

#### 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:

Refugees walk along an access road at Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda's Eastern province on a day when UNHCR-chartered buses had arrived with more refugees from a transit camp at Nyanza in the southern province who had recently fled neighbouring Burundi.

UNHCR / Tony Karumba;

## Contents

Regional Refugee Response Plan	3
Foreword	5
Regional Overview	7
Financial Requirements	19
Democratic Republic of the Congo Refugee Response Plan	22
Country Overview	23
Planned Response	29
Financial Requirements	35
Rwanda Refugee Response Plan	38
Country Overview	39
Planned Response	44
Financial Requirements	51
United Republic of Tanzania Refugee Response Plan	54
Country Overview	55
Planned Response	62
Financial Requirements	69
Uganda Refugee Response Plan	72
Country Overview	73
Planned Response	80
Financial Requirements	88
Annex	91
Regional Financial Overview	91

## **Foreword**

As the Burundi refugee crisis enters its fourth year, some 430,000 Burundian refugees are being hosted across the region by the governments and people of Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Uganda. Although the spectre of mass violence in Burundi has receded, with the political situation still unresolved and the persistence of significant human rights concerns, refugee arrivals are expected to continue in 2018, albeit at lower levels than in previous years.



At the same time, some refugees have decided to return home, and are seeking to re-establish their lives in Burundian communities that are facing considerable economic pressures and food insecurity. While UNHCR and partners are not promoting or encouraging refugee returns to Burundi in the current context, we 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.

Still the fact remains that the majority of Burundian refugees continue to need international protection. And yet their situation seems at risk of being forgotten in a crowded global landscape of crises. At the time of writing, the 2017 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan had only received dedicated funds to cover 17 percent of the needs, making it one of the most underfunded in the world.

I extend sincere thanks to the staff of the 27 partner agencies and government counterparts who are nevertheless working each day – without enough resources – to provide food, shelter, water, health, education and other basic services, finding innovative ways to do so. UNHCR and all RRP partners thank those donors who have supported these efforts, while urging them and others to demonstrate even greater solidarity through increased contributions.

In 2018, per the principles and goals of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), the inter-agency response will continue to support the four main host governments to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees, seeking to anchor the response in national systems wherever possible, with an emphasis on integrated service delivery with host communities, and promoting livelihoods and self-reliance through socio-economic inclusion.

The international community must stay engaged in the pursuit of a genuine and lasting resolution to the Burundi crisis. In the meantime, I appeal to Burundi's neighbours to continue to uphold their international responsibilities and commitments to receive asylum-seekers at their borders and afford protection to those who need it. Under no circumstances should recognized refugees be compelled to return to Burundi against their will.

Thank you for your interest in Burundian refugees,

Catherine Wiesner

UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator and CRRF

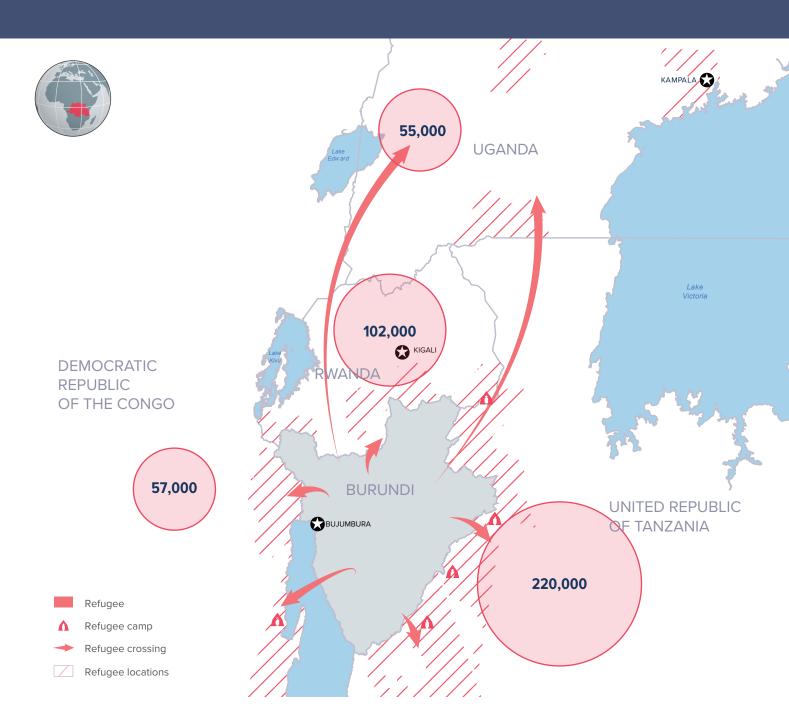
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Champion for the Burundi Situation

**434,000**PROJECTED REFUGEE POPULATION

US\$ 391M REQUIREMENTS

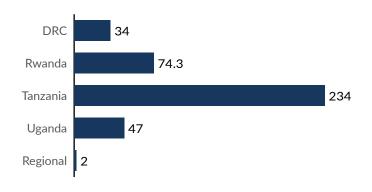
**27**PARTNERS INVOLVED



#### **Refugee Population Trends**



#### Requirements | in millions US\$



# Regional Overview

### Introduction

The political crisis and related security and humanitarian conditions in Burundi have led to the outflow since April 2015 of more than 400,000 Burundian refugees to neighbouring countries and beyond over the past two and a half years. This response plan includes an additional 37,000 Burundi refugees who were already present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (the DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. Tanzania is the largest host of Burundian refugees in the region with 256,000 refugees as of October 31, 2017 (of whom 236,000 are camp based). In Rwanda, there are 88,000 Burundian refugees mostly hosted in Mahama camp, with others residing in urban areas. The DRC hosts 45,000 Burundian refugees, predominantly in Lusenda camp in South Kivu, with the remaining families in transit centres or hosted by communities in Katanga, Maniema and North Kivu provinces. In Uganda, there are 39,000 Burundian refugees, hosted in the previously existing Nakivale settlement. In 2016, the total number of arrivals of Burundian refugees in the four major countries of asylum came to 123,000. During 2017, the Burundian refugee population increased by 61,000 as of 31 October 2017. Regionally, 86 per cent of Burundian refugees are hosted in camps, with 14 per cent living in urban areas.

The political situation in Burundi remains unresolved, with external mediation efforts in deadlock, including the Inter-Burundian Dialogue convened under the auspices of the East African Community (EAC) and its appointed facilitator, former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa. The human rights situation remains of significant concern, with the most recent report of the UN

Commission of Inquiry on Burundi finding reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed in Burundi. Recent refugee arrivals report facing pressure and violent harassment from local level officials to join and contribute financially to the ruling party, as well as continued surveillance by Imbonerakure militia of exit routes out of the country.

The prevailing socio-economic crisis continues to put pressure on the population in Burundi. Humanitarian reports indicate that 2.6 million people in Burundi were projected to be food insecure from October 2017. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) findings show that 198,000 people inside Burundi (roughly 2 per cent of the population), are internally displaced, 35 percent of whom have cited socio-political issues as the reason for the displacement, while the remainder have been displaced by natural disasters. A malaria epidemic is severely affecting the country, with over 6.6 million cases, including 2,875 deaths, reported as of October 2017. Poor access to water and sanitation also increase the risk of communicable diseases. Women and girls have endured particular hardships, including violence, insecurity, negative coping mechanisms (e.g. "survival sex"), and bear additional domestic and livelihoods responsibilities.

With the political situation predicted to remain at *status quo* and the socio-economic situation of the country projected to continue to decline, the outflow of Burundian refugees – mostly to neighbouring countries – is expected to continue in 2018, albeit at a lower level

than in previous years. The Burundian refugee population in the region is anticipated to grow by some 56,000 in 2018, including approximately 38,400 new arrivals and estimated population growth of 17,600. At the same time, over 60,000 assisted and self-organized returns to Burundi are anticipated. UNHCR and partners are not encouraging or promoting refugee returns to Burundi in the current context, but will assist those refugees who indicate they have made a free and informed choice to return voluntarily to do so in safety and dignity. Registered refugees and asylum-seekers, who request help to return to Burundi will be assisted to do so while those who choose to return on their own will also benefit from individual and community based reintegration support in Burundi, where the UN country team and partners have developed a <u>Joint Response</u> Plan - Burundian Refugees Voluntary Return, September 2017-December 2018 that is aligned with this Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP).

Taking all factors into account, the total population of Burundian refugees covered by the Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) is projected to be 434,000 by the end of 2018. This number may be adjusted as population verification exercises are carried out. While this RRP focuses on the four largest host countries of Tanzania, Rwanda, the DRC and Uganda, smaller numbers of refugees have also fled to other countries including Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. As the crisis enters its fourth year, the main focus of the response will be to ensure access to asylum for those still leaving Burundi while supporting host countries to continue to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees, prioritizing livelihoods and self-reliance in a whole of society approach that promotes socio-economic inclusion in host communities and national systems.

#### **Projected Burundi Refugee Population**

DRC

Population		new arrivals in	•	returns in 2018	Projected Refugee Population 31 Dec. 2018
44 859	50,000	8 000	2 000	3 000	57,000

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