

Rwanda has announced that by 2025, all refugees living in the country will be enrolled in the Mutuelle de Santé, the national community-based health insurance system, available to Rwandan citizens.

This initiative, which is already being rolled out, began with refugees living in urban areas and students in refugee boarding schools. These groups are now receiving healthcare under the insurance program.

The plan aligns with Rwanda's commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which it signed in 1979. The government aims to support refugees while helping them integrate and become self-reliant.

Gen. Maj (Rtd) Murasira Albert, Minister of Emergency Management, confirmed that by next year, all refugees will be part of the health insurance program. "By 2025, all refugees will be covered by Mutuelle de Santé, just like Rwandans," he stated.

The Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA) is working with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINICOFIN) and the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to determine how much refugees will contribute to the program each year.

"Refugees in urban areas are already enrolled, and starting next year, all refugees will benefit from Mutuelle de Santé," Murasira added.

The government is also addressing concerns from local Rwandans living near refugee camps who have refused to pay for health insurance. Some claim they should receive free healthcare, as refugees do, but the government is ensuring equal access for both refugees and host communities.

The health insurance coverage will extend to all hospitals and health centers serving refugees. Data from MINEMA shows that 91% of refugees are registered in the national refugee system. Additionally, 96% of children born to refugees have been registered, along with 96% of children under five years old.

Education and vocational training are also priorities for refugees in Rwanda. The country has built 878 classrooms for refugees, along with 786 toilets. Over 500 teachers are employed to educate them. Rwanda also has six ICT centers and six technical and vocational schools (TVET) for refugees.

Senators praised the government's efforts, noting that refugees are contributing

positively to the country's economy and society. "Having skilled professionals like teachers and doctors among refugees helps enrich our nation," said Senator Nyirasafari Esperance.

Rwanda currently hosts 135,635 refugees, most from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. The government continues to engage in discussions with other nations to facilitate refugee repatriation.

Rwanda's inclusive approach helps refugees integrate into the local community, giving them the opportunity to thrive.