



RW110- Humanitarian Response and Disaster Management

Rwanda Development Challenges and UN Solutions

Refugees and returnees: The security situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has resulted in a substantial influx of refugees into Rwanda. More than 74,000 individuals currently depend on the support of the UN in Rwanda in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda. Due to land scarcity, the four refugee camps are congested, challenging the ability to achieve minimum camp living standards. The UN provides shelter, food and non-food items, water and sanitation. The UN also promotes self-reliance, access to rights and justice, healthcare and education to address the needs of the refugees and preserve asylum space and strengthen protection practices. Refugees suffering from malnutrition receive additional food supplements or specific care at health centres or hospitals in cases of severe acute malnutrition to increase their nutritional status. Primary school children receive a mid-morning meal to reduce drop-out rates, especially among girl children in camps. Refugees returning to Rwanda need assistance in various areas and are entitled to a returnee package composed of food and non-food items but also socio-economic support to enable them to be reintegrated. Humanitarian response and Disaster management Vulnerable groups such as children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly, survivors of gender-based violence, and people living with HIV/AIDS need specific assistance.

Diseases: Disease epidemics such as Ebola, cholera, avian influenza, and HIV/AIDS, as well as diseases affecting crops are also considered as disaster threats. The UN advocates for a national emergency preparedness plan that takes disease outbreaks into account.

Earthquakes and floods: Increased seismic activity in the Rift Valley raises earthquake risks for nearby countries, Rwanda being one of them. Meanwhile, adhering to construction safety codes and seismic standards is a challenge in rural locations. In 2008, a 6.1 Richter scale earthquake hit the Rusizi and Nyamasheke areas, leading to 45 deaths, 876 injuries, 1,200 displaced families, and over 4,000 buildings damaged or destroyed. In addition, increased deforestation to expand agricultural land has resulted in land degradation which causes landslides and flooding. The UN and the Government of Rwanda work together to improve research and risk analysis to reduce the impacts of natural disasters and to improve national disaster management and recovery for affected people.

Volcanic activity: Active volcanoes in the region still pose a high risk to Rwandans living near Goma in DRC. The Nyiragongo volcano in the DRC erupted in 2002, which caused the displacement of 300,000 people and left nearly 130,000 people homeless. The UN works with Government of Rwanda to develop a disaster monitoring and early warning system.