



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



UNHCR Representative, António Canhandula speaking to returnees who he accompanied on a voluntary repatriation convoy to Burundi.
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Voluntary Repatriation of Burundian Refugees in Tanzania

January – June 2021



Finding solutions that enable refugees to live their lives in dignity and peace is a core part of our work at the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR). Voluntary repatriation is one of the solutions of choice for a vast majority of refugees who have made the brave decision to return home.

In Tanzania, the Voluntary Repatriation is guided by the 2001 Tripartite Agreement between UNHCR, Tanzania, and Burundi. In May 2021, the 22nd Meeting of the Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Burundian refugees in Tanzania took place. Through a joint communique, the Commission recognized the generosity of the Tanzanian people for hosting refugees. They further acknowledged the provisions of the Tripartite Agreement of May 2001 and reaffirmed that repatriation would continue to be facilitated for those Burundian refugees who registered an intention

to return, and the voluntariness of their decision has been verified. They further noted that while some refugees may opt to return now, others would continue to benefit from international protection.

Working with the Governments of Tanzania and Burundi, and with the international community's support, UNHCR and partners in Tanzania have helped over 20,000 Burundian refugees return home in 2021 (some 130,000 since 2017) voluntarily. UNHCR supports voluntary returns as an important durable solution and ensures that returns are based on the principles of voluntariness and informed decisions and take place in safety and dignity.

As of 30 June 2021, Tanzania hosts over 254,000 refugees, of whom 137,000 are Burundians living in three camps in North-Western Tanzania.



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"I have been a refugee my whole life. I was born a refugee, and many times, I took the risk of going back to Burundi just to end up being a refugee again in another country. But I take this risk again today to go back home. I want to practice agriculture, have access to the markets, and move around freely. My wife and children will only join after I see for myself the situation back home". Mhogy.

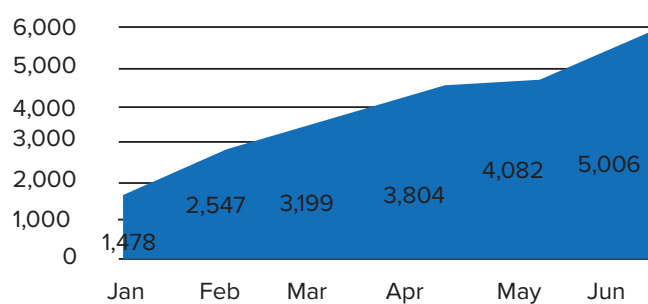


Burundians refugee family preparing to depart on the voluntary repatriation convoy. @UNHCR/ Magdalena Kasubi

■ VolRep Statistics from January to June 2021

Month\Camp	Nyarugusu	Nduta	Mtendeli	Total
JANUARY	483	709	286	1,478
FEBRUARY	638	1,625	284	2,547
MARCH	483	1,176	1,540	3,199
APRIL	532	2,103	1,169	3,804
MAY	573	3,169	338	4,082
JUNE	1,380	3,090	536	5,006
TOTAL	4,112	11,872	4,142	20,116

Monthly Summary



Average per convoy



■ Repatriation Grant Package issued upon arrival in Burundi

Cash Grant



- Adults (18 years of age and above): 150 US\$
- Minor (0-17 years of age or less): 75 US\$
- One mobile phone per family to receive the cash grants via mobile money

Core Relief Items Kit



Blanket, Plastic mat, Soap, Jerrycans, Plastic sheet, Kitchen set, Bucket, Mosquito net, Travel bag, Loin Cloth, Women's Underwear, Flannel

Food Kit



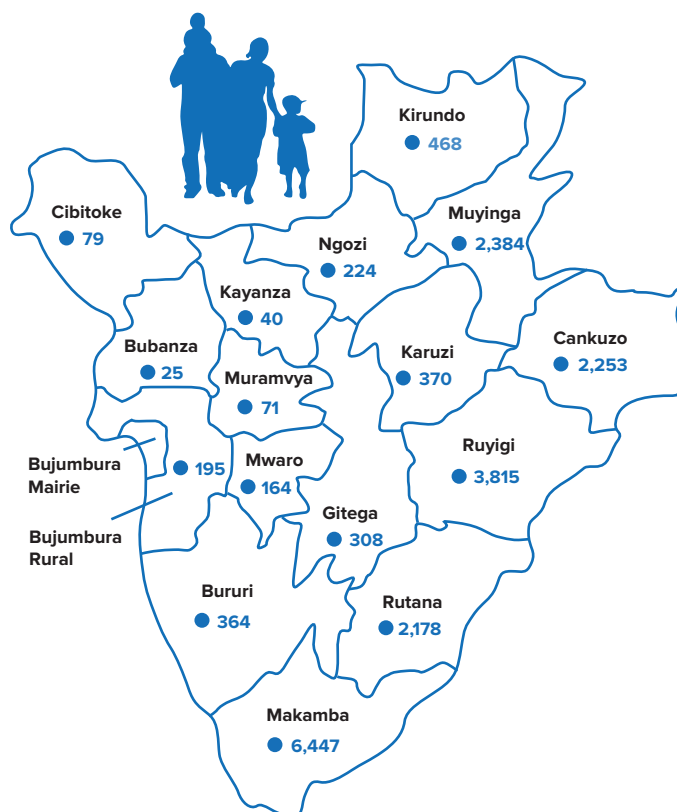
- Beans: 8 kg
- Super Cereal (soya corn blend): 3.375 kg
- Vegetable oil 1.7 kg
- Corn flour 24.3 kg
- Salt 338 grams

Challenges

- Due to COVID-19 preventive measures put in place, the operational cost of each voluntary repatriation convoy has significantly increased. For example, buses to transport returnees have had to be increased to ensure proper social distancing as well as implementation of appropriate hygiene and sanitation measures.
- Burundi has limited reception capacity and not always able to receive all persons who sign up for return due to inadequate infrastructure for COVID-19 prevention and mitigation. This limits the number of persons that return per convoy.
- Poor road infrastructure was cited at the 22nd Tripartite Commission Meeting as a major logistical challenge for the convoys, especially during the rainy season.

■ Areas of Return - Burundi

Province	Total
Makamba	6,477
Ruyigi	3,815
Muyinga	2,384
Cankuzo	2,253
Rutana	2,178
Rumonge	701
Kirundo	468
Karuzi	370
Bururi	364
Gitega	308
Ngozi	224
Mwaro	164
Bujumbura Mairie	195
Cibitoke	79
Muramvya	71
Kayanza	40
Bubanza	25
Total	20,116



"For the past five years, Nduta refugee camp in Tanzania has been my home. I have decided to go back home, but not without my solar panel, which has lit my home for the past few years. Apart from being good for the environment, it has provided my family with a sense of security. I will carry it wherever I go." Niyomukiza.



A voluntary repatriation convoy departing Nyarugusu camp for Burundi.
©UNHCR/Maimuna Mtengela

Intensified Focus Areas



Registration, return assistance and protection:

Registration, organizing, and facilitating return two convoys per week to Burundi (maximum 700 individuals per convoy), including pre-departure interviews to verify voluntariness of returnees and assessing protection needs;



Public health, shelter and basic assistance:

Observe WHO, Regional, National, COVID-19 prevention and control protocols throughout the process of voluntary repatriation as well as Improve the transit centres with respect to COVID-19 safety measures. Observe WHO, Regional, National, COVID-19 prevention and control protocols throughout the process of voluntary repatriation as well as Improve the transit centres with respect to COVID-19 safety measures.



Strengthening information campaign:

To guarantee the voluntary nature of repatriation, the 22nd Tripartite Commission Meeting agreed to organize Go-and See/ Come-and-Tell visits for Burundian refugees in Tanzania. This will provide refugees with objective and accurate information on their repatriation and reintegration in return areas and allow them to report their findings to other refugees upon their return to Tanzania without prejudice to their refugee status. The visits will start in July 2021 and will take place every month.



Increase sustainability of returns:

Increase advocacy and mobilization of resource efforts to support voluntary repatriation and make reintegration in Burundi sustainable.

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_17258

