

BURUNDI - Regional Refugee Response Plan

2019 Mid Year Report

January - June 2019



2019 RESPONSE

344,931

BURUNDIAN REFUGEES AS OF
30 JUNE 2019

US\$ 292.9M

REQUIREMENTS IN 2019

18%

FUNDING RECEIVED (JUNE
2019)

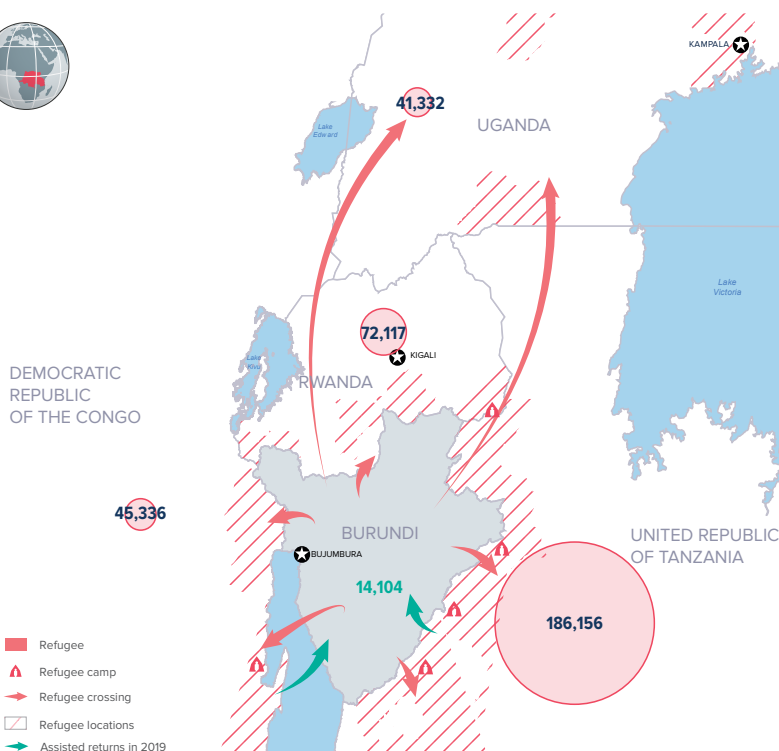
35

RRRP PARTNERS INVOLVED

REGIONAL SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 30 June 2019, over 344,000 Burundian refugees remained in exile in the four main refugee hosting countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The 2019 – 2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) brings together 35 partners requesting USD 292.9 million to meet the life-saving and resilience needs of Burundian refugees in these countries in 2019. By mid-2019, agencies had received close to USD 53 million, representing just 18 per cent of requirements.

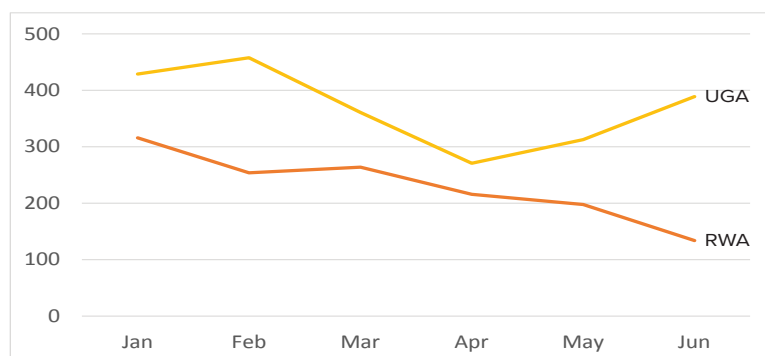
Despite significant underfunding, RRRP partners were able to support Burundian refugees across a number of key sectors. Access to education improved for Burundian refugee children, with primary school enrolment increasing from 69 per cent at the end of 2018 to 87 per cent in June 2019 and secondary enrolment increasing from 17 per cent to 27 per cent in the same period. Although there were occasional drops in full rations, RRRP partners have so far been able to provide in kind and cash-based food assistance more consistently in 2019 than 2018, when various pipeline breaks led to multiple ration cuts across the region. A total of 8,969 Burundian refugee babies (96.7 per cent) were delivered with the assistance of qualified health personnel, improving the health outcomes of both the mother and the child. Efforts continued to integrate refugees into national health systems, with the Uganda National Integrated Health Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (2019-2024) launched in January and urban Burundian refugees enrolled in the community based health insurance scheme in Rwanda. More Burundian refugee families are living in adequate shelter, with coverage increasing to 76 per cent by June 2019, up from 63 per cent at the end of 2018. RRRP partners continued to support efforts to restore and maintain the environment, a major concern shared by hosting communities and governments, planting over 33,500 tree seedlings and reforesting 193 hectares of land in areas hosting Burundian refugees.



At the same time, significant challenges remain in the Burundi situation response, with significant impact on the lives of many Burundian refugees. The majority remain heavily dependent on humanitarian assistance, with only 7 per cent of refugees aged 18 to 59 years (7,772) receiving livelihoods support in the first half of 2019. Sexual and gender based violence prevention and response and child protection activities remained critically hampered by staff shortages, with the regional caseworker-to-child ratio at 1:68, far above the international standard of 1:25. Just 514 Burundian refugees had access to tertiary education, severely constricting opportunities for many bright and hard-working Burundian youth. Access to safe water decreased for Burundian refugees in Uganda. Throughout the region, access to family latrines decreased from 38 per cent to 32 per cent in the past six months, leaving over 66,000 refugee families to rely on communal latrines or open defecation. The majority of households lack adequate basic domestic items in most locations as non-food items (NFIs) distributed at the onset of the refugee outflow in 2015 need replenishing.

BURUNDIAN REFUGEE POPULATION TRENDS

2019 MONTHLY ARRIVAL TRENDS



The 2019 Burundi Regional RRP planned for an estimated 278,000 refugees by the end of 2019. As of 30 June, a total of 344,931 Burundian refugees remained in exile in the four main host countries. The rate of new arrivals from Burundi remained similar to 2018, with 3,603 new refugees and asylum-seekers fleeing Burundi in the first half of 2019, compared to 2,037 in the preceding six months and 5,922 in the same period last year (Jan – Jun 2018). Uganda received the most new arrivals (2,221) followed closely by Rwanda (1,382). Since 2018, Tanzania has largely closed its borders to new asylum-seekers from Burundi and therefore figures of new arrivals are not known. The DRC did not report any new arrivals in the first half of 2019.

Between January and June 2019, a total of 14,104 refugees were assisted to return to Burundi from Tanzania, bringing the total since the start of the voluntary repatriation operation in 2017 to 71,963. UNHCR has not promoted or encouraged returns to Burundi, but assisted those refugees who have indicated they made a free and informed choice to return voluntarily. Assisted returns were temporarily suspended in January 2019 due to funding shortfalls faced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the partner responsible for transportation and other logistics aspects, but resumed in February 2019.

2019 RRRP FUNDING

By 30 June 2019, RRRP partners received almost USD 53 million against the 2019 plan and would like to thank the many donors who contributed to date. However, the funding equates to just 18 per cent of 2019 requirements. The USD 240 million funding gap presented major challenges for Burundian refugee families as RRRP partners reported deterioration against some indicators and ongoing shortages in protection staff, livelihoods and WASH.

THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

The overall humanitarian and general security situation in Burundi remained stable in the first half of 2019, although political tensions and human rights concerns continued. The country also continued to face socio-economic challenges including food shortages due to declining agricultural production. There was a 50 per cent increase in malaria cases since the beginning of the year and the Ebola epidemic in neighbouring DRC requires additional resources for preparedness. New refugee arrivals from Burundi reported insecurity, harassment by militias and the desire for family reunification in the countries of asylum. At the same time, refugees who chose to return home cited improved overall security, a desire to reoccupy their farmland and a desire for family reunification in Burundi. On 28 June, the Independent National Electoral Committee officially announced the 2020 elections schedule, with the presidential, legislative and municipal election to take place on 20 May 2020.

2019 MID YEAR ACHIEVEMENTS AND GAPS

Protection

RRRP partners continued to provide protection assistance to Burundian refugees across the region. All Burundian refugees are now registered on an individual basis, though there is a backlog of Refugee Status Determination (RSD) cases in Uganda, with 1,278 Burundian asylum-seekers awaiting RSD interviews as of 30 June 2019, and some 15,449 asylum-seekers in Tanzania who remain vulnerable due to their unresolved status.

Regionally, 100 per cent of the 1,319 identified sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) survivors received appropriate support, however underreporting remains an ongoing issue. In Uganda, the small number of female police officers represented a barrier for female refugees to come forward and report SGBV incidents. In Tanzania, the Basket of Solutions social enterprise project, implemented by RRP partners with the aim of strengthening women's resilience to SGBV, has been put on hold due to new restrictions on transporting raw materials into the camp and moving finished products out of the camp. The SGBV and child protection response continued to be hampered by limited funding and inadequate staffing.

Food

A total 304,475 Burundian refugees – the majority residing in camps or settlements – received food assistance in the first half of 2019, through food rations or cash assistance. Additional food assistance continued for vulnerable populations, including pregnant and lactating women, young children and children experiencing malnutrition. RRRP partners were able to provide food more consistently in 2019 than 2018, when various pipeline breaks lead to multiple ration cuts across the

region. There was a small pipeline break in super cereals with sugar in Tanzania in June, leading to a small reduction of the ration from 100 per cent to 96 per cent, while the cash transfer programme remains suspended. In Rwanda, refugees occasionally experience delays in receiving cash transfers due to the long distances between the issuing bank and the camp.

Activities aimed at ensuring sustainable self-reliance and food security among Burundian refugees remained underfunded across the region, the majority of refugees continued to depend on food assistance to meet their food and nutrition needs.

Health and Nutrition

In Rwanda and the DRC, Burundian refugees had full access to the national health system. In Rwanda, refugees utilised over 71,000 free outpatient consultations. In the DRC, despite the efforts of RRRP partners, health services in the areas hosting Burundian refugees remain below acceptable standards and refugees struggle to receive adequate health care. In Uganda, efforts continued to improve integration of humanitarian health services into the government health care system and the Ministry of Health launched the Uganda National Integrated Health Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities (2019-2024) in January. In Tanzania, Burundian refugees had access to seven health facilities across the two camps, however 30 additional health care personnel, as well as improved facilities and services, are required.

Across the region, 96.7 per cent of 9,271 Burundian women gave birth with assistance from qualified health personnel, up very slightly from 96.2 per cent in 2018. While the results of this indicator were maintained or improved between 2018 and 2019 in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, in the DRC only 90 per cent of women gave birth with assistance in 2019 to date, compared to 100 per cent in 2018.

PROTECTING, EDUCATING AND PROVIDING FOR BURUNDIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN

Some 6,119 Burundian refugee children remain separated from their parents or usual caregivers. This figure is down from over 8,000 at the end of 2018 due to reunification and improved reporting on children's status. Regionally, RRRP partners were able to provide individual case management to 64 per cent of Burundian children with specific needs in the first half of 2019, up from 31 per cent at the end of 2018, however data from Tanzania and Uganda were unavailable at that time. By 30 June 2019, 41 per cent of unaccompanied and separated children were assessed to be in suitable interim or long-term alternative care, though this figure varied across countries of asylum from 25 per cent in Uganda, 38 per cent in Tanzania, 49 per cent in Rwanda and 100 per cent in the DRC.

Child protection activities remain significantly hampered by caseworker shortages; the regional caseworker-to-child-receiving-case-management ratio stands at 1:68, well above the international standard of 1:25. This figure does not reflect additional children who may need case management and support and are currently not reached.

Over 66,700 Burundian primary-aged refugee children (87 per cent) were enrolled in primary school by mid-2019, up from 69 per cent at the end of 2018. A further 17,225 children aged 3 – 5 years (51 per cent) were enrolled in Early Childhood Development classes. While new classrooms were built in Tanzania (159), Rwanda (18) and Uganda (14), student-to-teacher and student-to-classroom ratios remained high, with tangible impacts on the quality of education available to Burundian refugee children.

For older Burundian children, access to secondary school also improved, with regional enrolment increasing from 17 per cent at the end of 2018 to 27 per cent by end-June 2019. However an estimated 26,000 Burundian children remain out of secondary school. Just 514 Burundian refugees have access to tertiary education in the region, the majority (461) in Rwanda, representing just under one per cent of the 18 to 28 year old population.

A total of 8,969 Burundian refugee babies (96.7 per cent) were delivered with assistance of qualified health personnel, improving the health outcomes of both the mother and the child.

The prevalence of Global Acute Malnutrition remained low among the Burundian children aged six months to five years old: 4 per cent in the DRC, 3 per cent in Tanzania and 2 per cent in Rwanda (updated data unavailable in Uganda). While the prevalence of stunting among children aged 6 – 59 months improved substantially in Rwanda (from 41 per cent in 2018 to 25 per cent in 2019), it remains high across the region at 51 per cent in Tanzania and 31 per cent in the DRC. Likewise, anaemia prevalence among the same age group was reported at 31 per cent in Rwanda, 41 per cent in Tanzania and 59 per cent in the DRC, with serious implications for these children's growth and mental development.

Livelihood and Environment

For most Burundian refugees in the region, there were few opportunities to sustainably support themselves and their families in 2019. Some 7,772 Burundian refugees received livelihoods support in the first half of 2019, including vocational training for single mothers in Rwanda and support for fishery activities in the DRC, however this represented a mere 7 per cent of the Burundian adult refugee population (18 to 59 years) in the region.

In Tanzania, Burundian refugees remained impacted by the continued closure of the common markets and the refugee-run businesses across the three camps, with many resorting to negative coping mechanisms. Advocacy with the Government of Tanzania to lift all restrictions was ongoing. In the DRC, there are limited partners available to support livelihoods and it has proved difficult to garner the expertise and engagement of the necessary actors. In Rwanda, there are insufficient vocational training opportunities for youth once they graduate formal education. In Uganda, despite increasing the financial requirements for livelihood activities from 10.3 per cent in the 2018 RRP to 15.9 per cent of the overall country RRRP requirements in 2019, investments in this sector remained inadequate to support Burundian refugees with livelihood assets or other means of income generation.

Energy and Environment

In ongoing efforts to restore and maintain the environment, some 68,000 households in Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda (79 per cent) had an energy saving stove and equipment by June 2019 (data unavailable for the DRC), while in the DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania, 36 per cent of households received monthly fuel distributions to reduce and prevent further cutting of local trees. Moreover, RRRP partners planted over 33,500 tree seedlings and reforested 193 hectares of land in and around areas hosting Burundian refugees, while in Tanzania, preparations began for the planting of a further 510,000 seedlings during the rainy season at the end of 2019.

Shelter and NFIs

The proportion of Burundian refugee families living in adequate shelter across the region continued to increase in the first half of 2019, from 63 per cent at the end of 2018 to 76 per cent by June 2019 (data unavailable for Uganda), largely due to increased shelter coverage in Tanzania. Since January 2019, a total of 2,255 refugee housing units were installed across the three camps in Tanzania, making the country the largest recipient of these innovative shelter solutions. Over 750 shelters were repaired or upgraded in the DRC and Rwanda. In Uganda, Kabazana reception centre and Nyakabande transit centre were expanded in the first half of 2019. The Government of Uganda allocated plots of land to 3,060 recognized refugees (864 households) in Nakivale, while RRRP partners provided household and emergency shelter kits.

An estimated 35 per cent of Burundian refugee families had access to adequate relief items by June 2019, although tracking coverage of domestic item needs remains difficult, in most locations non-food items (NFIs) distributed at the onset of the refugee outflow in 2015 need replenishing. Due to stock shortfalls, in Uganda, RRRP partners were compelled to distribute incomplete NFI kits to newly arrived families, with items such as solar lamps and kitchen sets often missing.

WASH

Against a target of 20 litres of water per person per day, Burundian refugees each received an average 19L in the DRC, 20L in Rwanda, 24.7L in Tanzania and 14.3L in Uganda in the

COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE FRAMEWORK (CRRF)

In the first half of 2019, RRRP partners, governments, development actors and others continued to apply the CRRF approach to increase socio-economic inclusion for Burundian refugees. Over 28,000 Burundian refugee children (82 per cent) in Rwanda and the DRC are enrolled in the respective national education systems. In the DRC, Burundian refugees had access to health centres and RRRP partners continued to work at the provincial level to include refugee-hosting areas in provincial development plans. In Rwanda, a tripartite MoU was signed in June to allow urban and student refugees (largely Burundian and Congolese) to access the Community Based Health Insurance scheme. Over 11,500 Burundian refugees will receive access to the insurance from September 2019. In May, RRRP partners mapped humanitarian and development partners working in refugee-hosting areas in Rwanda to pave a way for future partnerships, advocacy and possible joint resource mobilisation.

In Uganda, the implementation of existing government sector plans for refugee and host communities continued in the first half of 2019 (Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities in Uganda, and Health Integrated Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities) and additional plans are due for completion in the second half of the year (Water and Environment Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities, and Jobs and Livelihoods Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities).

first half of 2019. This represents an improvement (DRC) or maintenance on 2018 levels (Rwanda and Tanzania), however in Uganda, access to water decreased from 18L in January 2019 to 14.3L in June due to the influx of new Burundian and Congolese refugees in the settlements where Burundian refugees reside.

Family latrine coverage varies from 31 per cent in the DRC and 32 per cent in Tanzania to 76 per cent in Uganda. In Rwanda, Burundian refugees have access to communal latrines at a ratio of 17 people per latrine. Only in Rwanda and the DRC did Burundian refugees receive the acceptable 450 grams of soap per month.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

The 2019 – 2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan was launched in Geneva, Switzerland, in January 2019 and in Nairobi, Kenya, in February. The Regional Refugee Coordinator (RRC) / CRRF Champion for the Burundi Situation, Catherine Wiesner, continued a number of missions in the region and convened a series of regional meetings with partner agencies to identify opportunities for improved collaboration, advocacy, resource mobilisation and programming. A regional protection and solutions strategy has been developed and will be finalized later in the year. The 2019 Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (JRRRP), a coordinated effort to provide support for the return and reintegration of Burundian refugees, was also developed and was pending endorsement from the Government of Burundi as of June. In May, the RRC carried out an advocacy mission to Washington DC, New York and Brussels to further raise awareness and mobilise resources for Burundian refugees in the region. Engagement with the Office of the UN Special Envoy on the Great Lakes Region continued to ensure refugee issues were integrated in regional diplomacy. The RRC also participated in the High Level Meeting of Ministers on Displacement in the Great Lakes Region hosted by the Government of Uganda, where she advocated for support and solutions for Burundian refugees.

REGIONAL RRP PARTNERS

- Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène
- African Initiative for Relief and Development
- American Refugee Committee
- 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
- Global Humanitarian and Development Foundation
- 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
- 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

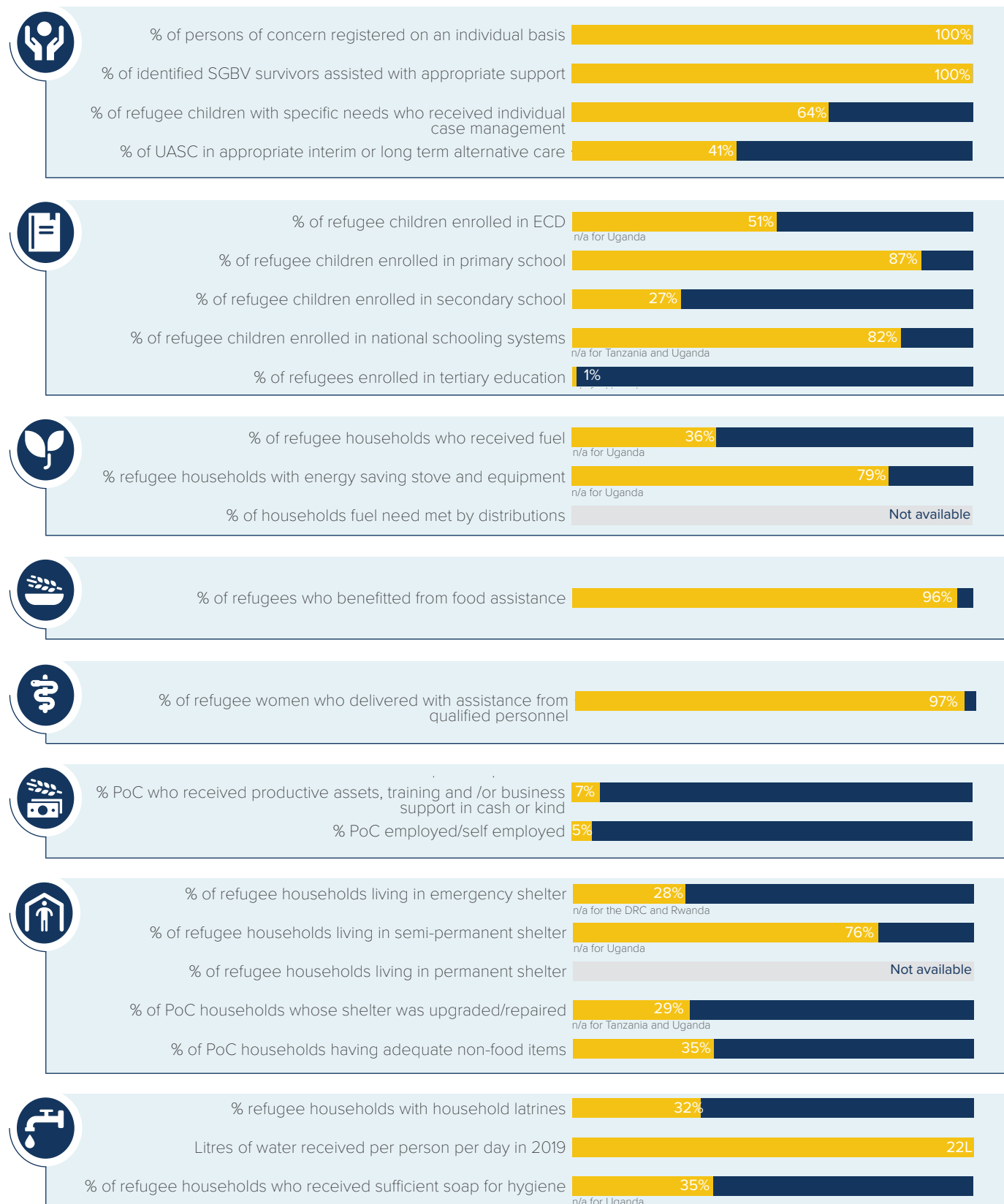
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Burundi Data Portal - <https://data.unhcr.org/burundi>

Ms. Catherine Wiesner RRC & CRRF Champion for Burundi situation wiesner@unhcr.org; **Ms. Anna Minuto**, Snr. Info. Management Officer, minuto@unhcr.org; **Tina Ghelli**, Snr. Communications Advisor, ghelli@unhcr.org; **Laura Swanson**, Info. Management Officer swanson@unhcr.org

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