

# Burundi Situation

October 2019

## 326,442

Total Burundian refugees residing in the main hosting countries (United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, the DRC, Uganda).

## 20,527

Burundian refugees assisted to voluntarily return so far in 2019, with some 2,293 assisted in October.

## 9,323

Total Burundian arrivals recorded in 2019. In October, 1,695 new arrivals were reported.

## 79,311

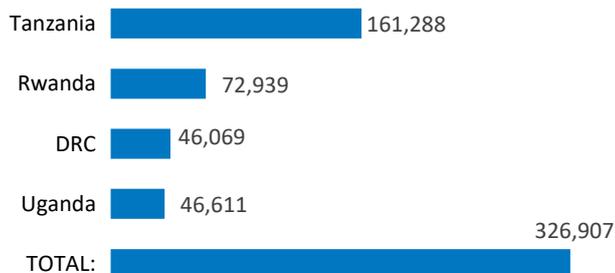
Total Burundian refugees assisted to return between September 2017 and 31 October 2019, mainly from Tanzania. For more information, please check the [Voluntary Repatriation dashboard](#).

## 103,412

**Number of IDPs** in Burundi as of October 2019 according to IOM's Data Tracking Matrix, for 77 per cent the factors of displacement are linked to natural disasters, for 23 per cent they are linked to the socio-political situation.

### POPULATION OF CONCERN

## Host Countries

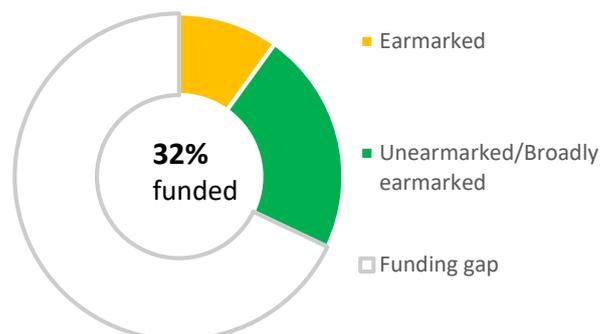


\* Figures reflect current number of registered Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers pre- and post-2015 who are assisted through the 2019-2020 Burundi RRRP. The total above does not include some 43,200 Burundian refugees who are registered in Kenya and Southern Africa and assisted within the respective country level programmes, as well as a further 42,000 Burundian refugees who have lived for decades in Tanzania and no longer receive assistance.

### BURUNDI REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING

(as of 6 November 2019)

## USD 292.9 million



\*Click [here](#) for the Refugee Funding Tracker

## New Arrivals

	In 2018 (Jan to Dec)	In 2019 (as of 31 October)
DRC	2,141	<b>2,200</b>
Rwanda	2,966	<b>2,147</b>
Tanzania	1	<b>0</b>
Uganda	2,851	<b>4,976</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,959</b>	<b>9,323</b>

## Highlights and Operational Context

- **On 30 October, Michel Kafando, the United Nations Special Envoy to Burundi, informed the UN Security Council that he planned to step down from the post he has held for two years, amid concerns over the impartiality of elections set for 2020.** Kafando pointed out that even though Burundi's security situation has improved, and that the government has put in place a "framework for political dialogue", there remains a lack of progress of the inter-Burundian dialogue guided by the East African Community, and warned about the ongoing deterioration of the socio-economic situation.
- **On 28 October, UNHCR, repeated its call to ensure that refugee returns from Tanzania to Burundi remain voluntary, following a bilateral agreement between the two governments in late August to increase return rates.** This also followed public statements made on 11 October during a rally in Katavi region in northwestern Tanzania, by President Magufuli urging Burundian refugees to return home. UNHCR continues to work with local officials to ensure refugee returns are voluntary and only taking place under the existing Tripartite Agreement between the Tanzanian and Burundian governments and the UN Refugee Agency. Some 79,000 refugees have made the choice to return to Burundi under this arrangement since 2017.
- **In October, the International Refugee Rights Initiative released the report “Returning to Stability? Refugee returns in the Great Lakes region”.** Among others, this report looked at the voluntary repatriation process for Burundians who fled to Tanzania after the 2015 crisis. It also highlights the social, economic and political dynamics of refugees' experience both with local authorities and their communities once back in Burundi. While returnees generally encounter solidarity and mutual assistance, they are also facing mistrust and socio-political exclusion.

## Update on voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from the United Republic of Tanzania

### Background

- UNHCR and partners are not promoting returns to Burundi but are working with the governments involved to ensure that returns are based on the principles of voluntariness and informed decisions and take place in safety and dignity.
- The current return operation is taking place under the framework of a Tripartite Agreement between the two governments and UNHCR in which all parties have acknowledged that while some refugees may opt to return now, others may still have well-founded reasons not to return at the present time and will continue to be in need of international protection.
- To ensure a sustainable reintegration in Burundi, support has been requested for both returnees and communities in areas of return in line with the objectives of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), in particular objective four (4), which focuses on supporting conditions in countries of origin for return.

## Update

- In October, out of 2,292 individuals repatriated to Burundi, some 830 individuals were added to the convoys as a result of the government of Tanzania's mobilization efforts. UNHCR was able to conduct voluntariness interviews in Tanzania with all those who departed, although some of these were conducted in rushed and less than ideal circumstances given the short timeframe available for those mobilized by the Government of Tanzania.

## Partners

- In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNHCR and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania work in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), HelpAge International, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Plan International, and the World Food Programme (WFP).
- In Burundi, UNHCR is collaborating with the Department of Repatriation under the Government of Burundi, World Food Programme (WFP), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Caritas and the Civil Volunteer Group (GVC).

# Achievements during the Reporting Period

## TANZANIA

### Latest developments

- **The population validation exercise, undertaken jointly by UNHCR and the Government of Tanzania, was concluded on 1 October 2019. Outstanding issues relating to the resolution of cases involving inactivated individuals is ongoing.** In December 2019, a similar exercise will be rolled out for populations living in Dar es Salaam and other urban centres. The verification exercise ensures that refugees and asylum seekers are accurately reflected in the registration system and helps streamline the provision of resources and services to people of concern.

### Achievements and Challenges

- **UNHCR and Relief to Development Society (REDESO) undertook the selection and placement of 82 new students in higher education institutes under the DAFI scholarship programme.** The scholarship programme is part of complementary pathways for the admission of refugees to a third country.
- **UNHCR, in partnership with African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD), has constructed nine permanent classrooms in three primary schools in Nduta camp** in support of improving learning space by decongesting overcrowded classes.

## RWANDA

### Achievements and Challenges

- As part of efforts to improve registration data and identity management by capturing biometric data of the refugees and asylum-seekers **the ongoing verification exercise in Mahama camp has reached 27 per cent** of the total population of over 60,000 refugees living in the camp.
- During the reporting period, **95 women were trained on handcrafting and linked to global markets through Indego Africa's market in the United States of America. 139 teenage mothers graduated from a six-month tailoring training** followed by assistance with a start-up package.

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

### Latest Developments

- **UNHCR and partners biometrically registered 1,030 Burundian asylum-seekers at Kavimvira and Sange Transit Centres (TC) in October, in addition to the 1,199 registered in September.** As of October, 1,030 new arrivals from Burundi reached the DRC. In order to respond to the growing number of asylum seekers at the TCs in South Kivu, six dormitories were rehabilitated in October (5 at Mulongwe settlement and 1 at Mongemonge TC). This will improve the housing conditions for new arrivals and prepare their transfer to Mulongwe settlement once they receive their refugee status.

### Achievements and Challenges

- **In order to assist refugees and host populations increase income generating activities and ensure peaceful coexistence, additional agricultural activities have been launched.** In Lusenda, refugees and host communities have started to cultivate a rice field (11 hectares) outside the settlement. At Mulongwe settlement, 3 hectares of land has been ploughed in preparation for the new planting season.
- *The Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène (AFPDE) and Action Medeor launched a new project aimed at improving access to health care and to drinking water and sanitation.* Activities will target Burundian refugees at Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement and the local population in Nundu and Fizi Health zones (165,000 persons). A feasibility study was conducted for the construction of a water supply network in Kenya town, Nundu Health zone which has a high concentration of Burundian refugees. At Mulongwe settlement, a similar study was conducted to assess the possibility to increase the amount of water supply for refugees and host population. Currently refugees at Mulongwe can access 15 liters of drinking water a day, while in Lusenda, it stands at 21 liters a day.

## UGANDA

### Latest Developments

- **In preparation of the 1st Global Refugee Forum (GRF), convened at ministerial level, to be held in Geneva from 16-18 December 2019, the CRRF Secretariat organized a national high-level consultation in October to generate a common approach for the Uganda refugee response, mobilize stakeholders and discuss the possibility of aligned pledges between Uganda and partners.** The Government shared its pledges, showcasing costed comprehensive plans and commitments were made by Ambassadors and Heads of Agencies in Uganda to align their pledges to Uganda's thematic plans.

### Achievements and Challenges

- **School monitoring activities by education partners in October aimed to ensure that learning is conducted in favorable and conducive learning environments.** Physical verification was also undertaken as a measure to track teacher attendance. High attendance rates that had been witnessed at the beginning of the term were maintained with most locations and schools registering over 80 percent attendance.
- **The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) suspended the use of refugee cards and requested attestation letters from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to facilitate SIM card registration on 7 October 2019, following reports of sim card fraud.** UNHCR held a meeting with OPM and UCC to find a solution to strengthen authentication of refugee ID card for the registration of SIM cards, starting from SIM issuing kiosks to mobile application, mobile network operators, UCC and OPM.

## 2019 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan Partners

The 2019 RRRP brings together the following 35 partners across the four main countries of asylum:

Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène | African Initiatives for Relief & Development | American Refugee Committee | Care and Assistance For Forced Migrants | CARE International | Caritas | Church World Service | Community Environmental Management and Development Organization | Danish Refugee Council | Food and Agriculture Organisation | Global Humanitarian and Development Foundation | Good Neighbours Tanzania | Handicap International | HelpAge International | Impact Initiatives | International Organisation for Migration | International Rescue Committee | Medical Teams International | Norwegian Refugee Council | Oxfam | Plan International | Relief to Development Society | Save the Children International | Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service | Uganda Red Cross Society | United Nations Capital Development Fund | United Nations Development Programme | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | United Nations Children's Fund | United Nations Population Fund | UN Women | Water Mission | Women Legal Aid Center | World Food Programme | World Health Organisation

### External / Donors Relations

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#### LINKS

Regional Data Portal: <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/burundi>

UNHCR Burundi Page: <https://www.unhcr.org/burundi-situation.html>

UNHCR Burundi Global Focus : <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/8488>

Recent News Story: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2019/10/5db6ffed4/refugee-returns-burundi-must-voluntary-under-pressure.html>

RRRP and JRRRP Funding Tracker: [Refugee Funding Tracker \(RFT\)](#)