Rwanda

A case history of education provision for refugees from 2012 to 2019
Rwanda: A case history of education provision for refugees from 2012 to 2019

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Acknowledgements

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*The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of UNHCR or GPE Secretariat. They are the result of independent research.*

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\(^1\) [www.jigsawconsult.com](http://www.jigsawconsult.com)

\(^2\) [www.refugeesupportnetwork.org](http://www.refugeesupportnetwork.org)
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## Acronyms and abbreviations

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADRA</td>
<td>Adventist Development and Relief Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRRF</td>
<td>Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEO</td>
<td>district education officer</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>ESA</td>
<td>education sector analysis</td>
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<td>ESSP</td>
<td>Education Sector Strategic Plan</td>
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<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>MIDIMAR</td>
<td>Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs</td>
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<td>MINEDUC</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>MINEMA</td>
<td>Ministry of Emergency Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEND</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs or Disabilities</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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Executive summary

This case history explores the provision of education for refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in Rwanda from the outset of the 2012 influx to the end of 2019. Findings from this study contributed to a comparative study with Bangladesh and Turkey whose overarching objectives were:

- To document which factors in the early stages of a refugee response seem to determine whether refugees are included in national education systems, as opposed to separate systems;
- To identify factors for further study that could shed light on essential program and policy actions that lead to greater effectiveness and sustainability of refugee education responses from the emergency stage forward.

This case history draws on:

- A review of more than 20 documents including reports, appeals, plans, academic articles, financial tables, and press releases (see Annex A for references);
- Seven interviews with relevant experts, each semi-structured and lasting an average of 60 minutes (see Annex B);
- The findings of a coding analysis exercise, with data provided by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), which is reported on in full in the cross-cutting report; and
- The sector expertise of the research team.

There are significant knowledge gaps across the sector regarding the most appropriate way to capture lessons learned from country-specific responses to refugee inclusion in national education systems. The practical working out of this experimental methodology provides an opportunity to reflect on and improve the way in which learning is captured and shared in such contexts.

Chapters 1 to 3 of the Rwanda case study provide an overview of the research objectives, methodology, background context and key response milestones in Rwanda related to the refugee influxes that occurred as a result of hostilities in eastern DRC during 2012 and 2013. Chapters 4 through 6 present the findings from three key analytical themes as these influenced or impacted government and partner decisions, and actions related to refugee education:

- Government policy and leadership
- Contributions and engagement of partners
- Humanitarian and development financing

Context

Prior to the DRC refugee influx into Kigeme in 2012, Rwanda had a long history of hosting refugees, and refugees accessed national education institutions in some areas of the country. There were no government leadership or policy barriers to implementing inclusion, but it was not formalized in policy, was never reflexively planned for during the emergency phase, and was not systematized. After the government was able to see evidence of effective implementation during the 2012 emergency, there was a greater commitment toward the refugee inclusion approach in their subsequent refugee education responses.

Analysis of Theme 1: Government policy and leadership

The following factors appear to have contributed to systematic inclusion of refugees in the national education system of Rwanda after the 2012 influx: a strong history of government being at the forefront of the national dialogue regarding support for refugees; willingness, ownership and strong leadership of the inclusion process by the government; government
As in Bangladesh, the ministry in charge of organizing the response to refugee education needs during the emergency phase was not the Ministry of Education. But unlike in Bangladesh, the Rwandan Ministry of Emergency Management had the mandate to act as a liaison with key line ministries in order to ensure that planning and budgeting were in sync with national and district sector priorities. Technical support from the Ministry of Education also provided an avenue to embed inclusion in the national education system further in government planning policy.

The implications of the policy and leadership approaches and actions taken by the Government of Rwanda appear to be: development opportunities embedded through humanitarian investment; certified educational opportunities for refugees; better sustainability of the provision of education for refugees; social cohesion between refugees and members of the host community; engagement of refugee teachers; replication of the Kigeme model response to other refugee situations, which can contribute to the evidence base concerning the efficiency of the inclusion approach in Rwanda.

Challenges have included loss of contact hours because of double-shifting; the distance from older camps and settlements to the national schools; and engagement of refugee teachers under the national payroll scheme. Also, at the moment of transition to the national system, there was no access to equivalency examinations or at-level transition for students who had attended parallel system secondary schools using the DRC curriculum. Therefore, repeating grades was the only option for these students.

Analysis of Theme 2: Contribution and engagement of partners

Contributing factors to successful government engagement with humanitarian and development partners included the government’s openness to engaging in dialogue with its partners, and the high level of support for humanitarian and development partners in implementing the inclusion approach from district government authorities. During the 2012 emergency, humanitarian and development actors coordinated and collaborated well, conducted joint assessments that included host-community educational needs and provided technical support where needed. A clear division of labor and responsibilities, and Rwanda’s “One UN” pilot country status supported strong collaboration between UNICEF and UNHCR.

Challenges included creating a shared vision of inclusion that aligned with differing institutional priorities, and greater joint advocacy for the inclusion and representation of refugees in national education policy and multiyear education sector plans.

Analysis of Theme 3: Humanitarian and development financing

The financing of the 2012 response was considered a critical factor for the successful inclusion of refugees in the national education system. Public expenditure almost doubled in Rwanda between 1980 and 2013, and MINEDUC (2015) notes that investments in education included teacher capacity and recruitment, school infrastructure, and teaching and learning materials. In addition to this national investment, Rwanda has received significant levels of aid. This high level of overall financial investment in education is considered both by respondents and in the literature as having been integral in supporting refugee children to be accommodated within the national education system.
The financing for infrastructure and enhancing the capacity of host communities came predominantly from humanitarian funding. This involved considerable resources to support the initial investment required for including refugees in the national education system. The financing contributed to the capacity of local schools through the construction of more classrooms, the provision of equipment and materials, and hiring and training teachers (UNICEF 2018).

Because Rwanda has made significant investment in its education system, it is difficult to correlate the apparent benefits for host community learners in communities that have included refugee students and harnessed humanitarian funding for systemic gain. Nevertheless, some of the research that indicates host community learners who reside closer to a refugee camp in Rwanda have a higher level of school attendance compared to learners who are further away. They also have completed more years of schooling on average, and are more likely to finish primary school than children residing further away from refugee camps (Bilgili et al. 2019).
1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives of the case history
This case history explores the provision of education from the outset of the 2012 influx of refugees\(^3\) from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) into Rwanda. It has two overarching objectives:

- To document which factors in the early stages of a refugee response seem to determine whether refugees are included in national education systems as opposed to separate systems.
- To identify factors for further study that could shed light on essential program and policy actions that lead to greater effectiveness and sustainability of refugee education responses from the emergency stage forward.

Within these objectives, there are three areas of specific focus: government policy and leadership; the contribution and engagement of partners; and humanitarian and development financing. Each of the focus areas is linked to a set of research questions that guided the interview structure, analysis and presentation of the data. The research questions are included in full in Annex C.

1.2. Methodology
This case history on Rwanda is one of three conducted within the overall study. The two accompanying case histories focus on Bangladesh and Turkey. Each of them follows the same methodological approach in order to facilitate comparative analysis; however, the structure of the findings is tailored to each country’s context. This case history draws on:

- A review of more than 20 documents including reports, appeals, plans, academic articles, financial tables, and press releases (see Annex A for references);
- Seven interviews with relevant experts, each semi-structured and lasting an average of 60 minutes (see Annex B);
- The findings of a coding analysis exercise, with data provided by GPE, which is reported on in full in the cross-cutting report; and
- The sector expertise of the research team

It should be noted that the methodology is experimental in both its design and application. There are significant knowledge gaps across the sector regarding the most appropriate way to capture lessons learned from country-specific responses to the inclusion of refugees in national education systems. The intention is that the practical working out of the methodology will provide an opportunity to reflect on and improve the way in which learning is captured and shared in such contexts. This has resulted in a set of observations focused on the way in which the methodology could be refined for future studies of a similar nature, which is presented in the cross-cutting report.

1.3. Structure and parameters of the case history
This case history begins by presenting a brief summary of the background context (Chapter 2), and an overview of key milestones regarding the provision of education for refugees in Rwanda from 2012 onwards (Chapter 3). This is followed by three analysis sections: Government policy and leadership (Chapter 4); Contribution and engagement of partners (Chapter 5); and Humanitarian and development financing (Chapter 6). The case history

\(^3\) The word "refugee" is used in this case history in reference to individuals who are forcibly displaced from their country of origin, regardless of their legal status within the host country. This is in order to conduct a cross-cutting analysis and discussion of findings across the three different country responses.
closes with key areas of learning for the sector (Chapter 7). Three annexes that provide additional information regarding the study methodology and cited resources are included.

The case history reviews insights from key actors during the Kigeme refugee response from 2012 to 2019 within the analytical framework presented by the research questions detailed in Annex C. It does not explore the experience of other refugee groups in Rwanda, and within the provision of education during the Kigeme response it is considered that this analysis may not have captured the full nuances of the operational context, particularly as it relates to undocumented policy, partnership and financing decisions. These gaps, and possible ways to mitigate them in future similar studies are explored in more depth in an extended methodology in Annex F of the cross-cutting report.

This case history is best read in conjunction with its associated outputs:
- Bangladesh: a case history of education provision for refugees from 2017 to 2019
- Turkey: a case history of education provision for refugees from 2011 to 2019
- Historical mapping of education provision for refugees: a cross-cutting report

2. Background context

2.1. Refugees in Rwanda

Rwanda has a long history of hosting refugees, predominantly from the DRC and Burundi. Congolese refugees include those who fled in the 1990s, as well as those who were fleeing hostilities in eastern DRC during 2012 and 2013. The influx during 2012 and 2013 is the focal point for this case history. The Congolese refugee population is over 75,000, and is distributed among five camps: Gihembe, Kigeme, Kiziba, Mugombwa and Nyabiheke. In addition there are around 1,100 Congolese refugees in urban areas (UNHCR Rwanda 2019).

Figure 2.1: Refugee camps hosting Congolese refugees in Rwanda

2.2. Rwanda’s National Education System

The Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) assumes responsibility for policy formulation, educational planning, coordination and monitoring, and evaluation at the national level. MINEDUC works closely with other government agencies and ministries at central and decentralized levels (Rwanda Education Sector Plan 2019-2023). The education system is
organized into four main levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education, with technical and vocational education and training streams at both secondary and higher education levels.

2.3. Defining educational inclusion for refugees in Rwanda

The term “inclusion” in the context of refugee children and education describes the participation of refugee children in mainstream national education systems in host country contexts. It differs from the term “inclusive,” which has historically described education systems, approaches and programs that are explicitly accessible to children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). It also differs from “inclusive” as it has been increasingly used to refer to an approach that seeks to ensure the access, participation and learning of all children, for example in the language of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4,\textsuperscript{4} UNESCO (1994) and Banham and Papakosta (2018).

According to respondents, in Rwanda education inclusion for refugees involves national schools accommodating all host community and refugee children in the national education system. Broken down further, this means that they are learning from the same curriculum; being taught by the same teachers; have the same standards for examinations; have access to the same certification; and that they are given equal access to secondary and tertiary education (for example, the fees required for tuition). It also provides “cohesion” meaning that host and refugee students are studying, learning and participating in extracurricular activities together. Respondents shared the collective opinion that Rwanda serves as one of the best examples of including school-aged refugees in a national education system. Indeed, the inclusion of refugees in the educational system is high in Rwanda, with school-aged refugees either included in national schools or in schools located in camps that follow the Rwandan curriculum (for example, in Kiziba, which has no nearby national schools) (UNHCR 2019). In the case of Kiziba, local children are also able to access the school for refugees (Bilgili et al. 2019).

At the policy level, as part of the overall study, the research team critically reviewed the findings of a coding exercise conducted by GPE on the inclusion of refugees in education sector plans. A similar methodology was then applied to education documents from Rwanda. Rwanda discusses the inclusion of refugees in education in its 2017 education sector analysis (ESA) although does not include any reference to refugees, education in emergencies or displaced persons in its 2018/2019 to 2023/2024 Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP). This can partly be explained by the fact that in general, countries often consider refugee issues as part of a humanitarian response rather than as part of development planning. In addition, the case of Rwanda shows that policy can be a subset of practice, leading to the provision of education for refugees before it is reflected in policies like the ESSP. This coding exercise is reported on in full in Annex D of the cross-cutting report.

3. Summary of key milestones

The timeline of this case history follows the influx of Congolese refugees in 2012 and tracks the decisions made regarding the provision of education to refugees through national institutions. Figure 3.1 presents an overview of the key milestones regarding educational provision for refugees in Rwanda from 2012 to 2019. The milestones include key policy, partnership, and financing decisions and activities that emerged from the background document review and interviews with key informants. Each of these is discussed in further detail in the subsequent analysis chapters.

\textit{Figure 3.1: Timeline of Key Milestones During the Kigeme Response}

\textsuperscript{4} SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
Rwanda has a long history of hosting refugees, and while a number of the responses within Rwanda are important to critically explore, the Congolese refugees who entered Rwanda in 2012 are the focus for this study. Prior to the influx, some refugees were already accessing national schools, although this was not systematic. At the outset of the Kigeme response, the Government of Rwanda agreed that all refugees would be included in the national education system; therefore an inclusion approach was operationalized. Learning from this approach was incorporated into other refugee camps (for example, the Mugombwa refugee camp in 2014), and was particularly important during the 2015 influx of Burundian refugees and the opening of Mahama refugee camp. The inclusion approach continues into the present day, with such milestones as the formal acceptance of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)\(^5\) in 2018.

4. Government policy and leadership

This section presents the findings regarding government policy on refugee education prior to the 2012 influx; the government ministries involved in the response; how the Government of Rwanda addressed the inclusion of refugees in the national education system at the outset and during the response; the conditions that supported this inclusion; and the effects on the sustainability and relevance of the education offered to school-aged refugees.

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\(^5\) The CRRF is a set of commitments to be implemented in situations involving large-scale movements of refugees, and is tailored according to the local context and operating environments. As articulated by UNHCR (2020), “At the heart of the CRRF and the Global Compact on Refugees is the idea that refugees should be included in the communities from the very beginning.”
4.1. Government policy on refugee education pre-2012

Congoese refugees who had fled the DRC in the mid-1990s were based in three camps, in three different regions: those camps were Gihembe, Nyabiheke and Kiziba. All of the camps had schools and offered a separate system of education. There was also a small but significant refugee population living in urban areas around Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. Already in 2012, refugees in the urban contexts were allowed to access national schools (Respondent B); however most of the urban Congolese caseload attended schools supervised by the DRC’s Ministry of Education officials, which functioned as private schools. These three protracted refugee camps interestingly had differences in their provision of education. Most notably, the Nyabiheke camp was close to government schools and as a result, refugee children were already enrolled in government schools from fourth year primary by the time of the Kigeme response. The Kigeme response was therefore not the first time that Rwanda had permitted refugee inclusion in their national education system; however the inclusion was not systematic, and the criteria for inclusion were not clearly defined at this point in time.

4.2. Government ministries involved in the Kigeme response

The coordination of refugee programs, including the education response, is under the leadership of the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), which was formerly the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs (MIDIMAR). While there was considered to be a disconnect at times between MINEMA and MINEDUC, there were sector development specialists in MINEDUC who led on the matter of refugee inclusion. At the district level, district education officers (DEOs) held responsibility for refugee inclusion through coordinating interventions and local actors, and collaborated closely with UNHCR and the camp coordinator, under the responsibility of MINEMA. DEOs also used planning and monitoring tools that facilitated information sharing and results-based analysis of action plans.

4.3. Government policy decisions and activities during the Kigeme response

The Government of Rwanda agreed that all new arrivals from the DRC in 2012 would be included in the national education system. Instead of building new and separate schools in the camps, existing schools would be expanded. Conceptually the approach was framed by MINEMA (2014) as a community-integrated approach “whereby programs meant to benefit refugees have to also benefit local communities and programs for citizens’ development benefit refugees” (as cited in Bilgili et al. 2019, 292). Following this decision, district MINEDUC officials and education partners began to explore ways of operationalizing the approach. A joint rapid school assessment was conducted on May 30, 2012 by UNHCR, UNICEF and district MINEDUC officials to determine the feasibility of registering refugee students in local schools (UNHCR 2012). Following a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNHCR and the Government of Rwanda, UNHCR supervised the selection of schools near Kigeme for significant expansion, and enhancement of their available infrastructure and capacity through the provision of new classrooms, teachers and latrines. In addition to school expansion, an
orientation program involving language courses was developed and funded by UNHCR to help students transfer into an anglophone system. While schools were undergoing construction, refugees were sent through these language programs, which several respondents argued prepared the refugee students for successful inclusion in the national system. Following construction, the Government of Rwanda encouraged school-aged refugees to access national schools where they could, for example in Kigeme.

4.4. Conditions supporting the inclusion of refugees in the national education system

There is no detailed documentation available regarding the rationale for the inclusion of refugees in the national education system, nor the degree to which this decision may have been informed by (or indeed, may have informed) policy, the collaboration and engagement of partners, and humanitarian and development financing. Seven potential areas emerged from the analysis as factors that supported the inclusion of refugees in the Rwandan national education system, all of which were echoed by several respondents:

1. A strong history of support for refugees, and being at the forefront of the national dialogue regarding refugee support.
2. A willingness of the government, and its interest in expanding the scope of inclusion from what had existed at the time, as well as government ownership and strong leadership of the process.
3. Recognition from the government of the potential for improvements to the host community’s education infrastructure, particularly since the border areas where most refugees find asylum are the least developed in the country.
4. Significant physical space limitations in the Kigeme camp sites.
5. Advocacy by education partners, and UNHCR’s brokering of some of the technical discussions through the deployment of technical support during the emergency phase.
6. Cases of successful inclusion showing evidence of the efficiency and effectiveness of the inclusion approach. (This included the Nyabiheke camp, located in the Gatsibo District.)
7. Notable sociocultural similarities between refugees and their Rwandan hosts, including a shared language, as articulated by Crawford, Holloway and Lowe (2019). This was a significant dimension of Rwanda’s refugee-hosting model.

4.5. Effects of policy and leadership on refugee education

Overall, there was a broad consensus that the Kigeme response was well orchestrated, resulting in effective provision of education for school-aged refugees. This section presents the positive effects that were seen as a result of policy and leadership, and explores some of the challenges faced. A summary of key milestones since the 2012 response is also provided.

The positive effects of policy and leadership on the relevance and sustainability of education include:
More relevant education: respondents noted the importance of refugees having access to opportunities after they complete their studies and receive a qualification (Respondents B and C).

(ii) A higher level of sustainability for refugee education than it otherwise would have been (Respondents B, D, F).

(iii) Social cohesion (Respondents A and F).

(iv) Mobilization of learning from the inclusion approach during the Kigeme response (Respondents B, C and D), which led to the decision to take the same approach for all refugee camps in Rwanda. The Mugombwa refugee camp, for example, designed their education system from the outset based on the Kigeme response. However, further research is needed into the lessons learned from Mugombwa, as to how this worked out in practice; why the government chose to replicate the approach from Kigeme; what improvements were made and applied in Mugombwa; and what the level of government ownership was in Mugombwa.

The challenges predominantly concerned practical impediments to inclusion, refugee teachers, and secondary school students. The practical impediments to inclusion involved, for example, the Kiziba camp, which was situated a long distance from any government schools. Even when there was no opposition to the inclusion approach ideologically, practical barriers remained and were just as impactful (Respondent D). Respondents also reflected that the difference in salaries between refugee teachers and host teachers was a challenge. There was, however, a recognition that the incorporation of refugee teachers onto the national payroll is not a simple process, since every government has its own requirements and they are not necessarily well aligned (Respondent A). In addition, refugee teachers typically did not possess some of the specific qualifications and identification required by the Government of Rwanda. To address this challenge, refugee teachers with minimal qualifications were accredited, and those with insufficient qualifications were provided with opportunities to access training that would allow them to obtain a national qualification (Respondent E). However, many of the teachers recruited and trained by refugee response partners have not yet been integrated into the national training and payroll schemes. A third challenge was that secondary school refugee students who were in separate secondary schools in Rwanda before the transition to education through national institutions were permitted to finish their studies following the Congolese curriculum. However, those students who were unable to successfully finish their program of study were unable to easily join the national system without having to go back to repeat grades.

While this case history concentrates on the 2012 influx, there are two broad but noteworthy timeline milestones that followed the initial response phase. First, in 2015 Rwanda saw an influx of Burundian refugees, which created additional capacity constraints on the country’s education system. One of the continued challenges the system faces includes needing to increase teacher contact time through the reduction of double-shift classrooms, and reducing student-to-teacher ratios (UNHCR Workshop Report 2019). Second, the Government of Rwanda officially adhered to the CRRF on February 14, 2018. However, neither its national nor its sectoral development plans explicitly include refugees.

It is the Government of Rwanda’s position that school-aged refugees will continue to be enrolled in national schools at the primary and secondary levels, “with the objective of integrating 100 per cent of the refugee children into the national education system” (UNICEF 2018). Some of the potential impediments to this success, however, continue to be inadequate school infrastructure, and a lack of teachers and supplies.
5. Contribution and engagement of partners

This section presents an overview of the education partners involved in the Kigeme response; findings regarding the government’s engagement with humanitarian and development partners; and collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development partners. It closes by exploring the emergency and follow-up assessments conducted.

5.1. Education partners involved in the Kigeme response

The Kigeme refugee response in Rwanda was led and coordinated by MINEMA and UNHCR at the national and local levels, and included many UN and NGO partners, local civil society organizations, and private-sector partners (UNICEF 2018). Respondents noted the success of the whole government approach, through which MINEMA engaged with key ministries to ensure that planning and budgeting were in sync with national and district priorities. For example, MINEDUC sector development specialists led the process of including refugee children and youth (UNHCR Workshop Report 2019). Giving this space to MINEDUC and other sectors to engage in resulted in an effective avenue for further embedding the inclusion approach in government policy planning. Also, as it becomes more embedded in policy, donors can see the level of sustainability of this approach. This collaborative model extends to the current education sector working group, which includes government representatives from MINEDUC working with other partners, including USAID and UNICEF, who work together on education sector planning, monitoring and policies. MINEMA and UNHCR envision a reduced role for themselves in the future as self-reliance grows among refugees (MIDIMAR-UNHCR 2016, as cited in Crawford, Holloway and Lowe (2019, p. 3).

5.2. Government engagement with humanitarian and development partners

The collaboration and engagement between the government and its humanitarian and development partners appeared to be a strength in the Kigeme response. Four key areas of success emerged from this analysis:

(i) The level of engagement from the government bodies, and their openness to dialogue. This factor, which may have been informed by the long history of international organizations contributing to the country’s national educational goals was considered a core strength of the response by all respondents.

(ii) The high level of support from district government authorities for humanitarian and development partners in implementing the inclusion approach.

(iii) A strong coordination mechanism, particularly at the early stages of the response. This was chaired by MINEDUC and cochaired jointly by UNICEF and UNHCR. However, respondents note that more could have been done to maintain this element over time and build on the initial momentum gained at the outset of the response (Respondents A and D).

(iv) The strong connections of UNHCR and UNICEF to various government bodies served to create an effective working dynamic between these two UN agencies (Respondent D). While situations where multiple agencies have strong connections with government bodies can also involve tensions, it was considered that in this case, it was enhanced and supported by the UN “Delivering as One” model, which will be described in the next section.

Three key challenges emerged regarding government engagement with humanitarian and development partners:
(i) Several respondents noted the complexity and challenges associated with creating a shared vision of inclusion between the various stakeholders that aligned with their priorities, which were followed by challenges of equal measure in operationalizing this vision. Respondents were unable to agree whether this vision was achieved in full, although they reflected that the open dialogue and avenues for collaboration went a long way in helping to achieve it.

(ii) When MINEDUC developed the 2018/2019 to 2023/2024 ESSP, the process may have benefited from additional, longer-term joint advocacy for the inclusion of refugees in the plan. As it was, refugees were not included. There was some discussion by respondents regarding the implications of the decision not to include refugees in the plan; several respondents felt that this may have resulted in missed funding opportunities for schools in refugee camps that were not included in some of the financing operations. Others noted that while refugees were not explicitly mentioned in the ESSP, they were still incorporated into the plans and budgets in the schools that were enrolling refugees. Additional research is needed to understand this in more detail, including the rationale behind the decision not to include refugees in the ESSP.

(iii) The humanitarian partners had a short-term focus on the delivery of the inclusion approach, rather than integrating planning with the longer-term plans of district-level education officials. Further research is needed to explore this more fully, as the research team was unable to interview one of the district officials involved in the Kigeme response regarding the impact of this short-term focus. One respondent commented on the focus on the short-term for practical reasons in relation to their collaboration with district level officials: "In order to make it happen and concretize it, we focused on the short-term practical questions“ (Respondent B).

Following from the Kigeme response, the government’s formal acceptance of the CRRF approach in 2018 led to an expansion of partnerships, and a task force composed of “MINEMA, jointly with UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF, was established in 2017 and is working to build the targeting assistance mechanisms in 2019” (Rwanda Country Refugee Response Plan 2019).

5.3. Collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development partners

Analysis of the collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development partners focuses on UNICEF and UNHCR, although other education partners were involved as well, for example Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) worked in areas such as identifying the needs of teachers and organizing the inclusion of primary school children in the national system. The Anglican Church was another major partner; they organized inclusion for the pre-primary levels (Respondent C).

UNHCR and UNICEF had a strong working relationship during the response, which was particularly evident during the initial phases, during which close technical collaboration and dialogue with MINEMA and MINEDUC resulted in successes in moving the inclusion approach forward. This was considered to be in part a result of having a clear division of labor and responsibilities, as well as being a UN “Delivering as One” pilot country prior to the 2012 influx. Respondents felt that this model strengthened the response by creating synergies between agencies and presenting opportunities for an early-stage humanitarian/development nexus approach. There was, therefore, "a modus operandi to think from the outset how the agencies can collaborate closely in support of the government through bringing the expertise of UNICEF together with UNHCR’s protection expertise and build on the inclusion” (Respondent B). This model also had access to a separate fund created for the Delivering as One pilot, which was considered an additional advantage (Respondent D).

The challenges regarding the coordination and collaboration between humanitarian and
development partners include strengthening long-term engagement; many of the consultants involved were posted for short-term contracts within different agencies. This has changed now, with UNHCR, for example, having dedicated education officers and senior development officers in Rwanda. Additional and related challenges include not having a long-term strategy for joint-advocacy initiatives, and the necessity for better documentation of decision making in order to learn from short-term contracted consultants, and to understand the rationale behind the decisions that were made.

5.4. Emergency and follow-up assessments

The way that humanitarian and development partners coordinate and collaborate may also impact the type of emergency and follow-up assessments conducted, and whether they collect equivalent information for students from the host community. Several respondents noted various limitations and opportunities for improvement regarding overall data collection during the emergency phase. This included accessing refugee and host community student data at a specific enough level to be able to see if the inclusion approach needs to be refined or adapted. In addition, there was a considerable lack of data comparing the separate system of education provision that was used in the other refugee camps and the inclusion approach used in Kigeme. Several respondents pointed to the importance of using the available data and the need for additional data to build an evidence base regarding the impact of inclusion of refugees in national education systems. It is considered that partnerships and coordination are key to strengthening this evidence base. Having host community students in the same school as the refugees streamlined the process for the follow-up assessments conducted by UNHCR following the emergency phase (Respondent A).

6. Humanitarian and development financing

This section presents an overview of the findings regarding financial contributions to education for refugees during the response period; the humanitarian and development funding response and its implications on refugee education; and the efficiency of education provision through national institutions versus provision through separate institutions.

6.1. Financial contributions to education for refugees

While this chapter explores how the refugee education response was affected by humanitarian and development financing, the large financial investment in education from the Government of Rwanda is also noteworthy. Public expenditure almost doubled in Rwanda between 1980 and 2013, and MINEDUC (2015) notes that investments in education included teacher capacity and recruitment, school infrastructure, and teaching and learning materials (as cited in Bilgili et al. 2019). In addition to its national investment in education, Rwanda has received significant levels of aid. This high level of overall financial investment in education is considered by both respondents and the literature as an integral element in supporting refugee children's accommodation within the national education system.

Detailed documentation, however, was challenging to find. For example, there is a lack of detailed information regarding the emergency response funds, who it was allocated to, and the link between the refugee education response and humanitarian and development financing. There were conflicting observations from respondents regarding the ability to estimate the international financial contribution to education for refugees during the Kigeme response, as well as the degree to which any data could provide insight into how it affected the response. While several respondents considered this a feasible undertaking, others remarked that the overall financing and associated spending is ill-documented.

6.2. Humanitarian and development funding response

The financing of the 2012 response was considered a critical factor for the success of refugee
inclusion in the national education system. The education budget is allocated at the central level and earmarked for each district. Districts also receive funds for the construction of classrooms, with funds allocated in line with the MINEDUC educational management information system and school mapping data, which identifies districts and schools with a need for infrastructure (ESA 2017).

The financing for infrastructure, and enhancement of the capacity of host communities came predominantly from humanitarian funding. This involved considerable resources to support the initial investment required for including refugees in the national education system. One respondent articulated this use of capital for long-term solutions as different than the default reflex of the sector and emergency responses traditionally: "This isn’t usual in humanitarian response - to take investment for long-term assistance to ensure we’re investing in the future" (Respondent C). The financing contributed to the capacity of local schools through the construction of more classrooms, the provision of equipment and materials, and hiring and training teachers (UNICEF 2018). Several respondents reflected on the length of time for using humanitarian funding in the Kigeme response, and observed that striking a balance between government ownership and sustainability, and ensuring that there is available support where needed is necessary. The literature similarly suggests that camp-based refugees continue to be highly dependent on humanitarian funding even though financing is taken over by the government once refugees enroll in national schools (Bilgili and Loschmann 2018; Downen 2018; UNHCR 2019a, as cited in Crawford, Holloway and Lowe 2019).

6.3. Efficiency of education provision through national versus through separate institutions

Prior to the Kigeme response, Rwanda had experience in the provision of education for refugees through separate institutions. Respondents considered the lessons learned from these experiences critical in providing an evidence-based decision regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of refugee inclusion in the national education system in 2012. Several respondents reflected that after the government was able to see evidence of effective implementation, there was a larger commitment by the leadership toward the approach. The ability to assess the efficiency of an inclusion approach versus separate provision is highly complex, however, with multiple implications: for example, how such an approach may impact the protection and recovery of refugees, as well as security issues. As articulated by one respondent, "education has contributed a lot in terms of social recovery and protection and social cohesion between the host community and refugees" (Respondent E). Any assessments of effectiveness and efficiency must be appropriately designed, and as noted in Chapter 5 on emergency assessments, there is a further role for partnerships to actively add to this evidence base.

The literature similarly suggests that the provision of education through national institutions versus through separate institutions is both more efficient and more sustainable. In their study regarding whether the education of host community students is influenced by living near refugee camps, Bilgili et al. (2019) focus on the protracted situation of Congolese refugees in Kigeme. Their findings highlight “that the inflow of Congolese refugees in Rwanda is overall positively associated with the education of children residing in the areas surrounding the refugee camps” (305). The benefits to host community students who reside closer to a refugee camp include: (i) A higher school attendance rate compared to students who are further away. (ii) More years of schooling on average, and being more likely to finish primary school than children residing further away from refugee camps. However, the research acknowledges that it is difficult to assign this finding directly to the presence of refugee camps; it could be because of significant national investment in education over the same period of time. For this reason, it is also worth exploring the overall progress made in educational outcomes in Rwanda. Crawford, Holloway and Lowe (2019) present the following areas of progress: (i) The expected number of years of schooling has increased, from 4.9 years in 1980 to 10.3 years in 2014. (ii) The net enrollment rate in primary education has
increased from 78.7 percent in 1999 to 95.1 percent in 2015 (Bilgili et al., 2019). The gross enrollment ratio in secondary education is still low in Rwanda, despite a steady increase over the past few decades. In 1980 less than 10 percent of the children were enrolled in secondary education, compared to 40.6 percent in 2013.

7. Conclusions and key lessons learned

7.1. Conclusions

This case history explores the provision of education provision from the outset of the 2012 influx of Congolese refugees into Rwanda in order to: (i) document the factors in the early stages of a refugee response that seem to determine whether refugees are included in national education systems as opposed to separate systems; and (ii) to identify factors for further study that could shed light on essential program and policy actions that lead to greater effectiveness and sustainability of refugee education responses from the emergency stage forward.

Seven factors emerged as supporting the inclusion of refugees in the national education system in the early stages of the Kigeme response: (i) A strong history of support for refugees, and being at the forefront of the national dialogue regarding refugee support. (ii) A willingness and interest by the government to expand the scope of inclusion from what had existed at the time, as well as its ownership and strong leadership of the process. (iii) A recognition by the government of the potential for improvements to the host community’s education infrastructure, particularly as the border areas where most refugees find asylum are the least developed in the country. (iv) Significant physical space limitations in the Kigeme camp sites. (v) Advocacy on the part of partners, and UNHCR’s brokering of some of the technical discussions through deployment of technical support during the emergency phase, may also have helped to pursue the inclusion agenda. (vi) Cases of successful inclusion were available as evidence of the efficiency and effectiveness of the approach (for example, the case of the Nyabiheke camp). (vii) Notable sociocultural similarities between refugees and Rwandan hosts, including a shared language.

Numerous factors emerged as requiring additional study that could shed light on the essential program and policy actions that lead to greater effectiveness and sustainability of refugee education responses. These broadly include: (i) The strength of the relationship between the factors observed (the history of hosting refugees, the strength of the coordination mechanism, the UN “Delivering as One” pilot model, the humanitarian and development financing, humanitarian action strengthening systems, etc.) and the response. (ii) The implications and the rationale behind not including refugees in the ESSP. (iii) District-level insights into the strengths and challenges of the response, since the research team was unable to connect with a key district official involved in the Kigeme response. (iv) The lessons learned from Mugombokwa refugee camp, which applied the learning from Kigeme. This should include how the learning from Kigeme was used and operationalized, as well as what improvements were made and why.

7.2. Areas of key learning

The Kigeme refugee response in Rwanda presents a number of additional important lessons learned for the sector regarding the key successes and challenges in the provision of education for refugees. These are summarized in the points below.

A strong refugee hosting model is needed that is in sync with national priorities and is aligned with the inclusion agenda. Rwanda provides an example of a well-articulated refugee hosting model that emphasizes refugees as self-reliant members of Rwandan society who are contributing to the economic development of their host districts. This is aligned with an inclusion approach, and is based on the efficiency of the response. Because of this level of
buy-in and alignment with national priorities, Rwanda saw a quick turnaround from the
decision to include refugees in national education institutions to the operationalization of this
decision. In addition, there was a strong level of coordination between government ministries
to ensure that planning and budgeting were in sync with national and district priorities, and
a high level of support from district government authorities for humanitarian and development
partners in the implementation of the approach.

**Refugees should be involved in the education response.** The Kigeme response found
success in the active involvement of refugees in the approach, particularly in seeking their buy-in: "If you don’t show them the benefits they’ll get from integration, they might not attend the schools" (Respondent B). Parents were consulted, and were a significant part of
the process.

**A strong humanitarian-development nexus is needed for the delivery of relevant
and sustainable education for refugees.** In Rwanda, there was a strong coordination
mechanism for the response, and numerous lessons learned regarding the collaboration
between humanitarian and development partners (coordination of advocacy, cooperation
among stakeholders who have separate resources, etc.). There was a strong working
relationship between UNICEF and UNHCR because of a clear division of labor and
responsibilities, and also because of being a “UN Delivering as One” pilot country. In
particular, Rwanda also serves as an important example of humanitarian support and
financing contributing to systems strengthening. This use of resources for long-term solutions
is considered different than the default reflex of the sector. There were still challenges seen
around short-term contracts, however; therefore, multiyear, multipartner approaches are
recommended in future.

**There is a need for national education plans to include refugees.** Including refugees in
education sector planning is needed in order to raise the profile of refugees for the agenda
and planning from development partners. While Rwanda discusses the inclusion of refugees
in education in its 2017 ESA, it does not include any reference to refugees in its 2018/2019
to 2023/2024 ESSPs. In general, countries often consider refugee issues as part of a
humanitarian response rather than as part of development planning. There was some
discussion by respondents regarding the implications of this decision; several respondents
felt that this may have resulted in missed funding opportunities for schools in refugee camps,
which were not included in some of financing operations. Others noted that while refugees
were not explicitly mentioned in the ESSP, they were still incorporated into the plans and
budgets in the schools that are enrolling refugees.

**There needs to be a more effective way of capturing learning for the sector.** All
respondents shared the opinion that the successes seen in Rwanda, as well as the responses
in other countries continue to be ill-documented. For example, there needs to be more
information about the rationale behind decisions made; broader reflections about the
responses; and more about what should be prioritized in future responses. Respondents were
unsure of the extent to which the response in Rwanda was documented, and argued this was
a result of short-term contracts and a general lack of the time, resources, and an adequate
system for documenting decisions during a crisis. This may also have been because annual
planning by humanitarian partners lacked a consideration of longer-term implications of the
response, and did not sync their short-term budgets with a longer-term perspective and
sustainability.

**An evidence base is needed to explore the implications of the inclusion of refugees
in national systems in more detail.** Drawing on the learning from refugee education
through separate institutions in Rwanda was critical in providing an evidence-based decision
regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of including refugees in the national education
system in 2012. After the government was able to see evidence of effective implementation,
there was a larger commitment by the leadership toward this approach. The successes seen
in Rwanda should be built on and shared with host country governments, with the data aligned
to national priorities. If the agenda is one of repatriation, for example, evidence should be gathered to indicate that inclusion in the national education system can act an avenue for effective repatriation: “If they go back home, their relevance will diminish and won’t be the same as those who benefited from education.” (Respondent E).

The cross-cutting report presents key learning from each of the three country contexts in greater detail, as well as sectoral recommendations and areas for further research based on the cross-cutting analysis.
Annex A: References


Education Sector Strategic Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18. Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Education.


Annex B: List of interviewees

- 6 interviews with staff from UN agencies
- 1 interview with a government representative
### Annex C: Research questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research area 1: Government policy and leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary and secondary research questions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RQ1a:</strong> How have different governments addressed the issue of whether and how to include refugees in national education systems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What was the national policy on inclusion of refugees prior to the crisis?</td>
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<td>• To what degree did ministries involved in national education sector planning lead emergency-phase planning? If they did not lead it, to what degree were they involved?</td>
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<td>• Was there any shift in government policy toward educational assistance for refugees and their access to the national education system during the course of the crisis? If so, what factors triggered such change? Did any particular factors incentivize/disincentivize such a change?</td>
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<td><strong>RQ1b:</strong> What can be said about how these approaches have affected the sustainability and relevance of the education offer for refugees?</td>
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<th>Research area 2: Contribution and engagement of partners</th>
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<td><strong>Primary and secondary research questions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RQ2a:</strong> How was the response influenced by governments’ engagement with humanitarian and development partners?</td>
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<td>• To what extent are education partners split along the lines of development and humanitarian response, and how do these links (or lack thereof) support or hamper an integrated, longer-term approach for refugee education?</td>
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<td>• What can be said about actions and measures undertaken by development actors during emergency phases in the three cases that have supported or hampered the transition of refugees to national systems?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How did development partners (including an education sector planning body) engage with humanitarian education actors during the crisis? Did development actors take part in / contribute to: (i) an emergency coordination mechanism established for the crisis; (ii) emergency assessments; (iii) developing the education chapter of the emergency and/or refugee response plan?</td>
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<td>• Did emergency assessments collect equivalent information for host community students?</td>
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<td>• Did emergency response plans fund government or partner action, or both?</td>
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<td>• To what degree did humanitarian partner action contribute to education sector planning goals as articulated in ESPs or equivalent?</td>
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<td><strong>RQ2b:</strong> How did this engagement support or hamper an integrated, longer-term approach for refugee education?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• What can be said about actions and measures undertaken by humanitarian actors during emergency phases in the three cases</td>
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that have supported or hampered the transition of refugees to national systems?

### Research area 3: Development and humanitarian financing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary and secondary research questions</th>
<th>RQ3a: How was the refugee education response affected by humanitarian and development financing?</th>
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<td>• What proportion of the joint humanitarian funding response contributed to programmes that supported refugee inclusion, either through direct support to public systems or learning support that led to inclusion (e.g. national accelerated education programmes)?</td>
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<td>• Is it possible to accurately estimate the international financial contribution to education for refugees?</td>
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<td>○ In Rwanda, for responses since the Kigeme response</td>
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<td>○ In Turkey, prior to and following the decision to include Syrian learners in the national system</td>
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<td>○ In Bangladesh, since 2017</td>
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<td>• What impediments, if any, exist to gathering accurate estimations of international humanitarian and development financial contributions to education for refugees in each context?</td>
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<td>• What data is needed to determine whether integrated programs for refugees are more efficient than parallel responses?</td>
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