

# Rwanda

February 2023

Since November 2022, 5,500 Congolese asylum seekers fled to Rwanda. Due to the conflict and unrest in North-eastern DRC, Congolese asylum seekers continue to flee to Rwanda.

14,500 refugee and host community primary school students in 15 major refugee-hosting schools have access to digital education resources.

Over 60,000 refugees in Mahama and Mugombwa camps received safe cooking energy in the form of LPG.

## KEY STATISTICS

**125,896** individuals are registered with UNHCR in Rwanda as of 28 February 2023. Mainly including people from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (59.60%) and Burundi (39.87%).

**91%** of refugees in Rwanda live in refugee camps

**962** refugees have departed for resettlement while 19 departed through complementary pathways in 2023

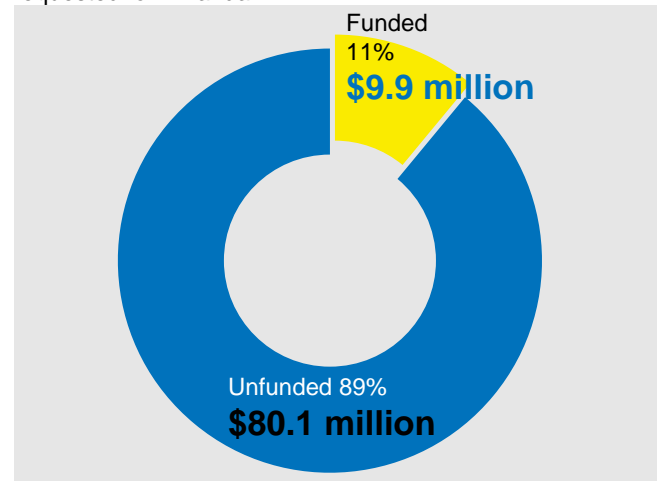


Kigeme refugee women's cooperative "Igisubizo" get together to weave baskets to sell and support their families

## FUNDING (AS OF 28 FEBRUARY)

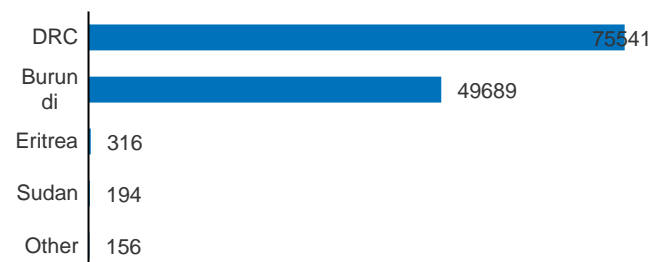
**USD 90.5 million**

requested for Rwanda



## CURRENT POPULATION OF CONCERN

### Countries of Origin



Source: © UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency

## Operational Context & Partners

The Government of Rwanda (GoR), through 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 and ministries.

## Achievements



### PROTECTION

- Due to fighting in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), since November 2022, asylum seekers from the DRC began fleeing to Rwanda's western province. As of the end of February 2023, 5,500 Congolese individuals had fled to Rwanda. In previous months, 1,774 asylum seekers were transferred to Mahama refugee camp and as of February 3,726 asylum seekers were hosted in Nkamira Site. UNHCR continues to work with the Government of Rwanda and partners to provide food and non-food related items to all new asylum seekers and coordinate the emergency response. UNHCR also continues to identify gaps in the response and advocate for more resources or contributions to meet the needs of the new arrivals.
- UNHCR works with psychosocial partner, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to identify and manage refugee mental health conditions across all camps in Rwanda. UNHCR and HI work with mental health professionals (psychiatric nurses or psychiatrists) to address complex refugee mental health conditions, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and depression. In February, 1,058 refugees with mental health (790) and psychosocial (268) conditions, in Mahama and Nyabiheke camps respectively, received psychosocial support through healing groups and individual psychotherapy.
- As part of ongoing efforts to improve birth registration for refugee children and families, as well as prevention of statelessness, in February, UNHCR and the Government of Rwanda registered 18 newborn babies in refugee camps in Rwanda.
- The Government of Rwanda has been issuing refugee IDs to refugees since 2007 and reaffirmed their commitment through a pledge at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019 to issue refugee ID cards to all refugees in Rwanda. In February, the Government through the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), the National Identification Agency (NIDA), the Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration (DGIE), together with UNHCR, provided 87 proof of registration documents and issued 15 ID cards to refugees in Rwanda. Holding a refugee ID card facilitates refugee access to assistance and services, as well as access to employment opportunities.
- UNHCR and child protection partners in camps are committed to ensuring that children, adolescents, and youth are protected from harm and that their rights are upheld. During February 2023, 14 child protection cases (11 neglects, one child with severe medical conditions, and two unaccompanied children) were documented and supported. 25 child protection-related cases were also closed once

the protection needs of children were met, bringing the remaining 274 cases of children at risk that continue to receive support. As part of refugee protection case management, Best Interest Procedures (BIP), which includes child protection case management, as well as Best Interest Determination (BID), continue to be conducted for children at risk. During February, 44 BIPs were conducted for refugee children in Rwanda.

- Gender based violence incidents among refugee populations continued to be reported. UNHCR and partners in refugee camps and urban settings are providing support to affected persons. In February, UNHCR and GBV partner in camps recorded 35 new GBV incidents, that included rape, sexual assault, physical assault, psychological and emotional abuse incidents. All survivors were provided with appropriate multi-sectoral support, including psychosocial counselling, medical assistance, material support, and referrals to Police and/or Rwanda Investigation Bureau, as well as legal services.



*Congolese asylum seekers fleeing unrest in Northern DRC and being hosted in the Nkamira Site. [DRC Influx Update](#)*

## EDUCATION



Over 14,500 refugee and host community primary school students in 15 refugee-hosting schools continued to use digital devices to access educational resources such as science and math throughout the month of February. Over 770 teachers in the same schools, who have been trained on digital literacy, continued to use digital devices and platforms to prepare lesson plans, deliver lessons, and assess performance of students. Since 2021, UNHCR has been partnering with ProFuturo Foundation to improve quality of education through utilization of online and offline educational resources.

- In response to the growing number of school age children in Nkamira, UNHCR, UNICEF and World Vision International conducted a needs assessment for the provision of rapid education (Education in Emergencies) in Nkamira. Education in Emergencies provides children in emergency situations the opportunity to access content that they may have already missed, allowing them to catch-up, and for older children, be able to access skills-based technical and vocational education. Currently preliminary

discussions with selected school-age children and parents indicate that education is among their priority needs. The joint assessment has so far identified education activities to support children in Nkamira in the immediate term, such as setting up temporary learning spaces/classrooms, identification and training of education facilitators, and distribution of educational materials. As of the end of February, data shows that there are over 1,700 school-age children (3-17 years old) in Nkamira Site and an additional 779 children in Mahama camp.

- Children with disabilities face difficulties in learning and accessing quality specialized education, making them vulnerable to stigma, discrimination and in instances, segregation. These difficulties are exacerbated for children living in refugee camps. To combat this, UNHCR continues to work with partners to make specialized learning accessible to refugee children with disabilities. In Nyabiheke refugee camp, for example, UNHCR paid for nine refugee children with different disabilities to attend specialized schools for two terms.



## HEALTH

- UNHCR is managing eight camp-based health care facilities across refugee camps in Rwanda in cooperation with Save the Children and AHA at the ETM. These include four health centres (two in Mahama, one in Kiziba, one in Nyabiheke) and four health posts (one in Mugombwa, Kigeme, Nkamira and Gashora). Health centres in camps offer broad health care services, including laboratory tests and vaccinations, while health posts offer primary health care services. In addition, some services including the provision of TB and HIV medications are provided through district government health centres.
- UNHCR supports access to health care services for all refugees in Rwanda. In February, 22,609 primary consultations were conducted in all camp-based health facilities, averaging 44 consultations per day per clinician. The local Rwanda host community also have access to these health facilities. The health centres in camps also supported the delivery of 293 new-born babies with 97.4% of the births attended by skilled health workers. UNHCR also continued to refer refugees in need of emergency, life-saving care to district level hospitals. In total, 456 health cases were referred for secondary and tertiary level care and management in February.
- Access to contraception is a priority within the refugee response and UNHCR continues to work with health partners in camps to provide access to contraceptive services to reduce the risk of teenage or adolescent pregnancies, and the likelihood of maternal, new-born and child deaths. One such location is the Mahama refugee camp, where UNHCR through the health partners ALIGHT and Save the Children, provided 9,243 women of reproductive age with contraceptives in February.



## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

- Eligible refugees in all camps receive cash assistance for food from the World Food Program (WFP). As of the end of February 2023, 94 percent of the total refugees living in the camps are under targeted food assistance. As per agreed targeting criteria, 87 percent of refugees in Rwanda (99,017 refugees) are classified as Highly Vulnerable and receive full (100%) food assistance, while 6 percent refugees comprising of 7,083 refugees are currently classified as Moderately Vulnerable and receive 50 percent

of the value of full food assistance. And 7 percent comprising 7,347 refugees are classified as Least Vulnerable and do not receive any cash for food assistance.

- In February, WFP increased the value of food assistance for refugees in all five camps across Rwanda by 43 percent to help them meet their basic needs. From February 2023, refugees classified as highly vulnerable, will receive RWF 10,000 per person per month (increased from RWF 7,000). Refugees classified as moderately vulnerable, will receive RWF 5,000 per person per month (instead of RWF 3,500). These are reduced rations from the adjusted full entitlements of RWF 13,600 for highly and RWF 7,800 for moderately vulnerable refugees due to WFP's funding shortfalls.
- 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. In the beginning of February, UNHCR and partners identified 17 Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and 106 Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) cases and admitted these cases to nutrition programs for treatments in their respective refugee hosting sites. These new additions brought the total SAM cases to 57 and the total MAM cases to 272. Additionally, UNHCR, through the respective health partners in refugee camps, supported 1,173 HIV/AIDS patients on treatment with nutritional feeding programmes.



#### WATER AND SANITATION

- UNHCR, in partnership with World Vision, provides water to refugees living in all refugee camps, reception, and transit centres across Rwanda, as well as the newly established Nkamira Site. In February 2023, water supply averaged 21.4 litres per person per day throughout the refugee camps in Rwanda. Camps such as Nyabiheke and Kigeme continue to provide less than 17 litres of water supply, which is below the minimum water supply of 20 litres per person per day. For Nyabiheke camp, the poor mechanical condition of the boreholes, alongside flooding at the treatments site, has significantly impacted the water supply. The pump is currently under repair to rectify the disruptions. In Kigeme, Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) water supply continues to experience chronic production issues at the treatment plant. Investment is required to enhance production including water treatment.
- To curb the impact of poor hygiene related diseases and stave off COVID-19 in all refugee camps and transit locations, UNHCR through WASH partners provided a total of 2,147 litres of liquid soap, for handwashing and other cleaning practices across all camps in Rwanda. Furthermore, 2,267 cubic meters of sludge from latrines' septic tanks and 854 m3 of garbage was collected from all refugee camps and disposed of to the respective waste dumpsites, in an effort to keep refugee camps clean.



#### SHELTER AND NFIS

- In February, a total 15 shelters were rehabilitated across all the camps, this includes: two in Kigeme camp, three shelters in Kiziba, and ten shelters in Mugombwa. In addition, UNHCR also transformed the roofing elements for 14 shelters in Kiziba camp from old iron sheets to new iron sheet roofing, bringing the total number of refugee shelters rehabilitated through roofing works this year to 36. The

construction of three terraces was also undertaken and completed to protect shelters on high-risk areas in Mugombwa and Kigeme camps, bringing the total construction for 2023 to 19 terraces.

- In response to the influx of asylum seekers from DRC, in February, UNHCR constructed 21 communal hangars to accommodate the growing population hosted at the Nkamira Site, bringing the total of communal hangars at the centre to 30 hangars. Each hangar has a capacity to accommodate 100 individuals. Additionally, construction works of a kitchen and dishwashing shed to allow preparation of meals within the site, as well as a guard house for the site, were also completed within the site.



#### ACCESS TO ENERGY

- UNHCR continued to provide gas for clean cooking/ energy in kind for refugees in Mugombwa and Mahama refugee camps in the form of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). LPG cookers emit 50 times fewer pollutants than cooking stoves fuelled by biomass such as mud stoves, making them the ideal cooking energy for refugees in camps. In February 2023, approximately 17,737 cylinders of gas equalling 76,422 Kgs were distributed to refugees in Mugombwa camp.
- Reports indicate that ethanol fuelled cooking has clean combustion with negligible emissions, safe to be used indoors as it eliminates threats of Household Air Pollution, and through the instant cooking heat available after ignition, it cuts the preheating time during cooking. In February, UNHCR continued to assess piloting the ethanol cooking business model in refugee camps, after its official launch in August in Rwanda.
- In 2018, UNHCR introduced a cash assistance programme to ensure refugees receive monthly cash payments that enable them to have the financial resources to purchase gas for cooking and other energy needs. In February 2023, UNHCR Rwanda supported 43,653 refugees in Kiziba, Nyabiheke, and Kigeme camps with cash assistance / cash for energy, while 548 refugees in the ETM centre also received cash assistance. This programme also contributes to improving environmental sustainability by reducing the need for firewood. To note that Mahama and Mugombwa camps are receiving energy in kind.
- In February, UNHCR, alongside implementing partners, distributed and facilitated the planting of fruit and forest trees in refugee camps and around hosting communities, to protect, reverse the impact of deforestation and environmental degradation. For example, in Mugombwa camp and Nyanza transit centre, 831 Alnus and Eucalyptus trees and 128 Grevilia trees were planted.



#### COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

- At the ETM, UNHCR, in coordination with World Vision International, supported 139 refugees through livelihood activities including ICT, tailoring, and hair dressing courses, while 134 refugees also benefited from language courses where they learn English, French and Kinyarwanda in February.

- As of the end of February, 581 Students (including 280 refugees and 301 host community members) supported by GIZ have completed a four-month technical training in Government Technical and Vocational and Education Training (TVET) schools. Additional to the TVET, the students also accessed life skills and entrepreneurship skills trainings.
- There is a favourable policy framework in Rwanda for financial inclusion of refugees. Refugees are included in the national financial inclusion strategy by the central bank, and refugee IDs are recognized by financial service providers to open a bank account or register sim cards for mobile money services. Based on the Results Monitoring Survey (RMS) findings, 87% of the refugees have an account at a bank or other financial institution or mobile money service provider. As a result of these opportunities, in 2022, about 1,134 refugees received loans, and 2,236 refugees received cash grants to start / grow their businesses, with the support of the business skills training and business advisory services from UNHCR and partners.
- Umutanguha Microfinance Limited, a local microfinance service provider based in Rwanda, that supports refugees with financial education trainings to capacitate and empower them on financial literacy. In February, Umutanguha Microfinance Limited in Mahama camp supported four refugees with loans to start their businesses, while 84 new accounts were opened for refugees, and 100 refugees were provided with financial education training.



#### **DURABLE SOLUTIONS**

- For the year 2023, UNHCR Rwanda has received resettlement quota for 4,313 individuals to USA, Norway, Canada, France, and Finland. By the end of February 2023, 955 individuals have been submitted to resettlement countries, including USA, Norway, Canada, and France. So far in 2023, 962 refugees have departed to USA, Norway, Canada, Denmark, Netherlands, Australia, and New Zealand through resettlement and 19 refugees departed through complementary pathways.
- In order to empower refugees with information that will contribute to their adjustment post resettlement, UNHCR works with the Resettlement Support Centre (RSC) Africa to conducted cultural orientation. In February, 423 refugees in Kirehe and Kigali, while 623 refugees from Kirehe and Karongi took part in such trainings.
- In 2023, UNHCR has so far supported the reception of 333 Rwandan returnees and their transportation to their respective areas of origin. The individuals were assisted with a three-month food package from WFP, while UNHCR supported their enrolment in one year health insurance and distributed 20 percent of a cash grant to help reintegration into their communities (the remaining 80 percent of the grant will be paid after confirmation by local authorities of their reintegration).

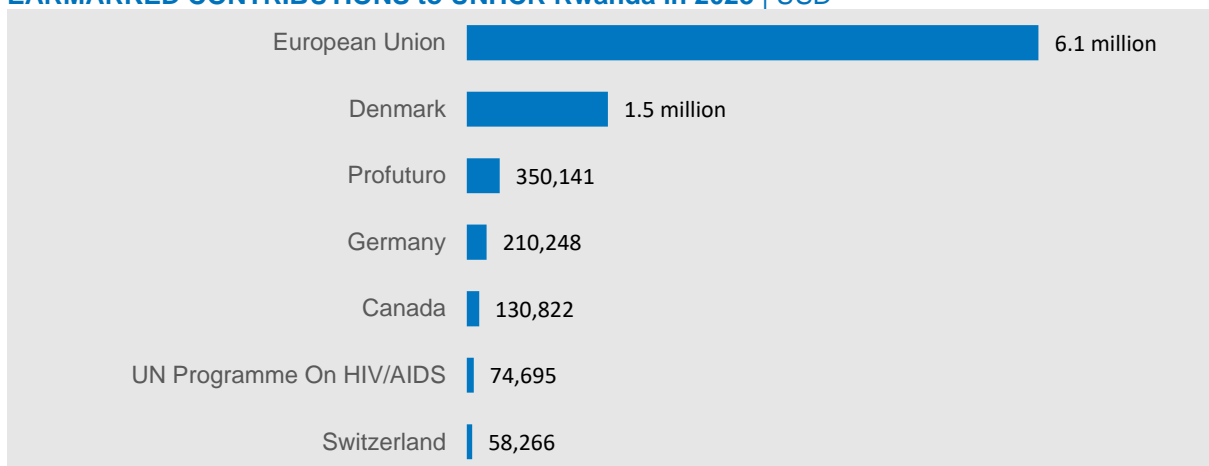


*Bartvie (7) departs with his family from the Kiziba refugee camp for a resettlement interview for Norway in Kigali*

# 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

Canada 3.9 million | Norway | Private donors

## UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions.

Sweden 77.6 million | Norway 63.1 million | Denmark 35.6 million | Netherlands 34.1 million | Germany 23.1 million | Switzerland 18.9 million | Belgium 11.9 million | Ireland 11.9 million

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