



# UNHCR Monthly Protection Update Refugee Status Determination (RSD) January 2019

The Ugandan Government is responsible for Refugee Status Determination (RSD). UNHCR works with the Refugee Department within the Office of the Prime Minister and other partners to build and enhance the capacity of national RSD procedures.

## Key Figures of the month

<b>1,744</b>	# of new asylum seekers registered at the Refugee Desk
<b>4,069</b>	# of new asylum seekers from DRC registered in settlements
<b>1,835</b>	# of new asylum seekers from South Sudan registered in settlements
<b>450</b>	# of new asylum seekers from Burundi registered in Nakivale settlement

## Key Achievement of 2018

<b>8,909</b>	# of asylum applications adjudicated by the REC
<b>8,038</b>	# of asylum applications granted
<b>90</b>	% of recognition rate in the first instance
<b>253</b>	# of asylum appeals reviewed by the RAB
<b>77</b>	# of appeals set aside by the RAB

### NOTE:

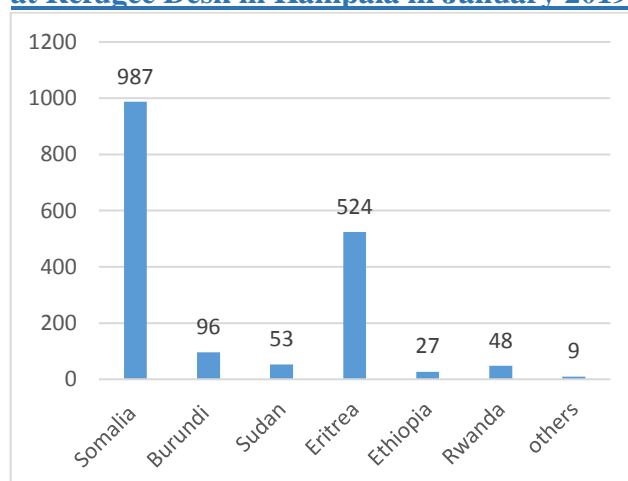
As of writing, DRC nationals (*who enter Uganda via designated border points*) and South Sudanese are granted refugee status on *prima facie* basis in accordance with Section 25 of the Refugees Act.

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

### Monthly Trend of Asylum Seekers

- During the reporting period, a total of 1,744 new asylum seekers were registered at the Refugee Desk in Kampala including 987 Somalis and 524 Eritreans. The figure indicates approximately 48% increase in the number of asylum seekers as compared to December 2018.
- 4,069 new asylum seekers from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were recorded in south west and mid-west of the country, which shows approximately 52% higher number compared to the previous month. The majority of them fled from ongoing tension and violence in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces including fresh clashes between Lendu and Begegere tribes.
- 1,835 new asylum seekers from South Sudan were reported in Arua, Adjumani and Yumbe districts. The reasons of their displacement included violence and insecurity including fresh clashes between the government force and National Salvation Front as well as lack of access to humanitarian assistance and basis service.
- 450 Burundian asylum seekers were newly registered in Nakivale settlement owing to continuous insecurity and the request for family reunification.

### Country of origin of asylum seekers registered at Refugee Desk in Kampala in January 2019



## Status Determination

There was no session of the Refugee Eligibility Committee and Refugee Appeals Board in January.

## Strategy

UNHCR supports the Ugandan authorities with the assumption of responsibility for individual refugee status determination with the following objectives:

- To strengthen the capacity of the government to deliver a fair, credible and efficient refugee status determination
- To advocate for improvement of the national legislation and related by-laws on asylum in line with applicable international and regional standards
- To actively engage with the government to ensure access to asylum in face of mixed flows of refugees and migrants.

## Challenges

- **Limited capacity to process asylum claims:** The latest OPM-UNHCR verification exercise confirms that there are 13,167 asylum seekers in Kampala as of end of October 2018. The analysis of backlog will be soon conducted based on the verified data in developing a strategy for backlog reduction.
- **Lack of adequate space for initial screening:** The poor physical condition of the Refugee Desk hampers an initial screening of asylum seekers in Kampala effectively. The current set-up does not equip for proper file management but also significantly compromises the principle of confidentiality and privacy.
- **Insufficient quality of RSD interview/decision-making:** A combination of several factors such as limited number of interview officers and interpreters (in light of the current caseload), inadequate quality of interpretation service and limited capacity to handle complex cases undermines the quality of RSD decisions.
- **Gaps in law, and gaps between law and practice of asylum procedure:** The review process of the Refugees Act and Regulations has been ongoing since 2015. Coupled with lack of proper application of certain provisions, there are several deficits such as limited authority of Refugee Appeals Board, lack of clear definition in certain terms as well as absence of the clear provision regulating the reception/admission procedure for asylum seekers in Kampala.
- **Increasing mixed migration flows:** The government has increasingly faced difficulties in recognizing the situation of refugees and refugees within migratory movements, which results in tightening an access to asylum procedure.

**Contact person: Yusuke Hara ([hara@unhcr.org](mailto:hara@unhcr.org))**