VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION OF BURUNDIAN REFUGEES

UPDATE AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2018

UNHCR and partners began to assist the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in August 2017 as a durable solution for those refugees who indicate a desire to return home. The vast majority of returns have been from Tanzania, with smaller numbers assisted to return from Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Almost all returns from Rwanda and Uganda have so far been self-organized.

KEY FIGURES – ASSISTED REPATRIATION







98 convoys

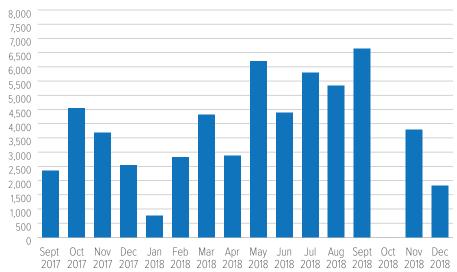


male

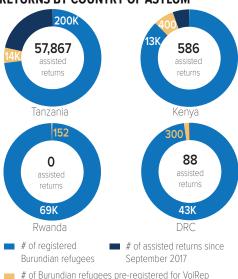


50.6% female

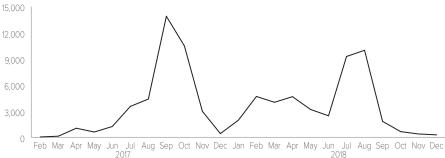
RETURN TRENDS BY MONTH SINCE SEPTEMBER 2017



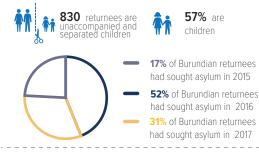
RETURNS BY COUNTRY OF ASYLUM



REGISTRATION FOR VOLREP IN TANZANIA 2017-2018



POPULATION PROFILE AT A GLANCE



AREAS OF RETURN KENYA # Burundian refugees RWANDA 13,322 # refugees returnees from a country of asylum to Burundi 69,423 586 # returnees by province 0.150 151-250 Kirundo 6124 251-1,600 1,601-5,500 196 5.500-14.500 Kavanza Bubanza Muramvva 43,010 Bujumbura Bujum 209 UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA n473, 88 199,741 155 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGC Makamba

KEY MESSAGES

- 1. UNHCR and partners are providing assistance to refugees who have decided to return to Burundi so that they may do so in safety and dignity, and to support social cohesion and sustainable return at the community level.
- 2. Funding is needed to address critical staffing shortages, increase the capacity of transit centers, continue to hire safe transportation, enhance the initial return package, expand and improve the returnee monitoring framework, and support sustainable reintegration.
- 3. The voluntary return operation from Tanzania to Burundi is taking place under the framework of a Tripartite agreement between the two governments and UNHCR in which all parties have agreed to ensure the voluntariness of return, as well as the need to continue to provide international protection to Burundians who have well-founded reasons for not returning at the present time.
- 4. While the governments of Burundi and Tanzania have undertaken to promote refugee return, neither UNHCR nor other governments are doing so at this time. All have acknowledged the importance of refugees having the opportunity to make a free and informed choice about repatriation.
- 5. While returnees are generally being welcomed back by the Government of Burundi and their communities of origin without incident, returnee monitoring indicates many do face a number of challenges to re-establish their lives and livelihoods in Burundi

* - Includes assisted returns from Tanzania (57,867), Kenya (586), DRC (88), Uganda (2), Gabon (1), Cameroon (1) and Burkina Faso (1)

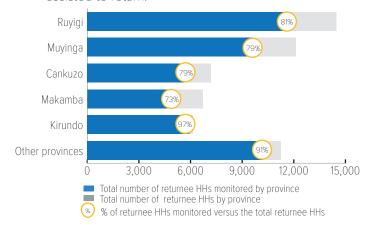
RETURN MONITORING IN BURUNDI

METHODOLOGY

In Burundi, UNHCR in partnership with Caritas is conducting household level interviews with refugee returnees coming back through the organized voluntary repatriation. Returnee monitoring aims to understand the situation that returnees are experiencing in their areas of return, namely access to basic support services and relevant rights and entitlements (housing, land, health, education, administrative documentation including identity cards and birth certificates, water and sanitation, nutrition), vulnerabilities, living conditions, and impact of the assistance provided upon arrival. Due to underfunding and capacity constraints, most returnee families are currently being visited by monitors only once within the first three months after their arrival in Burundi.

MONITORING PROGRESS

By 31 December 2018, 16,000 families have been monitored (out of 19,233), which represents 83% of those assisted to return.



CIVIL DOCUMENTATION

Only 20% returnee HHs report having national identification card

28% returnee HHs ort children having a birth certificate

DISPLACEMENT

85% refugees returned to their place of origin

VULNERABILITY

18% returnee HHs have vulnerabilities, most often chronically ill and/or disabled family members

EDUCATION

54% returnee children are reported to be attending school

70% children aged 6-11 and 30% children aged 12-17 years are attending school

HEALTH CARE

72% returnee Hs have access to health care

WATER

89% returnee HHs have access to water

54% of those having access to water, use public wells/fountains

ACCESS TO HOUSING

32% returnee HHs could access housing they owned prior to fleeing 49% could not access it after arrival (another 19% did not own housing before flight). **80%** of those who cannot access previous housing report it being inhabitable upon arrival

LIVELIHOODS

93% returnee heads of households are subsistence **farmers**

ACCESS TO LAND



76% returnee HHs report having access to

Another 13% HHs did not own land before leaving

TOP 3 PRIORITIES IN THE USE OF ASSISTANCE

All refugees who have returned with the assistance of UNHCR receive an initial return package in Burundi consisting of a financial grant, basic household supplies, and food items. Returnees report the cash grant was used for the following top priority expenses:

- 1. Household items (51%)
- **2.** Land rental (29%)
- **3. Shelter** (18%)

For more information please contact:

UNHCR Regional Regugee Coordination Office: Catherine Wiesner, RRC/CRRF Champion for the Burundi Situation, wiesner@unhcr.org; Anna Minuto, Snr. IMO, minuto@unhcr.org; UNHCR Tanzania: Chansa Kapaya, UNHCR Representative, kapaya@unhcr.org; Joan Allison, Deputy Representative, allison@unhcr.org;

UNHCR Burundi: Gogo Hukportie, UNHCR Representative, hukporti@unhcr.org; Roland Triande, Snr. Repatriation Officer, triande@unhcr.org