

***Source: International Rescue Committee***

***Date: 10 Oct 1997***

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## **Rwanda Program**

### **Project Purpose**

To encourage and assist the repatriation and resettlement of the Rwandan refugees returning from Tanzania, Zaire and Burundi, by developing a stable environment in Rwanda.

### **Project Beneficiaries**

Direct beneficiaries: 439,000 residents and 400,000 returning refugees in Cyangugu, South Kigali and Kibungo Prefectures. Indirect beneficiaries are 968,000 residents and 556,000 refugees in neighboring countries

### **Project Activities**

Rehabilitation of homes, educational facilities, health centers, transit camps and judicial infrastructure  
Re-establishment of health care services at IRC-supported health care facilities: immunization, nutrition, reproductive health care and training of health care staff  
Procurement and distribution of medical supplies and equipment  
Rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems  
Assistance for children residing in an unaccompanied minors' center, as well as assistance to vulnerable families through a community support program  
Construction, maintenance and management of transit camps for returning refugees as well as provision of food, seeds, non-food items and medical care to returnees  
Management of Open Relief Centers, assisting the local government with

resettlement of the returning internally displaced population  
Provision of loans and business training to local cooperatives  
Support of women's initiatives in rebuilding their lives and that of their communities through training project  
Participation in a program to rehabilitate child prisoners  
Support of start-up emergency IRC programs in Burundi and Zaire

### **Background**

On April 6, 1994, the airplane in which the Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi were traveling was shot down outside of Kigali, Rwanda. This incident signaled the beginning of a series of events that resulted in the loss of a large number of lives, and destroyed much of the country's infrastructure. The genocide, mostly by Hutu extremists, of an estimated one million unarmed civilians, predominantly those of Tutsi ethnicity, in conjunction with the flight of over two million people to the border countries of Tanzania, Zaire, and Burundi, left many sectors

without the qualified personnel needed for operation at pre-war levels. The new leaders of Rwanda are still struggling to overcome financial constraints and gaps in institutional memory in their effort to re-build the country.

Fighting in eastern Zaire exacerbated these conditions by sending an estimated 600,000 Rwandan refugees from the Goma and Bukavu area camps back to Rwanda. In September of 1996, Zairean government-sanctioned harassment of Banyamulenge (Tutsis of Rwandan origin, who have lived in the Mulenge hills for more than 200 years) escalated into violent conflict in both North and South Kivu. In addition, an estimated 480,000 Rwandans returned in December from Tanzania. Rwanda is now in the process of attempting to integrate these returnees.

To address these problems, IRC's programs provide a multi-sectoral approach to various facets of everyday life. IRC has rehabilitated schools, public health facilities, and water treatment plants. Court buildings and offices have been rebuilt to support a more effective judicial system needed to speed up the processing of thousands of prisoners held for alleged participation in the genocide. IRC participates in the rehabilitation and development of sanitation systems, and runs apprentice and cooperative programs to help people return to economic self-sufficiency. IRC operates sectors such as health care, community support, rehabilitation, and unaccompanied minors programs. IRC also carries out UNHCR-funded Quick Impact Programs and operates a trucking service to support IRC, local government and other NGO rehabilitation activities. In 1997 IRC will continue to focus on helping the Rwandan Government meet the overwhelming shelter needs of returnees.

## Contacts

Maha Muna, Program Officer Internet: [maha@intrescom.org](mailto:maha@intrescom.org)  
Marianne Buenaventura, Program Assistant Internet: [marianne@intrescom.org](mailto:marianne@intrescom.org)  
Susan Riehl, Regional Recruitment Officer Internet: [susanr@intrescom.org](mailto:susanr@intrescom.org)

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## **Burundi Emergency Response**

### **PROJECT PURPOSE**

To assist the Government of Rwanda in the reintegration and resettlement of over 1.3 million recent returnees from Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi through implementation of water, shelter, health and self-reliance programs.

### **PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

Provide shelter assistance to over 2,000 newly-resettled families in the three prefectures. Provide vulnerable families with shelter, credit, agricultural and livestock assistance through community-based support programs.

- Assist returnees during repatriation through the operation of transit camps, establishment of water and sanitation stations, support of health facilities and management of registration and food distribution activities. Accommodate and assist unaccompanied minors in a transit camp and UAM center with a capacity of 210.
- Rehabilitate or extend rural water systems into villages and water sensibilization training to hand-over maintenance responsibilities of these water systems.
- Operate of a loan schemes in four prefectures for 6,810 members of small businesses and 350 cooperatives of at least seven members each.
- Provide support to the Kibungo health district through formulation of a district health plan and material support to eight health centers and a hospital in Kibungo Prefecture.
- Support the Rwamagana nursing school with the employment of teacher-trainers and provision of material support.
- Support women's initiatives to rebuild their lives and that of their communities through training.
- Rehabilitate commune buildings, justice buildings and schools which were damaged during the war.

### **PROJECT BENEFICIARIES**

Beneficiaries include over 6,000 unaccompanied children accommodated at the Nyagatare Transit Center, approximately 600 unaccompanied children transited through the Fred Rwigema Center for UAMs, a total of 250,000 Rwandans benefiting from health activities, 550,000 Rwandan returnees assisted during repatriation and over 9,260 people benefiting from credit through the Self-Reliance Program. Indirect beneficiaries consist of approximately 1.5 million living in the prefectures in which IRC implements water and sanitation, self-reliance, health and rehabilitation projects.

## BACKGROUND

The 1994 genocide and war in Rwanda resulted in the deaths of an estimated one million civilians, the displacement or flight of over two million people, the breakdown of national infrastructures and the destruction of basic social and economic systems throughout the country.

The Government of Rwanda is still struggling to overcome financial constraints and gaps in institutional memory in their effort of re-build the country. The tenuous stability of the region has been threatened further with the forced repatriation of 1,100,000 refugees from Burundi and Tanzania and the return of 700,000 Rwandans from Congo/Zaire when fighting broke out near the camps in that war-stricken country. The return of these refugee populations had a profound impact on the immediate needs in the communes of Rwanda including the exacerbation of a severe shortage of housing, basic services and infrastructure.

To address these problems, IRC staff has worked closely with the local authorities to assist in the resettlement and reintegration of the new returnees. Through a multi-sectoral approach, IRC has been able to address the specific needs of each targeted population within the three prefectures of Cyangugu, Kibungo and Kigali-Rural. Large water and sanitation projects have brought water to rural areas and to newly resettled families in government-designated sites in which IRC also provides shelter assistance. IRC runs community-based support programs to provide credit, shelter, agricultural and livestock assistance.

Through the rehabilitation of communal buildings such as schools, hospitals and justice buildings, local governments benefit directly from IRC activities.

## Contacts

Tim Gilbo, Country Director Internet: [ircbuja@cbinf.com](mailto:ircbuja@cbinf.com) Maha Muna, Program Officer Internet: [maha@intrescom.org](mailto:maha@intrescom.org) Andrew Robarts, Emergency Recruiter Internet: [andrew@intrescom.org](mailto:andrew@intrescom.org)