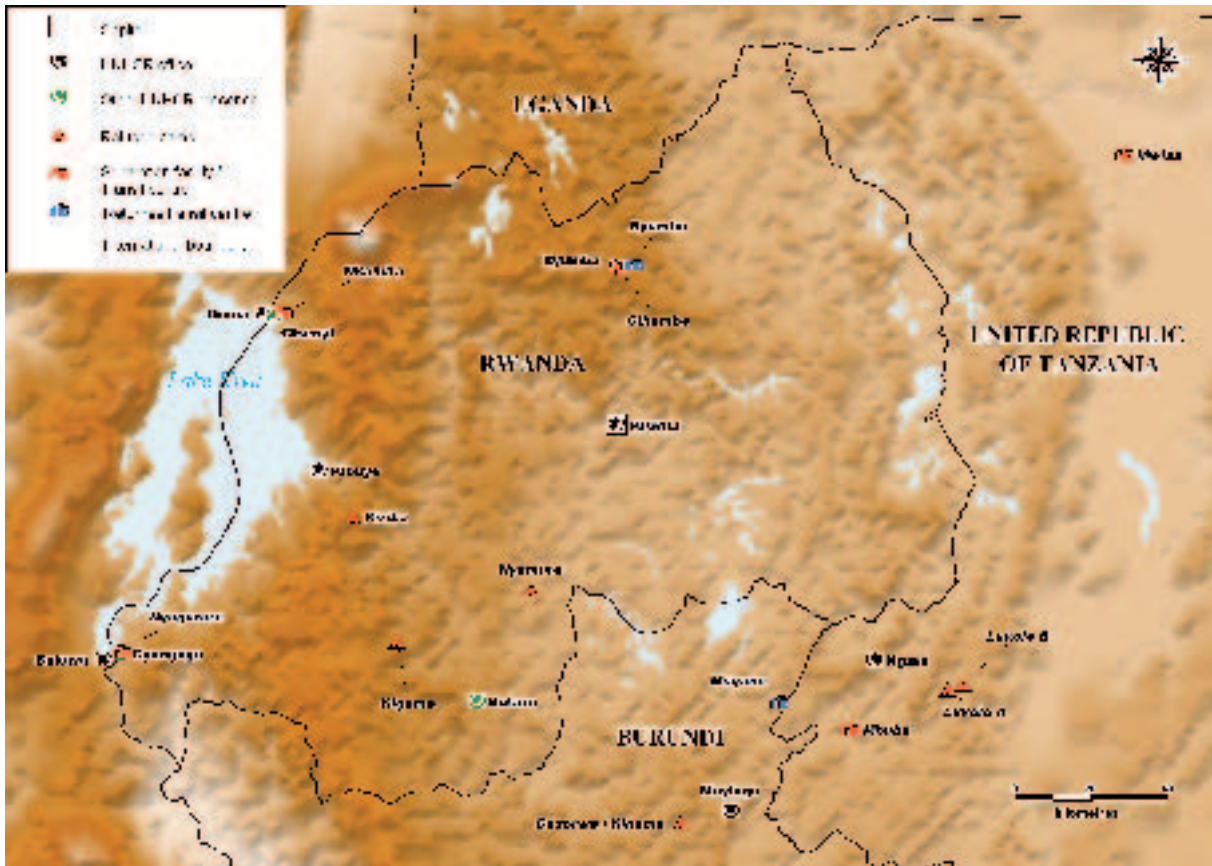


Rwanda



Main objectives

Promote the voluntary repatriation of approximately 80,000 Rwandan refugees by setting up appropriate legal frameworks, such as Tripartite Agreements; provide training and financial support to the newly-constituted Rwandan National Council for Refugees (NCR), which was due to take over core functions from UNHCR, including refugee status determination (RSD), in the first quarter of 2004; assist the Government with the provision of protection and material assistance to the refugee groups hosted by Rwanda and continue to look for durable solutions to their problems; provide adequate shelter for returnees; raise awareness of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and exploitation; conduct nationwide re-registration of all refugees in the country; prepare for the return of Congolese refugees to their country and facilitate repatriation of Congolese refugees to areas deemed to be safe; continue to promote and organize resettlement as a durable solution for Burundian and urban refugees.

Impact

- The needs of refugees and asylum-seekers for protection and basic assistance were met and returnees' rights were monitored.
- UNHCR handed over registration procedures to the Government.
- In an effort to mitigate environmental damage in areas affected by the presence of refugees, UNHCR re-planted 755 hectares with 1.8 million trees.
- UNHCR assisted almost 13,500 Rwandans to return home in 2004.
- UNHCR built a new refugee camp in Nyamure, Butare province, to provide shelter for new arrivals from Burundi.
- A total of 122 persons were resettled to third countries.

Working environment

The context

The Government of Rwanda assumed ownership of the national asylum system when in January 2004 the newly created NCR was tasked to register asylum-seekers and determine their status. However, in 2004, Rwanda's justice sector saw the most extensive reform undertaken since independence in 1962, with the consequence that the justice system was not operational for 10 months and thus the NCR did not function properly. This also affected the handling of those charged with genocide and awaiting trial under the traditional *Gacaca* court system.

Unity and reconciliation remain touchstones of official Government policy in a still divided country. The dominant discourse among the international community in Rwanda is one of development and progress in line with Rwanda's policies. Improved economic performance has recently reinforced confidence regarding Rwanda's prospects.

Constraints

The greatest constraint to successful implementation of UNHCR's programme in 2004 was the unexpected influx of Congolese refugees in June, August and December, and of Burundian refugees in September and October. Both movements were spurred by uneasy transitions in the neighbouring countries. As a result, over 13,000 new arrivals were registered. All camps were at full capacity and transit centres had to host asylum-seekers. This made it difficult for UNHCR to provide adequate protection and assistance. Furthermore, the construction of shelter and the provision of firewood were restricted by the lack of land coupled with new legislation prohibiting the cutting of trees.

Funding

Funding was sufficient to meet the basic needs of camp-based refugees and to provide limited secondary education. However, important gaps remained, most seriously in the area of reintegration assistance. Although UNHCR distributed a very basic returnee package, pressing long-term needs could not be met.

Persons of concern

Main origin/Type of population	Total in country	Of whom UNHCR assisted	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
DRC (refugees)	45,500	45,500	54	65
DRC (returnees)	10,800	10,800	-	-
Burundi (refugees)	4,700	4,700	50	54
Uganda (returnees)	2,600	2,568	-	-
DRC (asylum-seekers)	2,200	2,200	51	62
Burundi (asylum-seekers)	1,000	1,000	40	51

Income and expenditure (USD) Annual programme budget

Revised budget	Income from contributions ¹	Other funds available ²	Total funds available	Total expenditure
6,829,914	2,142,978	4,560,705	6,703,683	6,703,683

¹ Includes income from contributions restricted at the country level.

² Includes allocations by UNHCR from unearmarked or broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments. The above figures do not include costs at Headquarters.



Rwanda: A returnee mother and child who came back from DRC. The house was built by UNHCR in a returnee settlement near Cyangugu. *UNHCR/B. Heger*

Achievements and impact

Protection and solutions

Refugees

Increased numbers of refugees were detained in 2004 when they failed to produce documents proving their status. The police often refused to recognize the identity documents issued by UNHCR and the Government did not issue documents of its own. A proportion of the detentions followed infractions such as illegal cutting of trees or violent behaviour. UNHCR tried to obtain the release of refugees from prison (particularly in case of imprisonment due to lack of documents) and provided legal support.

Ensuring the civilian character of transit centres and refugee camps remained a serious challenge in 2004. In the first half of 2004, prior to the outbreak of the

Bukavu crisis in May/June 2004 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), when dissident army troops seized the town for a short period, recruitment drives were carried out. At year's end, ongoing investigations revealed strong suspicions that some disappearances of school-aged children were linked to further recruitment drives for military activities reported by refugees. UNHCR broached the issue repeatedly at the highest government levels without tangible results.

Registration remained a problem, particularly due to the lack of documents such as birth certificates and ID cards but also due to the right to dual citizenship in Rwanda. UNHCR's efforts to improve its database will be complemented in 2005 by a comprehensive registration exercise, if possible, involving the issuance of photo ID cards. No comprehensive registration was held in 2004 and records of urban refugees became increasingly flawed.

Asylum-seekers

As of January 2004, the NCR was nominally responsible for registering asylum-seekers and subsequent RSD. However, the NCR did not manage to respect the timeframe stipulated in the national law and only started registration in March. A procedure for registering new arrivals was established in close cooperation between the immigration authorities, the NCR and UNHCR, but many officials were not familiar with this procedure which resulted in irregular transfers and registrations.

The Office was still struggling with a significant backlog of RSD paperwork from 2003 and earlier. At the end of the year, more than 800 files had yet to be completed.

Returnees

The Government continued to express its commitment to bring all Rwandans home. UNHCR actively promoted voluntary repatriation and assisted in the return of almost 13,500 Rwandans. In 2004, seven Tripartite Commission meetings were held to discuss operational issues bringing together the Rwandan Government, UNHCR and the seven main countries of asylum. A declaration of the cessation clause with regard to Rwandan refugees was postponed.

In order to ensure repatriation in safety and dignity, monitoring activities were revived in 2004. Issues such as the recovery of land and property or the issuance of identity documents were followed up and problems shared during Tripartite Commission meetings. Monitoring activities also fed into the mass information campaign which was launched to keep Rwandan refugees informed about developments in their home country and their options with regard to return.

Durable solutions

Local integration was not feasible due to the shortage of land. Meanwhile, repatriation could not be facilitated owing to the volatility in refugees' provinces of origin in the two main countries of origin, the DRC and Burundi. Although some refugees decided to return on their own initiative, resettlement remained the most viable durable solution for refugees in Rwanda.

Activities and assistance

Refugees

UNHCR provided material assistance to some 20,000 Congolese refugees in Gihembe camp as well as more than 17,500 in Kiziba camp. Some 7,000 Congolese new arrivals were assisted in separation facilities/transit centres. Over 5,000 urban refugees and asylum-seekers were also provided with health services, and limited food assistance was given to 1,500 vulnerable refugees.

Community services: Some 760 Congolese refugees, of whom 80 per cent were women, benefited from vocational training. A micro-credit scheme was launched in early 2004. Over 50 highly vulnerable urban refugees and asylum-seekers received loans for small projects, which were fully repaid by 70 per cent of the beneficiaries. Over 2,500 refugees in camps and over 500 refugees in Kigali were considered as vulnerable persons including chronically ill persons, HIV/AIDS patients, malnourished children, older people, and unaccompanied minors.

Awareness-raising activities on prevention and response to SGBV continued throughout the year for staff in all sectors and members of the refugee committees.

Domestic needs/Household support: Non-food items such as blankets, jerry cans, kitchen sets and soap were distributed in the camps, as well as sanitary materials provided to women and schoolgirls. Some 400 vulnerable urban refugees unable to relocate to the camps received subsistence allowances and exceptional assistance.

Education: Basic primary education was provided to almost 8,000 children in the camps and urban Kigali. Secondary education assistance was provided to over 1,700 refugee children in urban areas and the camps. DAFI tertiary education scholarships were awarded to 17 refugee students.

Food: All camp-based refugees as well as highly vulnerable urban refugees received monthly food rations. WFP provided food in the Congolese camps and UNHCR/ Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs provided food in Kigeme camp.

Forestry: Reforestation activities continued with the planting of 1.8 million trees. Energy-saving techniques were introduced in all sites to limit the use of firewood.

Health/Nutrition: Over 90,000 consultations were held at the camp-based health centres and in urban Kigali, and nearly 1,300 persons were hospitalized. Supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes were provided to almost 2,000 vulnerable refugees in need. Nearly all children below the age of five and pregnant women were immunized against diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus and received vitamin A supplements. Sensitization campaigns on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS were conducted. Over 1,000 refugees were tested and counselled.

Legal assistance: UNHCR provided legal assistance to detained refugees and asylum-seekers. Registration and verification of refugees were conducted in Gihembe and Kiziba camps. Capacity building and training for newly recruited staff as well as police and immigration officers were prioritized throughout the year.

Operational support (to agencies): Operational support was provided to local authorities through provision of computer equipment and staff salaries. UNHCR supported five implementing partners by covering their administrative and logistical costs to ensure coordinated and smooth implementation.

Sanitation: Hygiene was maintained in the refugee camps through the construction and rehabilitation of latrines, showers, garbage disposal pits, and the management, cleaning and maintenance of public areas.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: During the reporting period, almost 1,000 houses were built and another 2,500 houses rehabilitated in the Congolese refugee camps of Kiziba and Gihembe. Other shelter infrastructure including communal halls and kitchens were built/rehabilitated in transit centres to accommodate some 7,000 Congolese refugees. Communal shelter infrastructure was constructed in the new site Nyamure for an estimated 3,000 Burundian refugees from September 2004.

Transport/Logistics: Fuel management was adjusted to tank-based systems for economy-saving purposes. Two buses and four trucks were redeployed to United Republic of Tanzania and Burundi.

Water: Water storage and distribution systems were maintained and quality control ensured. Minimum standards of water provision were met only in Kiziba camp due to an acute shortage of potable water in Rwanda.

Returnees

During 2004, almost 13,500 returnees were assisted with multi-sectoral assistance.

Community services: Special reintegration assistance was provided to vulnerable returnees in six Rwandan provinces. The orphanage of Rusayo in Cyangugu province was supported to host and assist unaccompanied returnee minors awaiting family tracing and reunification.

Domestic needs/Household support: The distributed returnee package comprised plastic sheeting, mats, blankets, jerry cans and soap. Some vulnerable households benefited from a special distribution of corrugated iron sheeting and agricultural tools and seeds.

Food: WFP provided each returnee with food rations for three months.

Health/Nutrition: Returnees were medically screened upon arrival in Rwanda and some received medical support and transport to their district of origin.

Legal assistance: In order to promote the voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees, UNHCR regularly disseminated information to keep the refugees abreast of developments in their home country through various means. UNHCR also supported the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission which included Rwandan refugees. Vulnerable returnees were assisted to recover their property and assisted in getting their identity cards.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR provided operational support to the Government. Officials participated at Standing Committee and Executive Committee meetings in Geneva and carried out (go-and-see and come-and-inform) visits to promote voluntary repatriation.

Sanitation: Sanitation infrastructures were maintained and rehabilitated.

Shelter/Other infrastructure: The transit centre facilities of Nkamira, Nyagatare and Byumba were rehabilitated and regularly maintained to accommodate Rwandan returnees.

Transport/Logistics: UNHCR provided transport for all returnees to their respective community of origin.

Water: Potable water was provided in sufficient quantities to refugees and the local population.

Organization and implementation

Management

In 2004, UNHCR maintained its main office in Kigali, with field offices in Byumba and Kibuye, as well as antenna offices in Butare, Cyangugu and Gisenyi. UNHCR employed six international, 41 national staff and nine UNVs.

Working with others

UNHCR worked with four international NGOs, one German development partner and two Government agencies. Among the UN agencies, UNHCR cooperated with WFP on the provision of food rations in camps and for returnees, with MONUC on repatriation from DRC, and with UNICEF on issues of education and child protection in transit centres and camps, particularly during the influx from DRC and Burundi. Furthermore, UNHCR cooperated with the UNCT under the auspices of UNDAF. UNHCR also participated in thematic working groups and corresponding task forces. It presided over the Disaster Management Task Force leading interventions in humanitarian situations throughout 2004.

Overall assessment

During the period under review, UNHCR's operations in Rwanda were tested by several challenges. Following the influxes from Burundi and DRC, the needs of an increasing number of refugees had to be managed, despite the decreasing number of staff and the budget. Although the Government of Rwanda was cooperative on the main issues, there

was serious contention over the slow implementation of the national asylum system, the granting of exit permits for resettlement and guaranteeing the civilian character of asylum. The operational support provided by governmental implementing partners was particularly disappointing, with little transparency in terms of open insight into their activities.

Exit strategies will have to be reformulated to ensure proper functioning of the national asylum system, to guarantee proper assistance and protection for refugees in Rwanda and to allow for due process for those Rwandan refugees living abroad.

Offices
<p>Kigali</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butare Byumba Cyangugu Gisenyi Kibuye
Partners
<p>Government agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Commission for the Repatriation and Reintegration of Rwandan Refugees Ministry of Local Government, Community Development and Social Affairs National Council for Refugees
<p>NGOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Humanitarian Action American Refugee Committee Jesuit Rescue Service Norwegian People's Aid
<p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Prior years' projects
	Annual programme budget	Annual and Supplementary programme budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,085,502	0
Community services	71,807	30,056
Domestic needs / household support	315,240	73,189
Education	269,736	48,163
Food	24,858	24,867
Forestry	33,849	0
Health and nutrition	404,605	185,139
Legal assistance	108,126	11,076
Operational support (to agencies)	393,513	140,722
Sanitation	166,276	110,193
Shelter and infrastructure	294,189	98,684
Transport and logistics	1,047,211	261,348
Water	113,802	37,716
Instalments with implementing partners	1,305,811	(1,021,154)
Sub-total operational activities	5,634,526	0
Programme support	1,069,157	0
Total disbursements	6,703,683	0
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	3,265,379	
Reporting received	(1,959,568)	
Balance	1,305,811	
Prior years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1 January		1,004,817
Payments made		19,577
Reporting received		(1,021,154)
Refunded to UNHCR		(35,199)
Balance		(31,959)
Unliquidated obligations		
Outstanding 1 January		319,721
Disbursements		(251,289)
Cancellations		(68,432)
Outstanding 31 December		0