

# Rwanda

## AT A GLANCE

### Main Objectives and Activities

Assist the Government of Rwanda in adopting rights-based refugee legislation and procedures, in accordance with recognised international and regional laws and practices; ensure the welfare of refugees and asylum-seekers and search for durable solutions; continue to work with others to strengthen Rwanda's capacity to receive and reintegrate returnees, and promote a climate of unity and reconciliation conducive to peace and stability both in Rwanda and in the region; contribute to the economic, social and political empowerment of Rwandan women.

### Impact

- UNHCR's programme contributed to the return and reintegration of more than 26,000 Rwandans in 2000.
- Through the Rwandan Women's Initiative, various projects were implemented to build capacity and ensure the sustainable return of Rwandan women. Some 5,000 women throughout the country benefited.
- In collaboration with the National Commission on Unity and Reconciliation, UNHCR laid the foundations for the implementation of the Imagine Co-existence Initiative.
- Congolese (DRC) refugees were successfully registered in Gihembe (Byumba) and Kiziba (Kibuye) camps, reducing the refugee population figures by 13 per cent.
- The participation of refugees in educational activities increased by ten per cent; the gap narrowed between



Persons of Concern				
Main Refugee Origin/Type of Population	Total in Country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent Female	Per cent under 18
DRC (Refugees)	28,500	28,500	54	62
Rwanda (Returnees) <sup>1</sup>	26,300	26,200	-	-
Burundi (Refugees)	1,500	1,500	48	48
DRC (Asylum-seekers)	1,100	1,100	-	-
Burundi (Asylum-seekers)	580	580	-	-

<sup>1</sup>Figures reflect returnees in 2000 only. Since 1994, over 3.2 million Rwandans have returned.

Income and Expenditure (USD)				
Annual Programme Budget				
Revised Budget	Income from Contributions <sup>1</sup>	Other Funds Available <sup>2</sup>	Total Funds Available	Total Expenditure
12,219,683	2,083,148	8,003,837	10,086,985	10,074,950

<sup>1</sup>Includes income from contributions earmarked at the country level.

<sup>2</sup>Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.



boys' and girls' school attendance (improved gender equality).

- UNHCR contributed to the translation and distribution of the draft refugee legislation.

## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### The Context

In 2000, Rwanda remained mostly at peace, despite being surrounded by conflict. During the year, there were major changes in the Government, including the departure of the Speaker of the House, the resignation of the Prime Minister and the subsequent resignation of the President. The Vice President, Paul Kagame, assumed the Presidency in April, since when relative political stability has prevailed. However, a fresh wave of violence in southeastern Rwanda during the second half of the year prompted an outflow of roughly 14,000 Rwandan refugees into neighbouring countries, mainly Tanzania (some 7,400).

The return and reintegration of Rwandan refugees continued in 2000, with more than 26,000 returning from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi, the Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Uganda and elsewhere in Africa. UNHCR provided transportation, medical assistance upon arrival, non-food items and a three-month food ration (supplied by WFP) for all returnees. As UNHCR's large-scale reintegration programme was concluded in December 1999, UNHCR was not involved in reintegration activities, housing and related infrastructure in 2000. However, the Office continued to actively encourage development-oriented agencies to implement programmes in Rwanda.

Returnees generally went back to their *communes* of origin and were reintegrated by the local authorities. The Government's policy of *Imidugudu* or "villagisation" remained an issue of concern. This policy of settling people in clusters of communities is not new to Rwanda; it was practised to a limited extent by the colonial governors and was adopted by the first post-independence government, resulting in the relocation of thousands of Tutsi families to eastern prefectures. In 1993, it was a component of the Arusha peace agreements, relating to the return of the Rwandan Tutsi diaspora and refugees in neighbouring countries. In 1996, it became the Government's official policy, but did not receive much international attention until it was applied to the displaced in the north-western prefectures of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri. Villagisation continues to be the Government's stated policy - for security, social and economic reasons. The Government has made progress in making its application more respectful of individual rights.

UNHCR's direct counterpart in most of its refugee-related activities, the Ministry of Social Affairs, which is answerable to the Ministry of Local Government,

underwent several changes. One direct consequence of this was that the draft refugee legislation, which was in its final form, was not presented to Parliament as planned. Another consequence was the absence of a stable or consistent Government counterpart responsible for refugee matters.

### Constraints

Rwanda is no longer able to solicit the level of support it received in the aftermath of the genocide, despite huge needs in the sectors of shelter and other infrastructure. Notwithstanding UNHCR's extensive shelter programme over the past few years, the lack of individual housing continues to be a serious problem in



Rwanda. Some 370,000 families, many of them returnees, still live under plastic sheeting and banana leaves, while a sizeable number of families are illegally occupying (private and public) property. Development-oriented agencies have yet to tackle these problems. As a result, the majority of Rwandans, returnees included, face poverty and despair. If not addressed, this situation could quickly deteriorate and lead to renewed conflict. Monitoring reports indicate that some returnees returned to countries of asylum, on account of the economic hardship they faced upon their return to Rwanda. Today, returnees are more vulnerable and have fewer resources or opportunities than their predecessors in previous years, having spent more than six years merely surviving in the forests of the DRC.



Security throughout the country was generally satisfactory, comparatively speaking, with only a few isolated reports of insurgency. In the capital, crime was on the increase, with burglaries, car break-ins and muggings frequently reported. The UN continued to impose security restrictions in certain areas of Rwanda, notably the west and north-west, including compulsory armed escorts, which remain in effect today. This constrained UNHCR's ability to move about freely in the north-western prefectures and the Office's ability to monitor returns. For the most part, however, UNHCR enjoyed unrestricted access everywhere else in the country.

### Funding

As a result of financial constraints and a prioritisation exercise, which occurred in November, assistance to the refugees was reduced to life-saving activities. UNHCR could not implement activities to improve latrines in the camps and to rehabilitate shelters belonging to vulnerable refugees. Furthermore, UNHCR was unable to provide school uniforms and materials to some refugee children. The planned distribution of an enhanced shelter package for the returnees could not take place.

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT

### Protection and Solutions

Returnee monitoring was limited due to the small number of protection staff. Some monitoring was delegated to national staff and, in Gisenyi, to a local human rights NGO. UNHCR conducted surveys of returnees to ascertain the level of reintegration achieved. The results showed that, in general, returnees did not face major problems. People almost always went back to their *commune* of origin or to their small plot of land; the majority received identity documents and children went to school whenever it was accessible and affordable. UNHCR co-operated closely with other agencies with regard to Rwandan refugee children in the process of repatriating from the DRC. UNHCR received and registered separated children repatriating with foster families or relatives, as well as unaccompanied minors between the ages of 16 and 18 who chose to repatriate alone. All other unaccompanied minors were transferred to other agencies' offices in the DRC for family tracing. In instances where family members could not be traced, the children were transferred to a centre in Rwanda, where they were accepted on a long-term basis. Some were placed in foster families in the area.

UNHCR implemented several activities aimed at developing the capacity of local partners in order to encourage sustainable return and contribute to national reconstruction and peace-building. These included: the Rwandan Women's Initiative (designed to enhance active and equal participation of women in economic, social and cultural affairs and to promote women's rights); the National Commission on Unity and Reconciliation (designed to bring conflicting communities back together); and the judiciary (overwhelmed with the consequences of the 1994 genocide).

The Rwandan Women's Initiative included literacy, vocational training and income-generating activities. The projects were implemented in conjunction with the Ministry of Gender and Women's Development (MIGEPROFE) in collaboration with national gender-oriented NGOs. All these projects were multi-faceted: women were helped to interact with each other, develop community cohesiveness, overcome bias and prejudice and work towards reconciliation, in addition to learning new skills and increasing their income.

UNHCR provided financial, logistical and technical support to the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. The Commission plays a crucial role in reuniting Rwandan society and implements numerous initiatives at the grassroots level. In collaboration with the Commission, UNHCR began in 2000 to lay the foundations for the Imagine Co-Existence Initiative in response to the complex problem of reconciling divided communities following conflict and mass violence. The initiative focuses on joint activities for members of conflicting groups; these are designed to overcome deeply rooted mistrust. The research component of this initiative, which includes input from a sister pilot project in Bosnia and Herzegovina, will provide important policy and practice guidelines for the work of UNHCR and its partners. Implementation is expected to start in 2001.

Following considerable planning and awareness-raising among Government officials, implementing partners and the refugee population, a registration exercise was successfully conducted for the 28,500 Congolese (DRC) refugees in Gihembe (Byumba) and Kiziba (Kibuye) camps. As a result, the refugee population figures were reduced by 13 per cent. It is expected that, once the situation in the eastern DRC improves, the vast majority of the Congolese refugees will repatriate. There continued to be serious problems involving violence against women and girls, including rape and forced marriage. Most cases were not formally reported. The problem remains difficult to tackle. A preliminary evaluation was conducted in October and November on the situation facing unaccompanied

minors in Kiziba camp. A similar evaluation will be carried out for Gihembe camp. In both camps, the majority of unaccompanied minors were in foster care, although some households headed by children (usually siblings) received special support.

The 1,500 Burundi refugees in Kigeme camp (Gikongoro) require permanent monitoring to prevent *refoulement*, as they are largely unwelcome in Rwanda. As voluntary repatriation is currently not an option, resettlement and local integration opportunities are being pursued. Discussions were held with the Government on the possibility of local integration. Some refugees were accepted for resettlement, but have not yet been given exit visas by the Government. Through women's committees and other representatives, UNHCR continued community awareness-raising activities to empower women and increase their influence on camp decisions. Women were regularly consulted regarding camp management and organisation and participated in the distribution of assistance.

In the absence of state procedures, UNHCR continued to provide recognition to some 2,000 urban refugees and asylum-seekers. The majority are from Burundi and the DRC; the remainder from Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, the Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. The level of malnutrition and health problems among these refugees was notably higher than that of camp-based refugees and there were more households headed by women. UNHCR provided food, health care, primary (and some secondary) education and vocational training. Some refugees were accepted for resettlement; however, delays were experienced in receiving exit visas from the Government.

In co-operation with the faculty of law of the University of Rwanda in Butare, the Office supported a follow-up meeting to the intensive training conducted in 1999 on the application of the 1951 and OAU Conventions on refugees. This meeting was attended by academics and graduates in law from six universities in five countries (Rwanda, Burundi, the DRC, Tanzania and Uganda). Through the Ministry of Justice, UNHCR also supported a training programme for paralegals who assist prisoners accused of genocide.

## Activities and Assistance

**Community Services:** The community services programme covered an extensive array of vocational training and literacy activities in all camps. These activities were aimed at young adults beyond school age, as well as other adults in need of life skills and small-scale income-generating opportunities while in the camps. Additional activities included the formation of

women's groups and the prevention of gender-based violence through awareness-raising. The prevention of HIV/AIDS was a major component of the community services programme. Through the Rwandan Women's Initiative, UNHCR supported the sensitisation and mobilisation of the community for the promotion of young girls' education. Training was undertaken in the areas of literacy, tailoring, poultry-keeping, pottery and crop production. Some 422 girls and young women attended literacy training. Several capacity-building workshops were organised to enable women to develop skills needed for more effective participation at all levels of decision-making in the public and private spheres.

**Crop Production:** Due to the lack of land, refugees undertook only small gardening activities around their shelters inside the camps. UNHCR distributed tools (hoes, watering cans and water pumps), seeds and insecticides.

**Domestic Needs/Household Support:** Non-food items, such as blankets, plastic sheeting, mats, clothes, soap and firewood were distributed to Congolese refugees in Gihembe and Kiziba camps and to Burundi refugees in Kigeme camp, as well as to urban refugees. The amount distributed varied according to family size. Soap was distributed on a monthly basis. One kilo of firewood per person was distributed on a weekly basis. Non-food items were also distributed to returnees upon arrival. Firewood was distributed to returnees staying at transit centres for more than a week.

**Education:** Primary and secondary education was provided to children in the camps. Literacy classes were offered for adults, as well as some vocational skills training. Awareness-raising campaigns were undertaken to raise school attendance. Since 1998, a steady general increase in attendance of educational programmes has been noted, with improved gender equality, and an increase in demand for post-secondary education assistance. In 2000, roughly 3,400 girls and 3,800 boys went to primary school, while 260 girls and 450 boys went to secondary school. Nine female and ten male students were enrolled in university. Eleven students were awarded DAFI scholarships.

**Food:** In addition to the food ration provided to refugees by WFP, supplementary food was provided to vulnerable persons. WFP provided a three-month food ration to returnees at transit centres in Cyangugu and Gisenyi.

**Forestry:** The presence of refugee settlements increases soil degradation and erosion, and deforestation in Rwanda. Refugees depend on firewood to meet their domestic energy needs and have made increasing demands on limited natural resources. In collaboration

with a national NGO, UNHCR addressed these concerns through activities to combat soil degradation and erosion, reforestation activities and the provision of fuel-efficient stoves. Two hectares of land were terraced around Gihembe camp. Congolese refugees and local communities in the Byumba and Kibuye prefectures were trained in the development of tree nurseries and in the construction of improved stoves. Some 185,720 trees and fruit trees of various species were planted and 458 improved stoves were built. An environmental specialist undertook a mission to Rwanda in order to assist UNHCR in identifying priority needs in this sector.

**Health/Nutrition:** Both therapeutic and supplementary nutrition services were provided in all camps and a nutritional evaluation of refugees in Rwanda was conducted, the results of which will be available in 2001. Some 120 children under five were admitted to the therapeutic feeding centre, while 445 expectant and 500 breastfeeding mothers benefited from the supplementary feeding programme. Some 5,620 refugees were treated in health centres in the camps and 700 patients were referred to national hospitals for specialist intervention. Less than 100 refugees living in the camps decided to be tested for HIV/AIDS. Some 577 cases of sexually transmitted diseases were recorded. Condoms were freely distributed. Health education and practical demonstration sessions were regularly conducted. Programmes concentrated on common and preventable health problems. Topics covered included: personal and environmental hygiene; the prevention of diarrhoea; vaccination; sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS); and the proper use of sanitation facilities and food. Medical assistance was provided to the returnees and unaccompanied minors in the Nyagatare West and Nkamira transit centres. Serious medical cases were referred to the main hospital.

**Income Generation:** Basic tools and materials were distributed to refugee associations undertaking income-generating activities inside the camps. The associations in Gihembe and Kiziba camps were comprised of 213 refugees, of whom 87 women were trained in carpentry, sewing, soap-making and hairdressing. Due to financial constraints, this assistance was stopped but most of the refugees continued on their own. Those refugees who could not pay for materials closed their shops. Under the Rwandan Women's Initiative, various income-generating activities were funded, including communal credit schemes, livestock credit schemes, small business assistance and crop production. An assessment of women's communal funds was undertaken by MIGEPROFE, the results of which are awaited. Some 21 representatives of

various implementing partners of the Rwandan Women's Initiative attended a five-day workshop on micro-finance management organised by UNHCR.

**Legal Assistance:** In the absence of national status determination procedures, UNHCR issued identity documents to recognised asylum-seekers. The Office conducted various seminars to improve the justice system in Rwanda. Through the Rwandan Women's Initiative, information campaigns against all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, were organised and broadcast on Rwandan radio. Counselling and legal assistance were provided to women in cases involving rape, divorce, inheritance and property rights.

**Livestock:** In Gihembe camp, refugees bred cattle inside the camp. UNHCR provided vaccine for 188 cows.

**Operational Support (to Agencies):** Financial, material and technical support was provided to all implementing partners. International and national NGOs were trained in programme management. UNHCR procured various materials for use in public information, such as the celebration of Human Rights Day, Family Day, Day of the African Child and International Women's Day in Rwanda.

**Sanitation:** Due to funding shortfalls, the construction in the camps of 445 latrines, 72 baths and 80 garbage pits was not completed. The shortage of latrines remains a big problem. Only 226 can be used; the remainder have either been filled or demolished. All 226 functioning latrines were cleaned on a daily basis with chlorine and then treated with sodium hypochlorite and insecticides. General cleaning of public areas in the camps was carried out on a regular basis. Education sessions were held with refugees on the proper use of public facilities, personal hygiene, infectious diseases and on the health risks posed by insects, such as flies, mosquitoes and fleas. In the transit centres, sanitation facilities, such as latrines, showers and garbage pits, were disinfected on a daily basis.

**Shelter/Other Infrastructure:** Some 606 new refugee shelters were constructed, 60 houses were rebuilt, and 4,700 shelters were rehabilitated in Gihembe camp. Maintenance of the camp infrastructure, including cooking areas (shared by several families), public bathing facilities, and food distribution centres, took place throughout the year in Gihembe, Kiziba and Kigeme camps. New offices for implementing partners were built, as were extensions for health centres, refugee shelters and kitchens. The Nyagatare West and Nkamira transit centres were enlarged and improved. All facilities (health centres, dormitories, kitchens, latrines, showers, distribution centres) were rehabilitated in order to

accommodate returnees for 48 hours before onward transportation to their *communes* of origin. A health centre and two schools were completed (they had been awaiting the completion of water supply systems).

**Transport/Logistics:** Firewood, food and non-food items such as plastic sheeting, mats, blankets, jerrycans and soap were transported and distributed to refugees in Gihembe, Kiziba and Kigeme camps on a regular basis. An implementing partner maintained and managed the UNHCR light vehicle and heavy-duty vehicle fleet. Returnees arriving from three different border entry points (Gisenyi, Cyangugu and Kibungo) were assisted with transportation to 11 prefectures. They were either transported directly by UNHCR or given an allowance for transport from the transit centres to their *communes* of origin. UNHCR maintained direct implementation and responsibility for the transport of relief items from the airport to warehouses in Kigali and other warehouses throughout the country. Under supervision by UNHCR, an implementing partner managed these warehouses and all loading and unloading operations.

**Water:** An adequate supply of clean potable water was provided through a piped water system to Gihembe and Kiziba camps. An average of 12-20 litres of potable water per refugee per day was made available. In addition, UNHCR delivered water to Gihembe camp on a daily basis by tanker to meet the standard level of water distribution. The water systems in the transit centres (Nyagatare West and Nkamira) were maintained on a regular basis.



## ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

### Management

By the end of the year, there were 82 staff (19 internationals, eight UNVs and 55 nationals) working in Rwanda. UNHCR maintained its main office in Kigali, supported by offices in Byumba, Kibuye and Gikongoro (managing three refugee camps respectively) and offices in Cyangugu, Gisenyi and Kibungo (providing reception and co-ordination of repatriation movements from Burundi, the DRC, Tanzania and Uganda). UNHCR shared office premises and warehouses with WFP in Cyangugu and Kibuye, resulting in savings for both organisations. UNHCR also shared the UN common office in Gisenyi. The Office participated in the security management team and the weekly heads of agencies meetings. The Office was regularly and actively involved in both the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/ United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) processes, as well as in thematic working groups. Regular meetings were held monthly between pairs of offices Gisenyi-Goma, Cyangugu-Bukavu, Kibungo-Ngara and Kibungo-Mbarara. As a result, repatriation movements were orderly and well planned. UNHCR also provided administrative and logistical support to its offices in the eastern DRC.

### Working with Others

In 2000, UNHCR worked with 19 implementing partners, including six national and seven international NGOs. The Office continued to be involved in the PARinAC process and organised the selection of national NGO focal points. PARinAC members participated in the contingency planning workshop. Training on emergency preparedness was held for government counterparts, implementing partners and other UN agencies.

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT

A further phase of UNHCR's programme in Rwanda is only feasible if other organisations help to make the transition from relief to development and funds are made available for that purpose. Although UNHCR withdrew from reintegration activities at the end of 1999, the Office continues to stress that failure to bridge the gap between relief and development in a timely manner could not only

jeopardise gains made thus far, but also expose the mass of the population to continued economic deprivation and consequent social unrest. This does not mean that UNHCR should remain in Rwanda indefinitely; however, it should try to avoid the negative consequences of a premature phase out. The Office continues to highlight the most pressing transitional needs and to encourage the identification of actors able to shore up the continuum from relief to development. In this regard, the UN Country Team has agreed to make transitional issues one of the four priorities for Rwanda in the UNDAF process (the other three being poverty alleviation, good governance and HIV/AIDS).

### Offices

**Kigali**  
Byumba  
Cyangugu  
Gikongoro  
Gisenyi  
Kibungo  
Kibuye

### Partners

#### Government Agencies

Joint Commission for Repatriation and Reintegration of Rwandan Refugees  
Ministry of Gender and Women in Development  
Ministry of Local Administration and Social Affairs  
National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

#### NGOs

African Humanitarian Action  
American Refugee Committee  
*Club mamans sportives*  
*Duterimbere*  
Forum for African Women Educationalist  
*Haguruka*  
Jesuit Refugee Services  
*Ligue rwandaise pour la promotion et la défense des droits de l'homme*  
Lutheran World Federation  
Norwegian People's Aid  
Population Services International  
*Profemmes*  
Rwanda Rural Development Initiative

#### Other

*Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit*  
United Nations Volunteers

Financial Report (USD)				
Expenditure Breakdown	Current Year's Projects		Prior Years' Projects	
		notes		notes
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	1,203,195		13,452	
Community Services	142,562		507,010	
Crop Production	4,544		11,414	
Domestic Needs / Household Support	275,199		122,149	
Education	115,311		855,293	
Food	13,164		2,447	
Forestry	0		63,392	
Health / Nutrition	347,189		614,696	
Income Generation	126,029		184,413	
Legal Assistance	94,347		456,203	
Livestock	164		45,602	
Operational Support (to Agencies)	353,080		400,323	
Sanitation	191,204		311,370	
Shelter / Other Infrastructure	71,259		556,547	
Transport / Logistics	1,531,290		1,025,190	
Water	41,173		1,906,102	
Instalments with Implementing Partners	2,771,301		(3,124,205)	
<b>Sub-total Operational</b>	<b>7,281,011</b>		<b>3,951,398</b>	
Programme Support	2,178,344		257,137	
<b>Sub-total Disbursements / Deliveries</b>	<b>9,459,355</b>	(3)	<b>4,208,535</b>	(6)
Unliquidated Obligations	615,595	(3)	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,074,950</b>	<b>(1) (3)</b>	<b>4,208,535</b>	

#### Instalments with Implementing Partners

Payments Made	6,817,997		3,686,562	
Reporting Received	4,046,696		6,810,767	
<b>Balance</b>	<b>2,771,301</b>		<b>(3,124,205)</b>	
Outstanding 1 January	0		5,296,606	
Refunded to UNHCR	0		798,852	
Currency Adjustment	0		(23,874)	
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>2,771,301</b>		<b>1,349,675</b>	

#### Unliquidated Obligations

Outstanding 1 January	0		6,925,242	(6)
New Obligations	10,074,950	(1)	0	
Disbursements	9,459,355	(3)	4,208,535	(6)
Cancellations	0		2,376,157	(6)
<b>Outstanding 31 December</b>	<b>615,595</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>340,550</b>	<b>(6)</b>

Figures which cross reference to Accounts:

(1) Annex to Statement 1

(3) Schedule 3

(6) Schedule 6