



**ALIGHT**

*Rwanda*



**The POST**  
**2020-21**



# ***Hello! Hello!***

## *Partners and Friends of Alight,*

Since 1994, Alight has played a critical role in rebuilding lives and responding to crises in Rwanda. Today, we're the one agency that works in all refugee camps and sites across the country. We serve nearly 150,000 Congolese and Burundian refugees, as well as refugees and asylum seekers residing in designated sites and their kind Rwandan host communities.

But I believe what makes us truly unique is an always unsatisfied appetite to be better. To forge ahead, to embrace new possibilities, to find others and welcome deep collaboration. To make good on our promise to be our very best for the people we serve, to never leave anything on the table. And all in alignment with Rwanda's abundant energy for innovation and change.

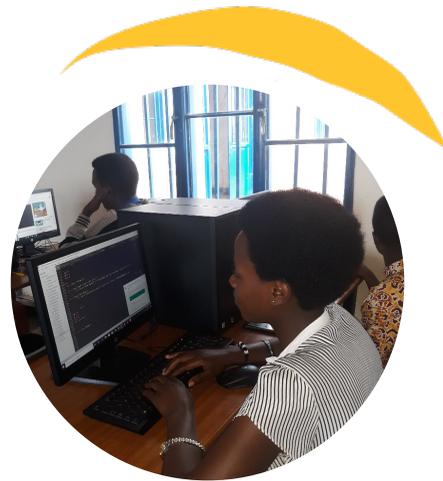
Recently, this commitment and our resilience as an agency has been tested by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our work could have stopped in its tracks! But remembering our promise to do our very best, and even better, we asked instead—what are the possibilities? How can we come through on the other side even stronger than before? The result has been to make large-scale changes for the better—like the digitization of almost all of our services—taking a great leap in bringing our programs into 21st century operationalization.

Embracing new possibilities also means collaborations with the private sector. With partners like MeshPower, kLab, GSMA, Viamo, Carnegie Mellon University, and MTN, we're piloting technologically-driven humanitarian assistance and growing opportunities in the most unexpected of places. And, we remain thankful to our long term supporters such as the US State Department, various UN agencies, as well as individuals or groups of supporters.

Part of striving to always be better means that even when we reach that next level, we don't settle. We know we need to keep reaching. The pursuit to embrace new possibilities is a lifelong one, and one that our customers deserve—to thrive and live in dignity. We're here and ready for the challenge. And we welcome you to this noble journey!



Bernad O. OJWANG  
Country Director, Rwanda



## SCOPING THE FUTURE



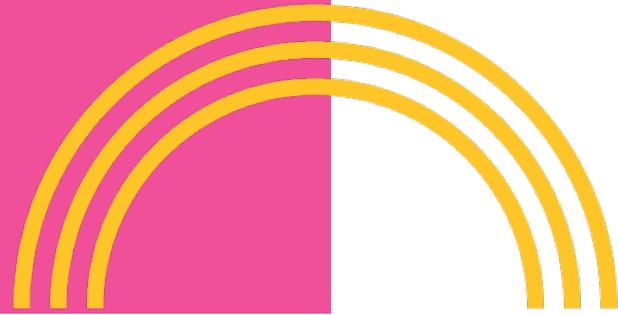
While Alight Rwanda works to ensure that the basic needs of refugees and asylum seekers are met, we also recognize that in order to help displaced people fully regain a life of dignity and fulfillment, we must think and act beyond the status quo. This includes seeking out partners in the private sector.

Through our partnership with MeshPower, GSMA, and VIAMO we're piloting technologically driven humanitarian assistance, such as Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems for pregnant mothers, solar street lights, charging kiosks, and energy saving stoves. Our partnership with kLab is pioneering world-class coding schools for talented refugee and host learners. We also actively collaborate with leading agencies like global telecommunications company MTN, training MTN agents on humanitarian and protection principles to work better and relate safely with Rwanda's refugee communities.

## FEEDBACK IN ACTION



The Rwandan people and government, with their dedication to economic growth, stability, and building world class systems and solutions, provide an ideal environment for our exploration and innovation— including piloting Kuja Kuja, Alight's customer feedback mechanism. In Rwanda, we've collected more than 600,000 ratings of our services and over 200,000 ideas for how to do better. Kuja Kuja allows us to consistently improve and iterate on all of our programs, using the voices of the people we serve as a guide, and making all the data available at [kujakuja.com](http://kujakuja.com). It helps us to fulfill our promise to work together—to do more and never settle.



## BETTER HEALTH & NUTRITION

Rwanda's health teams offer a full package of primary healthcare to patients in three refugee camps in Rwanda—Gihembe, Nyabiheke, and Mahama. They lead with compassion and creativity, prioritizing patient-centered care that addresses the needs of the whole person.

Reaching more than 56,000 patients quarterly, our services include primary health and reproductive programs, as well as a comprehensive immunization program, palliative care, outpatient consultations, minor surgeries, inpatient services, mental health care, and dental care.



## MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Our nutrition program supports over 18,000 people per quarter, paying particular attention to children under five, pregnant women, and those with chronic diseases to help them access nutritional support, education, and counseling. We also practice regular monthly nutrition screenings, identifying malnourished cases and getting them the support they need. Our Warm Meal project, one of our new nutrition initiatives, provides a warm, cooked meal for women who have just delivered babies, giving a critical boost of energy and supporting the production of breast milk and helping nearly 25 mothers per month survive childbirth. It's initiatives like these that keep our healthcare programs up-to-date with the evolving needs of our clients.



## SHELTER & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The bulk of housing as well as service spaces in refugee camps in Rwanda were built by Alight, with the support of various agencies. And, the infrastructure in half of the camps today continues to be maintained or rehabilitated by the team. But for us, “shelter” also means making a deliberate decision to maintain and improve the built environment in the places we work, whether that be roads, drainage, modern hospitals, or repairing dilapidated buildings.

Rwanda’s mountainous landscape can make infrastructure a challenge. But our engineers have worked diligently to construct well above 50 kilometers of road (and counting), 38 bridges, over 12,000 permanent shelters for refugee camps, as well as social halls, health facilities, maternity units, dental units, safe houses, nutrition centers, soccer fields, youth centers, and even cinemas! It’s all a part of making refugee camps and host communities not only safe, secure places, but places where people can build a meaningful life, too.



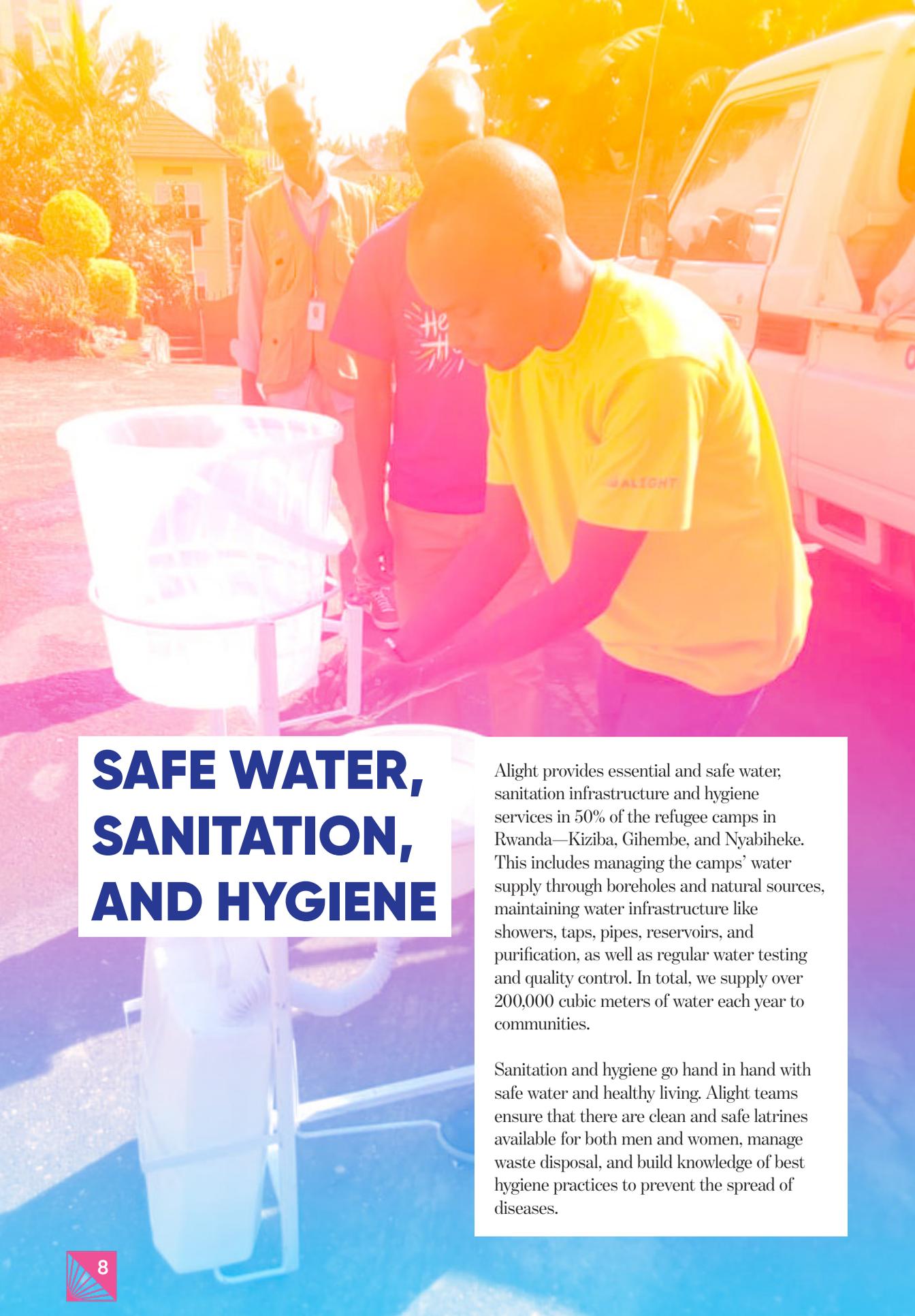
## COMMUNITY ECONOMIES

Through multiple approaches, we support displaced persons in building meaningful, sustainable livelihoods. The Stepped Approach to Improved Livelihoods program (SAIL) is one approach. SAIL is a competitive business grant program designed to empower entrepreneurs through small business grants. Budding entrepreneurs also receive training to support their small businesses, like hairstyling, mobile phone services, shoe repair, masonry, carpentry and transportation.

Through Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), communities pool money into a group-managed trust, enabling members to invest in small businesses, meet school fees, and cover the cost of social events that are part of the valuable culture of displaced persons, helping them to regain a sense of normalcy. We’ve also partnered with several accredited Rwandan academies to provide training in high-demand skills for the local and national labor market, like electronics repair, tailoring, carpentry, masonry, engine repair, and hairstyling.

The next chapter in our partnerships and work in this space now shifts to cash based interventions, targeted start-up or business expansion grants, linkages to financial services to access credit, and ongoing mentorship and support. Ensuring women, men and youth have the opportunity to work and feed their families and loved ones, we’re investing in their futures so they can lead safe and meaningful lives.





## **SAFE WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE**

Alight provides essential and safe water, sanitation infrastructure and hygiene services in 50% of the refugee camps in Rwanda—Kiziba, Gihembe, and Nyabiheke. This includes managing the camps' water supply through boreholes and natural sources, maintaining water infrastructure like showers, taps, pipes, reservoirs, and purification, as well as regular water testing and quality control. In total, we supply over 200,000 cubic meters of water each year to communities.

Sanitation and hygiene go hand in hand with safe water and healthy living. Alight teams ensure that there are clean and safe latrines available for both men and women, manage waste disposal, and build knowledge of best hygiene practices to prevent the spread of diseases.

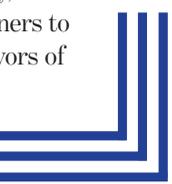
# **PROTECTING COMMUNITIES & ABUSE PREVENTION**



Upholding the principle of humanity and treating all people equally in all circumstances have remained fundamental to our Protection work at Alight. We place individuals at risk at the center of our efforts. Across all refugee camps and in urban settings in Rwanda, Alight teams actively work to reduce the risk of gender-based violence through a community-led approach, promoting resilience, fostering community activism, and enabling survivors and those at risk to access care and support. We have more than 400 Refugee Volunteers and Community Activists who work alongside a Protection team of 40 full time staff to raise awareness and let us know when cases need to be addressed.



Providing case management and psychosocial support, our teams care for those who have experienced trauma such as rape, emotional abuse, physical assault, and sexual assault, including children. We actively practice survivor-centered care, focusing on a holistic approach that provides clear, coherent pathways for continuing support and using trained staff to provide the safety, security, and confidentiality that clients need to survive. And we work with other partners to mainstream Protection in other sectors, which is vital to ensuring survivors of sexual and gender based violence feel and are safe.



# RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Early on, as the dangers of the pandemic became clear, the Rwanda team took action to make refugee camps and host communities as safe as possible. This included extensive COVID-19 screening for both Alight staff and community members, outreach and health messaging that detailed how to prevent and detect the virus, handwashing stations, and isolation areas for positive cases. Managing the supply chain and logistics for critical protection equipment like masks, soap, and medications was also key both for the team's protection and for keeping people safe and healthy.

# GOING DIGITAL: A COVID-19 RESPONSE

Unexpectedly, and despite the challenges, COVID-19 has led the Alight Rwanda team to innovate like never before, making changes in just a few months that were previously simply aspirations. Responding to restrictions on movement throughout the country, and especially to and from refugee camps, we were able to digitize almost all of our services, including new program delivery approaches like digital community and hygiene education, remote case management for survivors of abuse or neglect, and transitioning our procurement and finance to online models—things that felt nearly impossible before.



THANK  
YOU!

*Get in touch to learn more.*

**CONTACT**

*Betty Umugiraneza at  
BettyU@WeAreAlight.org*

*© Alight Rwanda*

*Alight Rwanda Country Office  
M&M Plaza, KG8 Remera  
Post Office Box 2680  
Kigali, Rwanda*

