

Rwanda: UNHCR - WFP Joint Targeting Strategy for refugees in camps

From blanket to needs-based targeted food assistance

Rwanda is currently hosting around 130,000 Burundian and Congolese refugees in six refugee camps. Under the overall guidance of the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), WFP and UNHCR has provided blanket food and non-food assistance in cash to camp-based refugees. WFP and UNHCR country offices committed to shift to targeted provision of food assistance based on needs. This is in line with the government’s commitment and strategy on graduating camp-based refugees out of dependency on humanitarian assistance programmes, and to ensure the most effective use of limited resources.

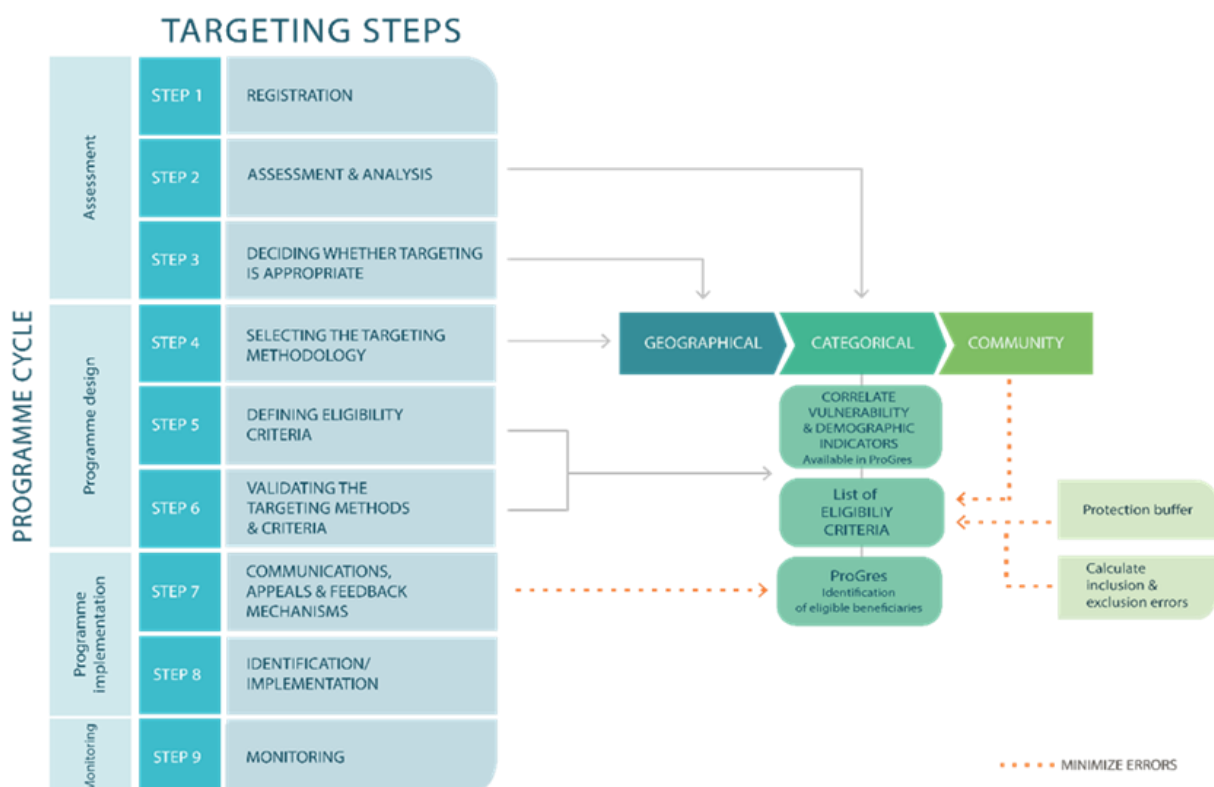
UNHCR and WFP requested the support of the UNHCR-WFP Programme Excellence and Targeting Hub (Hub) to develop a targeting strategy based on needs that follows the global commitments on targeting principles and Joint Guidance on Targeting of Assistance to Meet Basic Needs, jointly developed by the two organizations.

Targeting strategy

The development of the targeting strategy started in July 2020 with the following objectives:

- ⇒ **Identify vulnerable** refugee households in need of humanitarian assistance and less vulnerable refugees with higher livelihood resilience who would benefit from livelihoods support; and
- ⇒ Ensure the greatest **protection** outcomes through strong community participation, communications with refugee communities, and risk analysis to inform the approach.

The targeting approach followed nine targeting steps established in the joint targeting guidance and tailored to the context of refugees in Rwanda. The approach was based on a combination of geographical, categorical and community-based targeting while protection aspects were mainstreamed along all the steps of the targeting approach.



The **Joint Post Distribution Monitoring and needs assessment (JPDM)** conducted in December 2020 provided a strong understanding of the vulnerability and needs of the refugees in each camp and enabled the identification of the eligibility criteria for targeting assistance. Based on the JPDM analysis, refugee households were grouped into three vulnerability categories: highly vulnerable, moderately vulnerable and least vulnerable. Then, a profiling exercise was finalized to understand the key characteristics of each group and to inform the definition of potential eligibility criteria for different programmatic interventions including food and non-food assistance. In addition, potential risks associated with targeting and prioritization implementations were assessed and documented together by the Hub and the CO team.

The **analysis** led by the Hub technical team and conducted together with UNHCR, WFP identified eight eligibility criteria associated with the three different groups of households categorized as highly, moderately and least vulnerable. The targeting strategy was developed using the combination of these criteria (including the working capacity of the refugees) minimizing inclusion and exclusion errors, which was endorsed by MINEMA.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC		PROTECTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households that have a high number of dependents (dependency ratio ≥ 2) Single headed household with children below 5 years Single female headed household 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household head with no education Household with 8 or more members Household with 2 or more female children aged 0-17 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household with 1 or more disabled or chronically sick members Household with member at risk based on UNHCR classification (e.g. unaccompanied minor, older person living alone etc.)

Working capacity: presence of adult men in working age (18-59 years) able to work

A wide range of refugee **community members were consulted** on the proposed eligibility criteria to ensure they reflect vulnerability as defined by the refugee communities and to identify any additional protection risks of the targeting exercise. Forty-one community consultations were carried out in all six refugees' camps and feedback was incorporated to inform the finalization of the proposed set of eligibility criteria. Then, the targeting approach was discussed and finalized in collaboration with the Hub, the country teams and MINEMA.

Three different assistance packages were developed for the three group of refugee households with different levels of vulnerability.

VULNERABILITY GROUPS AND ASSISTANCE PACKAGES

Group 1 - Highly Vulnerable (100% of food assistance)

- **One or more** members falling under **protection criteria** or,
- **Two or more socio-demographic** criteria, or
- **One socio-demographic** criteria but **without any adult male** members aged 18-59 years able to work.

Group 2 - Moderately Vulnerable (50% of food assistance)

- **One socio-demographic** criteria and no other criteria with adult male working capacity in the household, or
- Households not meeting any of the above criteria, but **without any adult male** members aged 18-59 years able to work.

Group 3 - Least Vulnerable (not eligible of food assistance)

Households that do not meet any of the eligibility criteria, and have one or more male members aged 18-59 years able to work

Communication, appeals and monitoring

To mitigate potential implementation errors and ensure that changing situations in the households are addressed, a **joint appeal mechanism** was developed. Dedicated targeting helplines have been set up by UNHCR for each camp. Refugees are encouraged to call these targeting helplines considering the current COVID-19 pandemic. However, they could also approach existing complaints and feedback channels. UNHCR reassesses the eligibility of the household that has appealed through its case management process. The results of the case management processes are presented to joint appeal panels with representatives from WFP, UNHCR and MINEMA, which take the final decisions on household eligibility, set up in each of the six camps.

Consistent key **messages** on the targeting exercise, refugees' existing rights, the joint appeals mechanism as well as other existing complaints and feedback channels were shared through several channels: limited community meetings (due to the ongoing pandemic), refugee committees, community mobilisers, humanitarian field staff, posters and leaflets. This ensured that refugees and partners including Rwandan authorities and NGO partners were well informed about the targeting exercise and its different steps.

While first key messages were shared with refugees during the community consultations on the targeting exercise in mid-March, a broader information sharing campaign was carried out before the start of the implementation of the new targeting approach. A **joint community engagement strategy** details the key messages shared and the communication channels used. The key messages were agreed upon with country and field offices and will be regularly updated to make sure they reflect any changes to the targeting approach.

A **targeting governance** team is being established with members from UNHCR, WFP and MINEMA to oversee targeting implementation and management of ongoing activities.

A **joint monitoring system** of the targeting approach is under development to monitor key outcome indicators for refugees receiving different assistance packages. This will inform management about the impact of the targeting approach over time as well as the potential need to review and adapt the targeting approach to new circumstances and/or needs.

The size of the general food assistance ration for refugees depends on the availability of funding. Should funding not permit providing full assistance, WFP gives priority to those in highest need. The targeting exercise only applies to general food assistance. All refugees, will continue to receive other assistance from WFP and UNHCR.

The new targeting approach is effective from May 2021.

How was protection mainstreamed throughout the targeting process?

Vulnerability analysis: the vulnerability analysis takes into consideration protection needs and reliance on high risk coping strategies that expose refugees to protection risks.

Risk assessment: a detailed risk assessment of the targeting strategy identified potential protection risks and designed mitigation measures.

Community consultations: validated the targeting eligibility criteria and approach, ensuring that protection concerns and risks identified are also captured.

Eligibility criteria: protection criteria for selecting beneficiaries are used to complement the demographic criteria based on socio-economic vulnerability.

CFM and appeals mechanism: the appeals mechanism is designed to allow beneficiaries to appeal decisions on their eligibility for assistance. Protection issues related to the targeting implementation are identified through the CFMs, ensuring procedures are in place to adequately handle high priority cases such as corruption and complaints relating to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

Monitoring: least vulnerable households will be monitored to assess whether it has increased exposure to protection risks.

May 2021

For further information please contact: WFP.UNHCR.hub@wfp.org

Cinzia Papavero, Senior Targeting Advisor

Suneet Singh, Joint Country Coordinator - Rwanda

Homaira Sikandary, Programme Team Leader and Joint Coordinator (a.i.)