



BURUNDI

**REGIONAL REFUGEE
RESPONSE PLAN**

January – December 2016

December 2015
(Updated July 2016)

The UN R

Cover photograph:

05 May, 2015. Burundian refugee child in Mahama Refugee Camp, Rwanda. UNHCR/K. Holt

Strategic Overview

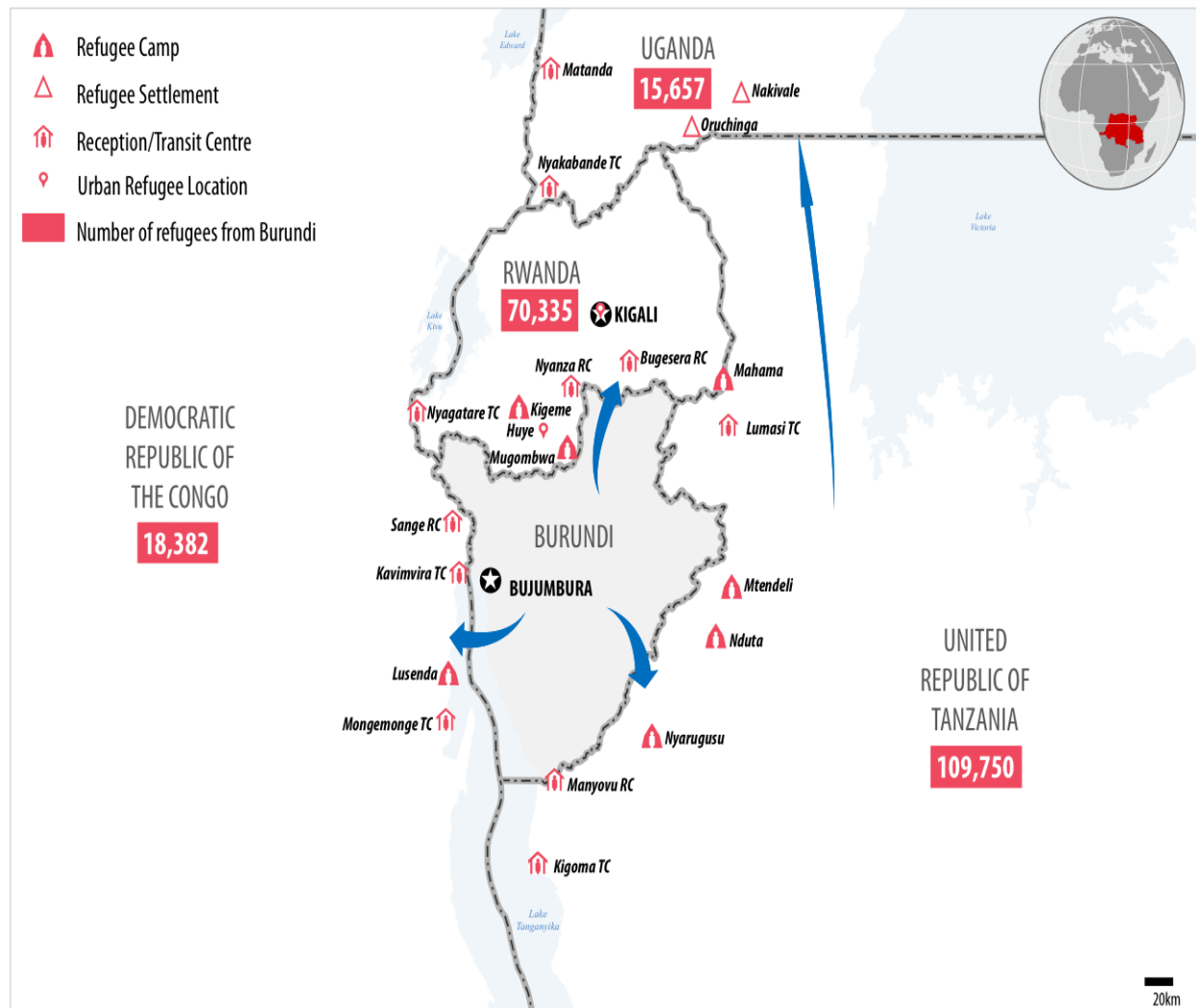
Period	January to December 2016
Current Population	214,124
Population Planning Figures	340,000
Target Beneficiaries	340,000
Financial Requirements	US\$ 323,873,645
Number of Partners	33

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REGIONAL STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

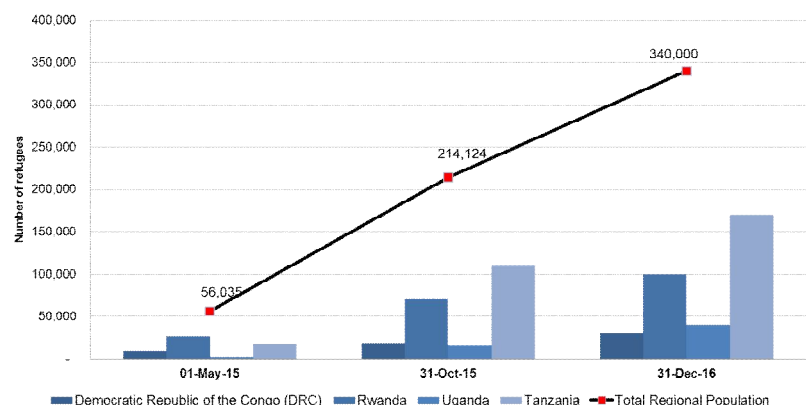
Situation map as of 31 October 2015



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Sources: UNHCR, UNCS

Planning Figures

340,000 Burundian refugees



Introduction

The civil unrest in Burundi has led to an outflow of over 210,000 refugees (as of 31 October 2015) to neighbouring countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania, and as far away as Uganda and Zambia. It started in Bujumbura in April 2015, with a peak in June, ahead of the contested Presidential election that took place on 21 July 2015. Since then, a tense political crisis and a climate of fear and intimidation have spread throughout the country.

The worsening situation led to the declaration by UNHCR of an L1 emergency on 22 April, and an L2 emergency on 11 May 2015. A Regional Refugee Coordinator was also appointed to coordinate the response. To ensure a coordinated response to the protection and assistance needs of the Burundian refugees in the region, a Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) was launched in May and then revised twice, in August and October 2015, as the situation in Burundi remained very volatile despite the conclusion of the electoral process with the contested re-election of President Nkurunziza for a third term in office.

While the influx of new refugee arrivals has somewhat slowed after June, there has been a shift in reasons for refugee movements. While many refugees cited fear of post-election violence in early 2015 an increasing number of refugees have cited human rights violations including against freedom of expression in the second half of the year. Even more worrisome, the security situation has lately deteriorated further: on 10 November, the UN Human Rights Office reported that at least 240 people have been killed in Burundi since 26 April 2015, including 15 children. The killings include the close range shooting on 13 October in Bujumbura of nine people, including an IOM staff and a cameraman for Burundi State radio and television, his wife and two teenage children in their home. A week later, a UNDP national staff was killed when armed men attacked a bar in Bujumbura.

There has also been a rise in inflammatory speeches, raising heightened concerns that the situation within Burundi will significantly deteriorate further. This prompted, on 12 November, to the unanimous adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 2248 (2015), which, *inter alia*, strongly condemns human rights abuses and violence, calls for the respect, protection and guarantee of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all by the Government, and urges the latter to support the mediation efforts; finally, it expresses its intention to consider additional measures against those perpetuating violence and impeding the search for a peaceful solution.

While levels of refugee reception and delivery of protection and assistance were significantly raised in all countries of asylum, the current needs of refugee women, men, girls and boys have only been partially met. Governments in countries of asylum continue to be in need of strong support by humanitarian actors to address the current and evolving needs of Burundian refugees for an extended period of time. This is why this new Regional Refugee Response Plan will cover the period from January to December 2016.

Beneficiary Population*

	14 May 2015	31 October 2015	31 December 2016
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)	9,183	18,382	30,000
Rwanda	26,308	70,335	100,000
Uganda	2,308	15,657	40,000
Tanzania	18,236	109,750	170,000
Total Population	56,035	214,124	340,000

**It should be noted that some 809 Burundian refugees were registered in Zambia at the end of October 2015. As the planning figure for 2016 is still relatively low (3,000 individuals), the protection and assistance needs of the Burundian asylum-seekers and refugees in Zambia will be addressed by UNHCR and local authorities. However, as the situation evolves and if the number of new arrivals reaches 5,000 or more, the UNCT will be mobilized, and an inclusion of a Zambia chapter in the RRRP will be considered.*

Regional Protection and Humanitarian Needs

Overall Protection Needs/Strategy

Given the volatile security and protection environment within Burundi, Burundian refugees continue to have a genuine fear of being harmed should they return and they are therefore in need of international protection. New arrivals should continue to be granted refugee status on a *prima facie* basis in the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania and be biometrically registered. The refugee status of sensitive cases will be determined individually. In Zambia in view of the relatively low number, asylum seekers are going through individual status determination prior to undergoing biometric registration. Access to asylum is the cornerstone of refugee protection; therefore border monitoring will ensure *non-refoulement* of those fleeing for their lives, while providing valuable information on possible spontaneous return movements. In 2016, all countries of asylum will ensure that refugees receive official documentation for their protection and enjoyment of rights.

Of particular concern will be the development of process flows and strategies to address the risks of recruitment and infiltration of armed elements will be instrumental to maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum.

Community-based protection prevention and response mechanisms will be developed or reinforced, for child protection and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in particular. Pursuing the progressive removal of restrictions on the ability of refugees to exercise their rights will be done through promoting social cohesion between refugees and host communities – with a particular attention to refugee camp settings. As such, the response intends to progressively include refugee camps within the local economy, infrastructure, national social protection and service delivery. Both refugees and host communities will be involved at all stages of the response.

Attention to refugees with specific needs, including persons with disabilities, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), survivors of SGBV and other persons at risk will require strengthened identification and referral pathways after the initial arrival stage.

Information-sharing on refugee profiling in the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania will be important to analyse the protection situation within Burundi leading to forced displacement, as well as any secondary movements or spontaneous returns.

A pilot project on intention monitoring will be rolled out in Rwanda and other countries of asylum in order for the comprehensive solutions framework to be informed and adjusted periodically by the reality of refugees through continuous dialogue with them.

Organized repatriation is not supported, as conditions are not yet conducive for a safe and dignified return. However, it is anticipated that some refugees will decide to return in a spontaneous and non-organized manner. In specific cases, UNHCR might agree to facilitate individual returns, once it is confirmed that the decision is voluntary (free and informed) and that specific protection needs require exceptional measures (such as for the family reunification of refugee UASCs with their parents within Burundi).

Education

Efforts will continue to be made for all school-age refugee children girls and boys to be enrolled in local schools in countries of asylum. This will continue to require informal education projects to address children's challenges to adapt to the new curriculum in the short term, and maintain a cultural link with the country of origin in the longer term. Particular efforts will be made in Tanzania for the progressive and smooth transition from the Burundian to the Tanzanian curriculum.

The need to ensure certification after the integration of refugee girls and boys in the national system will be given appropriate attention. Engagement with the authorities, development and humanitarian actors, as well as with refugee and host communities, will be reinforced with a view to increasing school reception capacity for refugee children in all settings. A comprehensive strategy for quality, inclusive refugee education will inform and guide annual work plans.

Food Security

Continued efforts in joint fundraising will be needed to ensure refugees receive complete food rations regularly. Food will be provided at points of entry and in refugee camps. People with specific needs, including pregnant/lactating women and older people will be prioritized during food distributions. Adequate infrastructure will be provided for food distribution. School feeding will also be considered in order to improve the enrolment and retention of girls and boys in school. Cash transfers and/or livelihood activities will be provided where possible so to improve the food security of the refugees, and in particular promote dietary diversity.

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