

BURUNDI REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January 2019 — December 2020



CREDITS:

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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 / Tobi Jones

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Foreword

As the Burundi refugee crisis approaches its fifth year, some 390,000 Burundian refugees are being generously hosted by the Governments and people of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, 349,000 of whom are assisted through the Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan. While smaller numbers of asylum seekers continue to arrive throughout the region, voluntary returns to Burundi have increased in the last year with more than 55,000 assisted to repatriate as of November 2018.



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 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.

In my travels I have had the privilege to sit with Burundian refugees – from Nduta Camp in Tanzania to Nakivale Settlement in Uganda, and from Mahama Camp in Rwanda to the Mulongwe site in the Democratic Republic of Congo – listening to their struggles, fears, and aspirations. Amidst all of the compelling individual stories, one thing is clear: the Burundi refugee population is diverse, and every person 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.

I regret that in 2018 the Burundi situation remained one of the least funded refugee crises in the world, the consequences of which were acutely felt with food cuts, lack of medicines, inadequate shelters, and overcrowded classrooms in countries of asylum. Refugees returning to Burundi, while by and large welcomed back, also faced food insecurity and a range of reintegration challenges.

At the same time I salute all 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. I thank the host governments and communities that have continued to welcome and provide refuge.

And we extend our utmost appreciation to the donors who have supported our collective assistance efforts. We have recently made strides to better reflect your contributions, including both earmarked and un-earmarked funding in our funds tracking and communication materials.

The 2019-2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) takes 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.

The emphasis on solutions is also reflected in the 2019 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 more comprehensively present the full regional response.

As we look forward to the era of implementation of 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 work together to realise the promise of greater international responsibility sharing in the pursuit of comprehensive solutions for Burundian refugees.

Catherine Wiesner

 UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator and CRRF
 Champion for the Burundi Situation

2019 PLANNED RESPONSE

278,000

PROJECTED REFUGEE
POPULATION BY END OF
2019

116,000

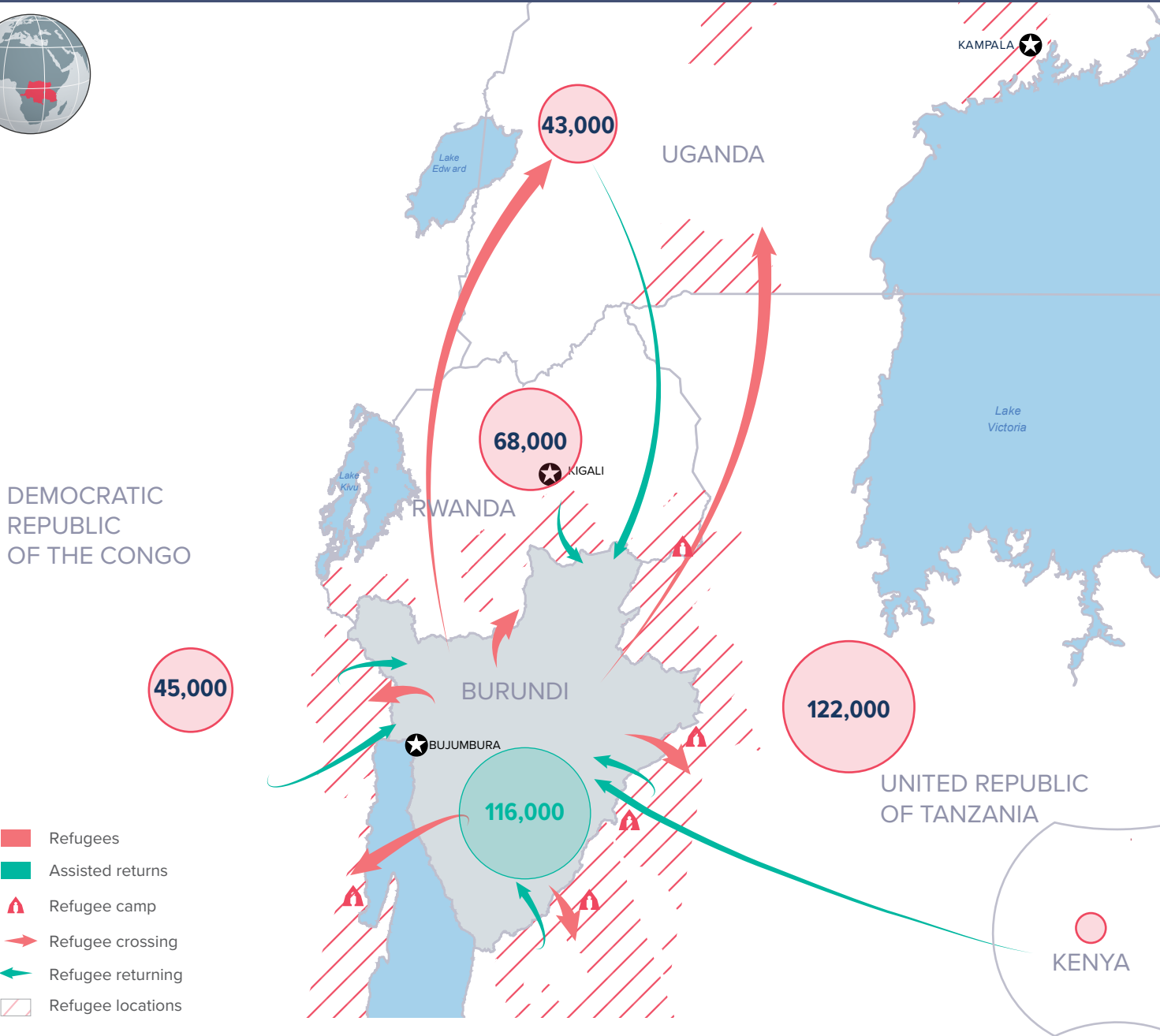
PROJECTED RETURNEES
IN 2019

US\$ 296.4M

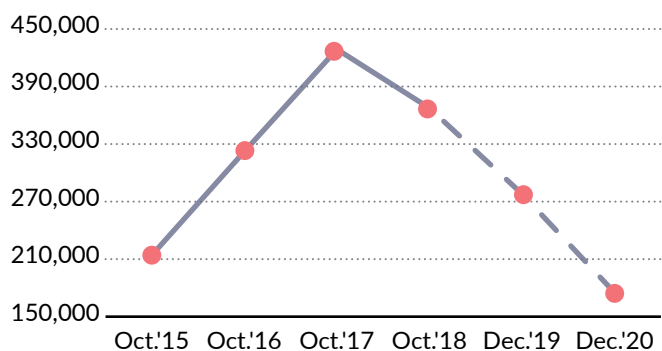
REQUIREMENTS 2019

35

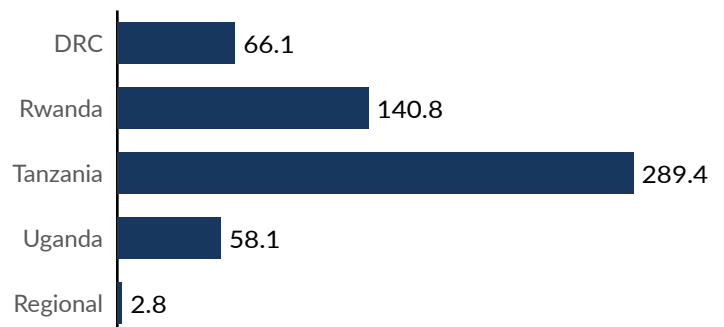
2019 & 2020 PARTNERS
INVOLVED



Refugee Population Trends 2015 - 2020



2019 and 2020 Requirements | in millions US\$



Introduction

The 2019-2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) outlines the multi-agency response strategy and financial requirements of 35 partners supporting host governments to provide protection and assistance across the four main countries of asylum, as well as in Burundi for returning refugees. An expanded two-year timeframe, inclusion of impact on the host community, and the addition of several new partners, including UNDP and a number of local NGOs, are all reflective of efforts to make the 2019-2020 Burundi RRRP more comprehensive and solutions-oriented.

In light of the number of overlapping refugee situations in the region, another new direction in 2019 is to emphasise Country Refugee Response Plans (CRRP), which articulate the multi-agency response for all refugee populations at the country level. In presenting a coherent approach to the Burundi refugee situation, this Regional RRP summarizes the elements of the Country RRP that relate to the Burundi situation.

Importantly, as the number of voluntary refugee returns to Burundi have become more significant in the last year, the 2019-2020 Regional RRP also summarizes the 2019 Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (JRRRP) developed by inter-agency partners in Burundi.

Tanzania continues to host the largest number of Burundian refugees with some 204,000¹ as of October 2018 living in the eastern part of the country in Nduu, Mtendeli, and Nyarugusu camps. In Rwanda, most of the 69,000 Burundian refugees reside in Mahama camp (58,000) while 11,000 live in urban areas. The DRC hosts 42,000 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. 34,000 Burundian refugees reside in Uganda, the vast majority in Nakivale settlement.

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.

With the Inter-Burundi Dialogue convened under the auspices of the East African Community having made negligible progress in 2018, the underlying political conflict remains unresolved. Meanwhile, a Constitutional Referendum in May 2018, though marred by allegations of intimidation, arrests and forced disappearances, did not result in any significant increase in displacement. Presidential elections scheduled for 2020 mark the next major event on the political calendar.

The September 2018 report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi states that serious human rights violations have persisted and the prolonged political crisis has had a negative impact on the socio-economic situation. Burundi's economy remains seriously impacted by suspension of financial aid by major donors, shortage of foreign exchange reserves, price inflation, and declining investment.

¹ 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 October 2018 approximately 147,000 people are internally displaced – 75 percent linked to natural disasters and 25 percent linked to socio-political factors – representing a 20 percent overall reduction in the last year.

Although new refugee arrivals to neighbouring countries decreased in 2018, host countries still receive individuals claiming 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 November 2018, more than 55,000 refugees have been assisted to return to Burundi – 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.

If recent trends continue, it is expected that the number of Burundian refugees in the four main countries of asylum will decrease by approximately half over the next two years. The 2019-2020 Regional RRP anticipates assisting a total of 394,000 Burundian refugees by the end of 2019, of whom 116,000 are projected to return to Burundi over the course of the year. In 2020, the Regional RRP includes 296,000 Burundian refugees, of whom 121,000 would return to Burundi and 175,000 would remain in countries of asylum at the end of 2020.

Projected Burundi Refugee Population

	Refugee Population 31 Oct. 2018	Projected Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2018	Anticipated new arrivals & growth 2019	Projected returns 2019	Projected Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2019	Anticipated new arrivals & growth 2020	Projected returns 2020	Projected Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2020
DRC	42,308	50,000	5,000	10,000	45,000	5,000	15,000	35,000

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