ALIGHT Rwanda supports displaced persons and host communities through co-creating community driven solutions to improve their living standards. Over 2 million people have been assisted by Alight in the past 30 years.By Francis Byaruhanga.

Alight (formerly American Refugee Committee – ARC) is grateful for the 30 year presence in Rwanda through the fundamental support and collaboration with the Government of Rwanda through Ministry of Emergeny Management – MINEMA, Ministry of Health – MoH, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion – MIGEPROF,Ministry of ICT- MINICT, Ministry of Agriculture – MINAGRI, District authorities and other stakeholders such as UNHCR, UNFPA for the unfailing support without which it would have been impossible to support over 2 million persons.

The mission of Alight in Rwanda is to unlock new pathways to re-define quality and innovative assistance to our customers. We inspire and unleash abundance in every person we serve.

Eunice Mwende, the Executive Director of ALIGHT Rwanda

Eunice Mwende, the Executive Director of ALIGHT Rwanda made the remarks as the organisation celebrates 30 years of providing humanitarian services to refugees in Rwanda.

The milti-donor funded NGO commenced operations in 1994 following the Genocide against the Tutsi.

Eunice observed that livelihoods have improved in the last 30 years citing the organization’s efforts in empowering families particularly the youth and women in refugee camps.

“Our initiatives have significantly improved the general welfare and livelihoods within the camp. Many families have seized available opportunities and hence can educate their children, meet basic needs like food,” said Eunice.

Over 60 young refugees have been trained in software development in Mahama and Nyabiheke refugee camps. Of these, 24 of them graduated in March 2024 and have been linked to employment opportunities in Kigali.

She said that Alight promotes co-creation initiatives with its customers on all its programs in order to find solutions together.

In the last three decades, our organization has seen significant growth in our interventions, customer base, and geographic footprint, she says.

Over the years, the organization has focused on fostering equality, refugees' empowerment, and human connection. The organization adapts to evolving challenges, striving to be a strategic force in supporting conflict-affected and displaced persons as well as advocating for peace and stability in the region.

"Recently, we supported 300 teen mothers, enabling them to generate income by producing soap like those found in supermarkets. Through this endeavor, their group can earn above Rwf800,000 (approx. $800) monthly from sales and other services they provide."

Other achievements along the 30-year journey include facilitating employment opportunities and establishment of a coding school in camps.

However, she noted that cutting down on refugee funds substantially affected their activities and prompted ALIGHT Rwanda to focus on building refugees' resilience and self-sufficiency.

Through collaboration with the government and other partners providing support in various areas, including healthcare and policy guidance will help catch up with the emerging financial challenges.

ALIGHT Rwanda operates across five refugee camps established in the aftermath of the Genocide. When war erupted in the DR Congo in 1998, it provided refuge to Congolese and Burundian civilians fleeing violence.

The camps include Kiziba (Karongi), Nyabiheke (Gatsibo), Mahama (Kirehe), Mugombwa (Huye) and Kigeme (Nyamagabe).

The organisations main sectors of interventions are Livelihoods and economic empowerment, Health, Protection, Nutrition, Clean energy and Climate smart and

Gender sensitive agriculture.