

# BURUNDI REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January 2019 — December 2020

*Updated for 2020*



**CREDITS:**

UNHCR wishes to acknowledge the contributions of partners and staff in the field, Regional Bureau in Nairobi and Headquarters who have participated in the preparation of the narrative, financial and graphic components of this document.

Production: UNHCR, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes, Nairobi, Kenya.

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

All statistics are provisional and subject to change.

For more information on the Burundi crisis go to: [Burundi Information Sharing Portal](#)

**FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPH:**

*Kenya. Coastal community of stateless Burundians joins push for citizenship*  
UNHCR / Tobin Jones

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# Foreword

As the Burundi refugee crisis approaches its sixth year, some 367,000 Burundian refugees are being generously hosted by the Governments and people of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, about 326,000 of whom are assisted through the Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan. Voluntary returns to Burundi continued in 2019 with nearly 80,000 people assisted to repatriate from September 2017 to December 2019, the vast majority from Tanzania. At the same time, some 500 to 1000 Burundian asylum seekers continue to arrive throughout the region each month.

The situation in Burundi remains complex. Overall security has improved but significant human rights concerns persist, and the underlying political conflict that sparked the conditions causing people to flee remains unresolved in the run up to the elections planned for May 2020. In this context, UNHCR and partners are not promoting refugee returns to Burundi, but are working with the governments involved to assist those who indicate they have made a free and informed choice to return voluntarily, to do so in safety and dignity. It is clear that the Burundi refugee population across the region is diverse, and every personal and family circumstance is different. Even as some refugees are opting to return home, the majority will still require international protection for some time to come.

In taking up my responsibilities as the Director for UNHCR's newly established Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes, I am conversant with the Burundi situation by my previous experience working as the UNHCR Representative in Burundi during a different era, as well as having held different positions in several of the major countries of asylum. From my experience with previous iterations of the Burundi refugee situation, and in following closely its current context, I am motivated to ensure that UNHCR is steadfast and proactive in leading the multi-agency response and collaborating closely with partners in pursuit of effective protection and eventual solutions for Burundian refugees.

Regretfully, in 2019 the Burundi situation remained one of the least funded refugee situations in the world, the consequences of which were acutely felt with inadequate shelters, insufficient domestic items (blankets, soap), lack of medicines, and overcrowded classrooms in countries of asylum. Refugees returning to Burundi, while they were by and large all welcomed back, also faced food insecurity and a range of reintegration challenges.

I would like to thank all our partners for remaining steadfast in their dedication to create more dignified living conditions and foster hope for both refugees and returnees, despite scarce resources and fading international attention. My utmost appreciation goes also to the host governments and communities that have continued to generously welcome them and provide safe refuge. I particularly want to thank all of the donors who support our collective protection and assistance efforts. We continue to seek to better reflect your contributions, including both earmarked and un-earmarked funding in our funds tracking and communication materials.



The updated 2019-2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (Regional RRP) continues to take a comprehensive and solutions-oriented approach, with a continued emphasis on the inclusion of refugees in national systems, and integrated service delivery with host communities wherever possible. Greater self-reliance and the opportunity for refugees to contribute to their host countries remain the goals of socio-economic inclusion and livelihood activities as reflected in the Global Compact on Refugees.

The emphasis on solutions is also reflected in the updated 2020 Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan developed by inter-agency partners in Burundi, a summary of which has been included in this document alongside summaries of the respective Country Refugee Response Plans in order to comprehensively present the full regional response.

This Regional RRP is being published following the first ever Global Refugee Forum in December 2019. As we look forward to the era of implementation of the pledges made there in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, informed by all of our experience to date in the application of the principles and goals of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in this region, let us continue to work together to realise the promise of greater international responsibility sharing in the pursuit of comprehensive solutions for Burundian refugees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Salami'.

**Clementine Nkweta Salami**

UNHCR Regional Director, Regional Bureau for East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes

**2020 PLANNED RESPONSE**

**302,000**

PROJECTED REFUGEE  
POPULATION BY END OF  
2020

**50,000**

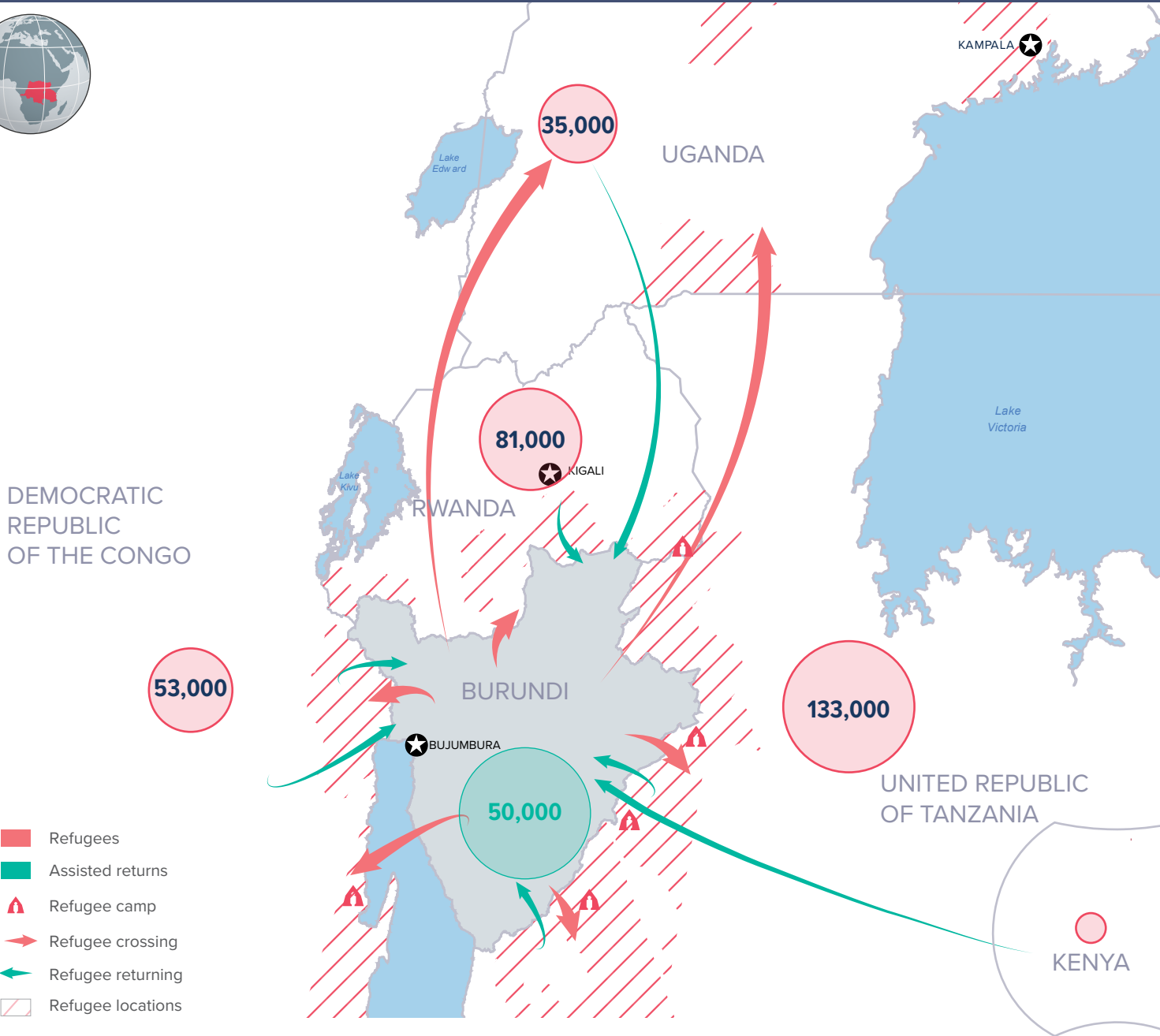
PROJECTED RETURNEES  
IN 2020

**US\$ 289.8M**

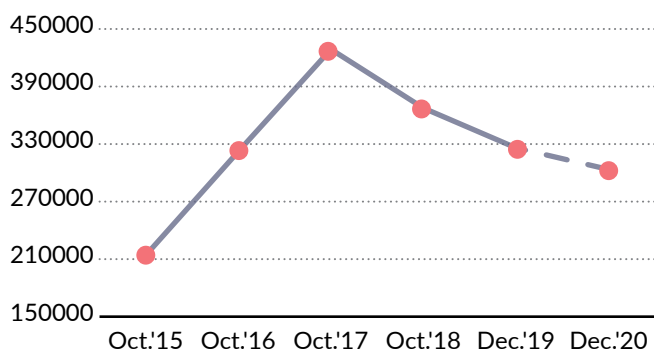
REQUIREMENTS 2020

**37**

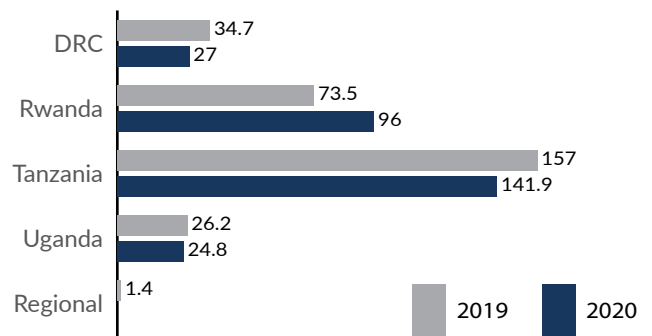
PARTNERS INVOLVED IN  
2020



**Refugee Population Trends 2015 - 2020**



**2019 and 2020 Requirements | in millions US\$**





# Introduction

The revised 2019-2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (Regional RRP) outlines the multi-agency response strategy and financial requirements of 37 partners supporting host governments to provide protection and assistance across the four main countries of asylum, as well as in Burundi for returning refugees. The updated plan continues to take a comprehensive and solutions-oriented approach and includes the impact on host communities.

While Country Refugee Response Plans (Country RRP), which articulate the multi-agency response for all refugee populations at the country level, continue to be emphasized, this Regional RRP presents a coherent approach to the Burundi refugee situation and summarizes the pertinent elements of the relevant Country RRP.

With the significant number of refugee returns to Burundi in the last several years, especially from Tanzania, the updated 2019-2020 Regional RRP also summarizes the Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (JRRRP) developed by inter-agency partners in Burundi, which is also updated for 2020.

Tanzania continues to host the largest number of Burundian refugees with some 166,978<sup>1</sup> as of December 2019, almost all of whom live in the eastern part of the country in Ndutu, Mtendeli, and Nyarugusu camps. In Rwanda, most of the 73,332 Burundian refugees reside in Mahama camp (61,869) while some 11,463 live in urban areas. The DRC hosts 47,573 Burundians in South Kivu, predominantly in the Lusenda and Mulongwe sites in South Kivu, with others living in communities in Katanga, Maniema, and North Kivu provinces. 45,671 Burundian refugees reside in Uganda, the vast majority in Nakivale settlement, with others living in Oruchinga settlement and urban areas.

In the pursuit of protection, assistance, and solutions for Burundian refugees, the 2019-2020 Regional RRP also takes into account the situation of and relationship with host

communities. Resilience programming for both refugees and hosting communities will benefit targeted host community individuals, households, and communities, with the aim to conduct the humanitarian response in a manner that engages and strengthens national systems and local service delivery in refugee hosting areas.

Despite significant efforts, the Inter-Burundi Dialogue convened under the auspices of the East African Community has stalled and the underlying political conflict remains unresolved. With presidential and legislative elections scheduled for May 2020, the Government of Burundi has declared an increasingly favourable climate for a free, transparent and calm election, and warned that any attempt by other countries to interfere with the elections would be an attack on Burundi's sovereignty.

At the UN General Assembly in September 2019, the Burundi Government cited several "positive gestures" from the authorities towards ensuring peaceful elections, including the promotion of freedom of expression and allowing new political parties to exist; the decision of Burundi's current President, Pierre Nkurunziza, not to stand in the presidential elections; the reintegration of refugees and political exiles; and the release of more than 2,000 prisoners since the beginning of the year.

However, the September 2019 report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi states that serious human rights violations continue in a general climate of impunity and the suppression of civil liberties is intensifying in the run up to the 2020 elections. The prolonged political crisis has had a negative impact on the socio-economic situation. Burundi's economy remains seriously impacted by the limited financial aid by major donors, shortage of foreign exchange reserves, price inflation, and declining investment.

<sup>1</sup> There are a further 42,000 Burundian refugees from previous eras still residing in Tanzania who no longer receive assistance and are not included in the Regional or Country RRP.

The International Organization for Migration Displacement Tracking Matrix indicates that as of December 2019 approximately 104,000 people are internally displaced – 79 per cent linked to natural disasters and 21 per cent linked to social and political factors – representing a 30 per cent overall reduction in the last year.

New arrivals of Burundian refugees continue to be recorded in the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda. In 2019, a total of 11,251 new arrivals were registered in those countries. Individuals claim persecution, violence, harassment and fear, as well as a desire for family reunification, and food insecurity as reasons for their departure. At the same time, refugees opting to return home cite improved overall security, adverse conditions in countries of asylum, a desire to reoccupy their farmland, and family reunification.

As of December 2019, more than 79,700 refugees have been assisted to return to Burundi since September 2017 – mostly from Tanzania, with additional numbers having returned both with assistance and on their own from Rwanda, the DRC, and Kenya. Current policy is not to promote returns to Burundi, but

to assist those refugees who indicate they have made a free and informed choice to return voluntarily, to do so in safety and dignity.

With refugees in Tanzania feeling increased pressure from government authorities in 2019 to sign up for voluntary repatriation, Regional RRP partners continue to advocate that decisions to return remain fully voluntary, without pressure or intimidation. Many refugees say they would prefer to wait for the conclusion of the 2020 elections before considering return to the country.

The 2019-2020 Regional RRP brings together 37 partners to respond to the needs of a projected 352,000 Burundian refugees by the end of 2020, of whom up to 50,000 are projected to return to Burundi over the course of the year.

These projections may be revised depending on the evolution of events in Burundi in 2020, the situation in the main countries of asylum, and any significant related changes to the arrival and return trends.

### Projected Burundi Refugee Population

	Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2019	Projected returns 2020	Projected Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2020
DRC	47,573	4,000	53,000

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_17997](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_17997)

