many areas. Although these incursions may not pose a threat to the country as a whole, they resulted in a tightening of security and controls which adversely affect refugees, particularly those outside camps.

Resettling refugees from Rwanda to third countries remains difficult, as the process of obtaining an exit permit is very protracted. The complex local procedures have made it difficult for some resettlement candidates to leave. Furthermore, even though the NRC is operational, it lacks trained staff, equipment and facilities. Registration has been very slow and there has been no refugee status determination in 2004.

Reintegration assistance for returnees remains crucial in the Rwandan context. Widespread poverty and a general lack of arable land exacerbate the difficulties. The fragmentation of land, and the alienation of property entitlement remain crucial problems, particularly in the context of the continuing return to certain areas of groups of individuals. These include released prisoners, ex-combatants from the DRC, demobilized soldiers from the Rwandan army, and thousands of Rwandan returnees. A new land law was tabled in Parliament, but it could well impact negatively on the already impoverished rural population. UNHCR is expected to phase out operations in Rwanda in the near future, but has to ensure sustainability with regard to returnees and refugees. This may be impeded by gradually decreasing funding.

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## Strategy

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### Protection and solutions

UNHCR will assist all Congolese refugees in their voluntary repatriation to DRC from 2005 onwards under the auspices of a Tripartite Agreement. In addition, UNHCR will facilitate voluntary repatriation to Burundi, in the context of the ongoing transition there. Some Burundian and Congolese refugees may be reluctant to return, and for some of them resettlement to third countries will be pursued as a solution. This applies to some 500 Burundian refugees who have been living as refugees in Rwanda since the early 1970s. Due to the aforementioned socio-economic constraints, local integration is not an option in Rwanda.

### Assistance

UNHCR will continue to provide basic material assistance for Burundian and Congolese refugees including provision of food, shelter, education and health care. Limited assistance will be made available for vulnerable urban refugees, who will be encouraged to transfer to camps where they could receive assistance more regularly. UNHCR will provide returnees with transportation to their communes of origin and a repatriation package comprising a three-month food ration and non-food items. UNHCR will cooperate with UNDP and FAO to provide transitional reintegration assistance for returnees.



Congolese refugees' houses in Gihembe refugee camp, near Byumba. *UNHCR*

## Desired impact

UNHCR aims to ensure the full protection of all refugees by the Government of Rwanda and raise general public awareness about refugees' rights and duties. UNHCR also aspires to repatriate remaining Rwandan refugees from neighbouring countries to their home country in safety and dignity in 2005.

UNHCR also envisages finding durable solutions (repatriation and resettlement) for a significant number of refugees in Rwanda with a view to a phase-out of operations by late 2006.

## Organization and implementation

### Management structure

In 2005, UNHCR will maintain its main office in Kigali, with field offices in Byumba and Kibuye, as well as antenna offices Cyangugu and Gisenyi. The antenna office in Gikongoro will be closed in the first quarter of 2005. UNHCR will have 42 staff members in Rwanda (six international, 36 national) and 13 UNVs.

### Coordination

UNHCR will work with five international NGOs and two government agencies. The Office will continue its cooperation with WFP for the provision of food rations in camps and for returnees, with ICRC on family reunification, with MONUC on repatriation from DRC, and with UNDP as the coordinating agency in Rwanda. Under UNDAF auspices, UNHCR will contribute to coordination and joint programming assessment as well as participate in UNCT theme groups and task forces.

### Offices

Kigali  
Byumba  
Cyangugu  
Gikongoro  
Gisenyi  
Kibuye

### Partners

#### Government agencies

Joint Commission for the Repatriation and Population, Refugees and Migration  
Ministry of Local Government, Social Services and Information  
National Council for Refugees

#### NGOs

Africa Humanitarian Action  
American Refugee Committee and Bureau of  
Jesuit Refugee Service  
Norwegian People's Aid

#### Others

*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*

### Budget (USD)

Activities and services	Annual Programme
Protection, monitoring and coordination	930,692
Community services	130,003
Domestic needs	318,433
Education	245,000
Food	15,000
Forestry	60,000
Health	586,359
Legal assistance	116,083
Operational support (to agencies)	622,185
Sanitation	196,239
Shelter/other infrastructure	154,634
Transport/logistics	1,164,071
Water (non-agricultural)	124,064
<b>Total operations</b>	<b>4,662,763</b>
Programme support	863,579
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,526,342</b>