



Catholic Relief Services-USCCB
Rwanda Program
Nyarugenge-3rd Floor,Chadel House
#KN 78 st/ 2 Street
Across Belgian School
P.O.Box :65 KIGALI
Office Cell phone :(+250)788307256
General e-mail address: CRS_RW@global.crs.org

VISITOR BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Introduction

This document has been designed for Visitors coming to work for CRS Rwanda. It is advised that this document and particularly the Constant Companion are kept with you at all times. This document is meant to complement the CRS Field Security Plan (FSP) for Rwanda and in no way should override the statements contained therein.

CRS/Rwanda is warmly known as ‘the land of a thousand hills’. It is situated in East – central Africa. It lies 121 Km South (75 miles) of the equator in the Tropic of Capricorn, 1416 kilometers (880Miles) west of the Indian Ocean and 1250Km (777Miles) east of the Atlantic Ocean – literally the heart of Africa.

Landing at Kigali International Airport

Rwanda like most of countries around the world protects the environment and among several measures, the carrying and use of plastic bags is prohibited in country.

Ground Transportation

CRS Rwanda will arrange transportation to and from the airport. Should they miss your arrival, taxis are available at the airport and can safely bring you to the hotel. Prices are regulated, and you should not pay more than 15’000 Rwandan Francs (\$17). You will be able to pay using USD. If you have any questions regarding transportation upon arrival, please feel free to contact CRS Rwanda Logistics Officer, Achille Munyaneza (+250) 788317076 or Supply Chain Specialist, Annick Murekatete (+250) 788308309.

CRS office information:

Catholic Relief Services, Rwanda Program:

- Mail: P.O. Box 65, Kigali
- Physical Address: Chadel House, Across from the former Belgian School location, Kiyovu
- Office cell phone + 250 788307256

Opening Hours: Monday – Thursday 8:00 – 13:00 and 14:00 to 17:00
Friday 8:00 – 13:30

Useful contacts:

- Jude Marie Banatte, Country Representative, Cell phone # + 250 788303191
- Charlotte Batanage, Operations Manager, Cell phone # +250 78 8387197
- Vestine Mukamusana, Administrative Officer, Cell Phone # +250 78 8382208
- US Embassy, Kigali, Line Telephone # +250 252 596400
- US Consul Cell Phone # +250 788300345

Entry visa

Citizens from the following countries can obtain a free Rwanda three-month single entry visa upon arrival at Kigali International Airport or at the point of entry to Rwanda: Democratic Republic of Congo, East African Community Partner States, Mauritius, Philippines, Singapore, Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Haiti, Senegal, Seychelles and Sao Tome and Principe, to visit for a holiday, sightseeing, social or other recreational purpose or to visit relatives or other short term non-work purposes.

All other travelers to Rwanda are required to obtain an entry visa without prior application and pay 50 USD upon your arrival at the entry point to Rwanda. To apply online, please visit the following Web site: [Entry Visa](#). For further information relating to the visa application, please follow this link <https://www.migration.gov.rw/Visa.html> or ask any questions through Facebook to **Rwanda Migration**.

Security issues

Currently, CRS Rwanda operates under Security Operating Level Two (2). There are no perceived direct or indirect threat to CRS or its staff. The major category of concern for this country overall is Political and Security situation in the Great Lakes region. There is a distinct risk related to the movement of refugees from neighboring countries.

Despite the instability in the Great Lakes, the security in Rwanda is generally good. Crime in Kigali typically consists of pickpockets and not much more. Please avoid wearing or carrying valuables, especially when you are walking alone during the day or even with others at night. Walking alone at night is not recommended. Likewise avoid overcrowded streets and do not leave your baggage un-attended.

Taxis

CRS uses the below taxi drivers on a regular basis who can be contacted for service.

Taxi driver's name	Phone #	Location
Papias FIKIRI(Papi)	+250788461230	KIGALI
YegoCabs	Toll free 9191	KIGALI
Move by Volkswagen	+250783118818	KIGALI

Air ticketing

The CRS Regional Senior Travel Hub Officer for CARO, Marie Goreth Nzeyimana is in charge of travel arrangements and can be reached by telephone at +25779949780. She is able to assist you with any ticketing problems that you may experience. Please remember to reconfirm your airline ticket 48 hours before departure.

Health facilities and concerns

Visitors should drink only bottled water and avoid raw, uncooked vegetables.

Access to good health care is limited, particularly outside Kigali. The best hospital in Kigali is King Faisal, [King Faisal](#), which is located behind the Marasa Umubano hotel in Kacyiru neighborhood. To schedule an appointment at King Faisal Hospital, you can call 078.830.9002, 078.830.9003 or 3939. They provide Ambulance services. The Belgian Embassy's clinic, [International Dispensary](#), Telephone number 078.830.0353, also provides services to expatriates. The Baho International Hospital, [Baho](#), Telephone number 078.234.3710 and the Pineda dental Clinic, [Pineda](#), Telephone number 078.856.4377 provides good dental care. The eye care services can be provided by Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital, [Agarwal](#), Telephone number 078.730.743. Serious illnesses or injuries would typically involve treatment in Nairobi or Johannesburg.

The risk of infection of malaria exists in Rwanda. You may choose to come with your anti-malarial pills, although some of them can be found in Kigali, if required.

Proof of yellow fever vaccination is usually required to enter Rwanda, although not always checked. As such, and to be sure, please carry your vaccination certificate with you.

Climate/weather

Rwanda is generally temperate, with two rainy seasons (March to May, September to December). The average daytime temperature in the central plateau is 19 to 22°C (65 - 70°F); however, it can be 12-14°C (52 - 55°F) in the morning and the evening, especially in the North in places like the Volcano National Park [Rwanda Meteorology Agency](#).

Dressing

In Kigali, light clothing is recommended during the day and a sweater or jacket is **highly** recommended at night, especially during rainy season. Sunglasses, sunscreen and a hat may be necessary especially during the hot months (June-August). Rwandans tend to dress conservatively and appreciate when visitors are well dressed.

Restaurants

There are many restaurants ranging from inexpensive establishments offering local cuisine and buffets to a limited number of European and Asian style restaurants that can be more expensive. Please note that it is forbidden to smoke in public places in Rwanda. Most restaurants have reserved areas for smokers. Some of the most popular restaurants are listed below:

Within 10 minutes walking distance of CRS Office

- White Horse (pizza): about 6,000 RWF, generally takes 45-60 minutes.
- Vendi Vidi (local buffet): 2,000 RWF including juice. Very close to CRS office.
- Preet Indian Fast Food: 3,000 to 5,000 RWF. All vegetarian.
- Chess Café (vegetarian sandwich, soup and bakery): under 5,000 RWF.
- German Butchery (good German food): 6,000 to 10,000 Rwf, food takes a while to prepare (about 45 mins) so probably best for a Friday afternoon or weekend. The first Saturday of the month they roast a suckling pig and have live music.
- Brioche (Western coffee and sandwiches): 5,000 – 10,000 Rwf

Within walking distance of Mille Collines, 5Swiss and Ubumwe Grande hotels (downtown Kigali)

- Khana Khazana (Indian): \$10-15 per meal, [Khana Khazana](#)
- Heaven Restaurant (International): \$10-15 per meal, [Heaven](#)
- Chez Robert Restaurant (Belgian): 7,000Frw for buffet, [Chez Robert](#)
- Panorama Restaurant at Mille Collines (International): 10,000Rwf for buffet, [Mille Collines](#)
- New Cactus (International): 5,000-10,000Rwf/Menu, [New Cactus](#)
- Ubumwe Grande Hotel (International): 12,000Rwf for buffet, [Ubumwe Grande Hotel](#)
- Baso Pâtissier (coffee, pastries and sandwiches): 5,000- 10,000 Rwf [Baso Pâtissier](#). Has some of the best pastries in Kigali although they run out early on weekends.
- Jumia food: Online food delivery service from +40 restaurants. Delivery fee is 1,000 RWF. You will be asked to provide a phone number for Jumia to notify you when delivery has arrived, as well as delivery location. You could give them the hotel reception number. For ordering visit the following link [Jumia Food](#)

Within walking distance of the Lemigo Hotel:

- The Hut (International): 12,000-40,000Rwf/Menu, [The Hut](#)
- Meze Fresh (International): 4,000-4,500 Rwf, [Meze Fresh](#)
- Masala Indian Restaurant: 10,000 – 20,000 Rwf
- Question Coffee (coffee shop): 5,000 Rwf. Excellent coffee and pastries but they run out early on weekends. Does not serve food other than pastries. Nice ambiance for working with reliable wifi.

Kimihurura area (a neighborhood in Kigali with lots of restaurants and nice for walking):

- Papyrus, (African):15,000Rwf, [Papyrus](#)
- Lalibela (Ethiopian Restaurant), [Lalibela](#)
- Great wall Chinese Restaurant), [Great wall](#)
- Java house (Western breakfast and lunch) : 7100 Rwf, [Java house](#) (within Kigali Heights)
- Select Restaurant, [Select Restaurant](#)
- Zaaffran Indian Restaurant, [Zaaffran](#)
- Riders Lounge Kigali (International), [Riders Lounge](#) (located within Kigali Heights)
- 360 Degrees Pizza: 10,000 Rwf, [360 Pizza](#) (located within Kigali Heights)
- Borneo (excellent Indonesian food): 5,000 – 10,000 [Borneo](#)
- Repub Lounge (African): 5,000 – 10,000 [Repub Lounge](#)

Worship

There are a variety of possibilities to worship, including:

- **Saint Michael Cathedral (Catholic)**
+250 252572014/574801
- **Saint Etienne Cathedral (Anglican)**
+250 252573105
- **Al Madina Mosque (Muslim)**
Tel +250 252583271

Supermarket information

- **Simba Supermarket:** Carries lots of local products and some imported foods and wines. There are two locations close to the office: one is located within the UTC building and the second is located on the roundabout near KN 4 Ave. There is also a Simba Supermarket, known as Simba Gishushu, within walking distance from the Lemigo Hotel.

Money and ATMs

While it is possible to exchange USD for Rwf, there are many ATMs around Kigali City, including in most hotel lobbies. If you prefer to bring USD and exchange money, it is recommended that you bring new notes in large denominations. You will be able to change USD and Euros at banks and/or forex bureaus in the center of town. The average rate is 907 Rwanda Franc to the US dollar and 1,031 Rwanda Franc for 1 Euro in the national Bank of Rwanda. Please avoid changing money with street vendors; it is illegal.

Photography

You may take photographs anywhere in Kigali except military installations, police barracks and Presidential residence. If you want to take photos of people in towns or in the countryside, the normal courtesy requires that you first ask for their permission and consent. When visiting the Kigali Genocide memorial, you can take photos outside, but inside you will have to pay. Whenever you are not sure of what to do, and not to do, please ask your tour guide for his/her advice.

Communication

The telephone network is very efficient in Rwanda. Kigali city is covered by a mobile phone network provided by the MTN Rwanda, [MTN](#), AIRTEL/TIGO [Airtel](#), the two first are leading telecommunications companies in the country. For the land lines, there is Liquid Telecom, [Liquid Telecom](#). All of these companies offer internet service which is reliable.

Language in Rwanda

The main language spoken in Rwanda is Kinyarwanda. English is largely spoken by central government as well as people who are in contact with visitors. French is widespread amongst Church officials.

Things to see and do in Kigali:

Kigali Genocide Memorial

This dignified memorial has been constructed in Gisozi area of Kigali and opened for the tenth anniversary of the genocide in April 2004. The Centre is built on a site where over 250,000 people are buried. The Centre is a permanent memorial to those who fell victim to the genocide and serves as a place for people to grieve those they lost. Entry is free of charge. A headset is available at 25 USD for foreigners and 15 USD for East African visitors. For additional information, you can visit [Kigali Genocide Memorial](#)

Presidential Palace Museum-Kanombe/Kigali

Located in Kigali about 2 km from Kigali International Airport, the Palace served as home to Juvenal Habyarimana and Pasteur Bizimungu during the 1970s up to the late 1990s. The Presidential Palace

Museum is one of the new museums in Kigali. It gives visitors a chance to visit the former state house as well as gain an overview of Rwanda's history, one can also visit some of the flight debris of the FALCON 50 presidential plane that went down on 6th April 1994. [Presidential Palace Museum](#)

Traditional Handcrafts

A wide range of traditional handicrafts are produced in rural Rwanda, ranging from ceramics and basketry to traditional woodcarvings and contemporary paintings. Rwanda's traditional Agaseke baskets have become famous the world over. High quality, ethically sourced and produced handicrafts can be found at the following locations:

- [Go Kigali Boutique](#) – located within the Marriott Hotel
- [Azizi Life Boutique](#) – located within the Heaven Hotel complex
- [Rwanda Clothing](#) – local housewares and clothing (with alterations available on site), often tailored to western styles. Within walking distance of the CRS office.
- [Nyamirambo Women's Center](#): Fabric-based and woven items including tablecloths, embroidered pouches, pencil cases, laptop cases, handbags, pillow covers, baskets, etc. They also organize neighborhood tours.

A good selection of lesser-quality painted and handcrafted artifacts can be viewed in craft villages, shops and numerous art galleries in Kigali. A common place to peruse and purchase modern art work in Kigali is the [Caplaki Craft Village](#), or Kimironko Market.

Exercise/Fitness

Several hotels in town have pools, gyms and spas. Information is available online – just google “Kigali hotel” and search amenities.

- Prime Minister's Roundabout: Quiet roundabout with several ministries where people go to walk/jog. About 1km around.
- Cercle Sportif: Tennis courts, swimming pool (3 lanes, 25m) etc. Day pass is 3,500. Pool opens at 8am.
- Hotel Milles Collines: Walking distance from office. Pool is about 19m (?), no lanes but swimmable. Day pass is 7,000.
- Waka Fitness: One of the better gyms in town. Offers classes as well as plenty of exercise equipment. There are two locations, one within walking distance from the CRS office in town and a second in the Kimihurara neighborhood. Drop-in passes cost 8,000 Rwf per day.

Art Galleries

- [Inema Arts Center](#) – home to both indoor and outdoor exhibits from artists across Africa.
- [Niyo Arts Gallery](#) – Nonprofit art and cultural center with a mission of helping vulnerable children and single mothers.

Appendix 1: Attractions outside Kigali

For people who want to visit areas outside of Kigali, especially for gorilla and chimpanzee trekking, it may be quite chilly and relatively cold. It is recommended that you have comfortable water-proof hiking shoes, a raincoat and warm jacket, a hat and gloves, a pair of binoculars, a camera with a water-proof bag, comfortable pants and long-sleeved shirts/blouses. Layering is advised as the temperatures will likely drop as you hike to higher elevations.

Lake Kivu: [Lake Kivu](#)

Lake Kivu stretches for almost 100km along the DRC border to the West, this lake is part of the "collection" of lakes one can find along the Rift Valley. With a maximum depth of 480m, it is one of the deepest lakes. Around the lake one finds a number of resort towns, such as Gisenyi in the Northern Province, Cyangugu in the Southern Province and Kibuye in the Center. The road is paved from Kigali to each of these lakeside resort towns.

Akagera National Park: [Akagera](#)

Akagera National Park is situated in the Eastern Province of Rwanda towards the border of Tanzania. Untypical to the rolling hills of Rwanda, this part of the country is a flat Savannah. The National Park is 1085 km² where one can see buffalo, elephant, zebra, giraffe, hippo and various antelope. Akagera also boasts 550 bird species, including some rarities that one cannot find elsewhere in Africa.

Volcano National Park: [National Park](#)

Located along the border to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, there is the Virunga Mountain Chain and in Rwanda the park is called the Volcano National Park. The Volcanoes are extinct, with the exception of the southern peak close to Rubavu, and the National Park offers hikes and walks as well as the opportunity to track gorillas. The views from those mountains across the rolling hills of Rwanda are spectacular.

One can get to Musanze/National Park from Kigali in 1.5-2 hours, either by private vehicle or by public taxi minibus. If you intend to make a gorilla visit, you will need to organize your own transport from Musanze town to the park boundaries at Kinigi, where you will continue your trip on foot. Vehicles can be hired for this purpose in Musanze town. You must be at the Park Headquarters at 7:00 AM.

Gorilla Trekking

One of the most amazing attractions of Rwanda is tracking the Mountain Gorillas in the Volcano National Park. You have a 99% guarantee to see the gorillas in their environment. Tracking can take between an hour or two and the walk is steep up the slopes of the volcanoes. Be aware though that you "walk" through the dense rain forest along slippery slopes; good shoes are a must and you should be fit!

- ***Costs for gorilla permits*** (inclusive of park entry fees, but not transportation to the park HQ or from the park HQ to the path): USD \$ 1500 per person

Nyungwe National Park: [Nyungwe](#)

Intact mid-elevation forests (1600-2000M) like Nyungwe are rare in Africa, but they are an important habitat for many species. Nyungwe is one of the last places in Africa to maintain this type of crucial forest. At over 1000 km², Nyungwe is Africa's largest protected mountain rainforest.

Nyungwe is stated as “the most important site for biodiversity conservation in Rwanda” by Birdlife International for its estimated 280 bird species, 25 of which are endemic. This forest, the largest mountain rainforest in all of Africa, hosts 13 species of primates including the Angola Colombus monkeys found in groups of 300-400 animals. It also hosts a large population of chimpanzees and two other threatened species of monkeys; the owl faced monkey and reported but unverified sightings of the golden monkey. Recently, Nyungwe opened a canopy walk, the only one of its kind in East Africa. This is a wonderful vantage point to view the incredible biodiversity of this rare forest.

The National Museum of Rwanda (Butare, Rwanda)

Butare is 136 km from Kigali. Inaugurated on September 18th, 1989 and located in Huye, the National Museum of Rwanda is the most well-known museum in Rwanda and houses perhaps the finest ethnographic and archaeological collections in East Africa with more than 10,000 artifacts. Absorbing displays of traditional artifacts are illuminated by a fascinating selection of turn-of-the-century monochrome photographs, providing insight not only into pre-colonial lifestyles, but also into the subsequent development of Rwanda as a modern African state. [The Nation Museum of Rwanda](#)

Nyanza Royal Palace, Rukari (Nyanza, Rwanda).

Nyanza is a 1.5 hour drive from Kigali. Under the reign of King Yuhi V Musinga in 1899, Nyanza became the royal capital of the country. The court became the home of the artistic and intellectual activities and was also a place for economic exchange. Today, a replica of the traditional Royal Palace sits at Rukari. The impressive enormous domed structure is made entirely with traditional materials, has been painstakingly restored to its 19th century state and is now maintained as a museum. [Nyanza Royal Palace](#)

Rwesero Arts Museum (Nyanza, Rwanda)

Located across the valley from the Museum of Rwandan Ancient History and the Nyanza Royal Palace, the Rwesero Arts Museum displays contemporary artwork. The museum was originally built as a Palace for King Mutara III Rudahingwa but he passed away before occupying it. Both the Museum of Rwandan Ancient History and the Rwesero Arts Museum are located 2km from Nyanza town. [Rwesero arts Museum.](#)