



@UNHCR Burundi, Women crossing the Rusizi River fleeing DRC to Burundi

**BURUNDI INTER-AGENCY REFUGEE**  
**RESPONSE PLAN**  
DRC Emergency Situation

**March - September 2025**

Population included in the response plan: Refugees, Returnees, Third-Country National and Migrants

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## At a Glance

# Burundi Planned Response

### March-September 2025



**90,000**

Projected refugee population within 6 months



USD

**76.5 M**







Total financial requirements



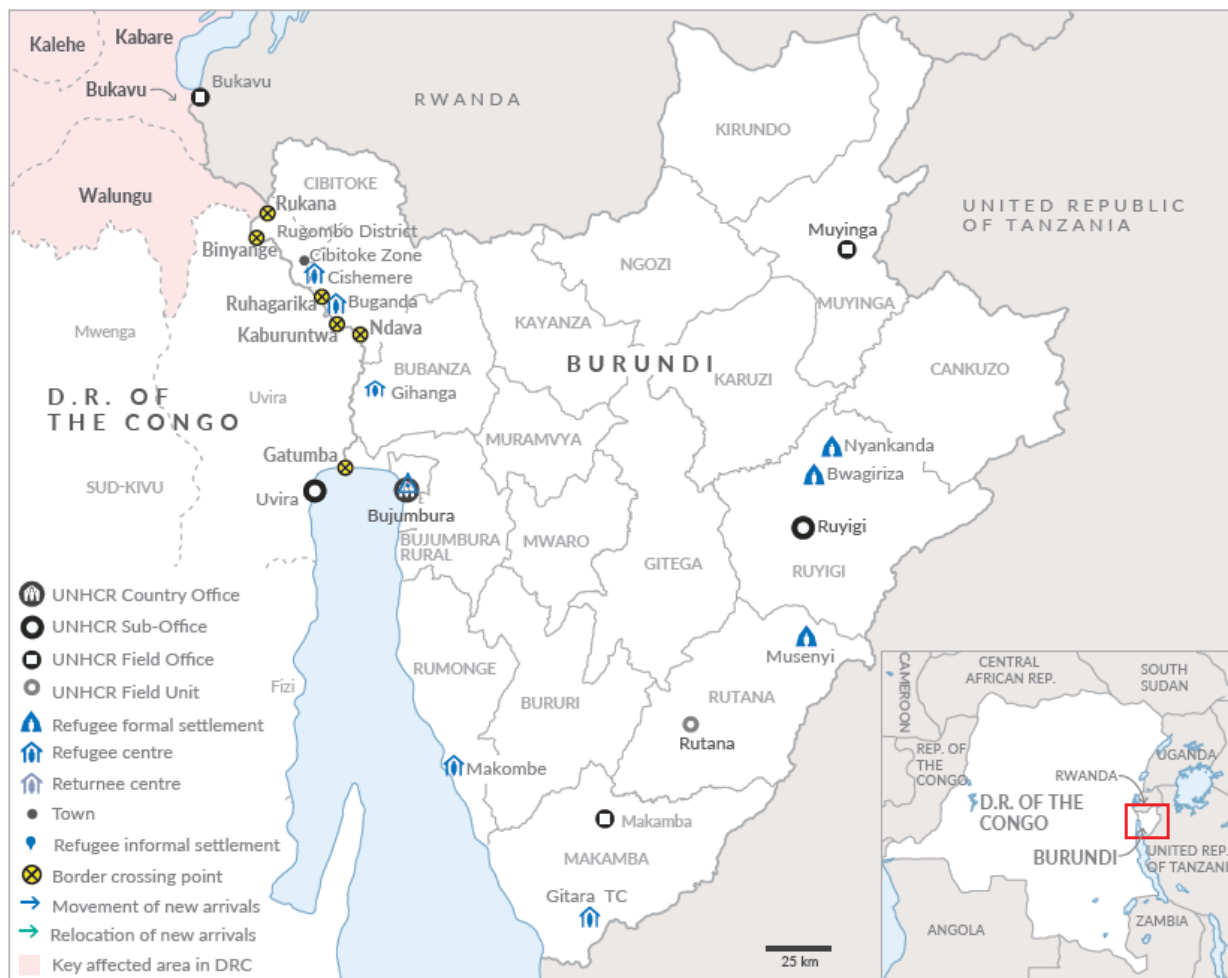
**16**

RRP Partners

## Population Figures

Current Key figures <sup>1</sup>		Planning figures	
 <b>69,854</b> Estimated New Arrivals from DRC since Jan 2025	 <b>1,650</b> Assisted Refugee Returnees	<b>90,000</b>	Estimated number of new arrival refugees within <b>6 months.</b>
 <b>12,872</b> Relocated	 <b>26,707</b> Registered Refugees	<b>16,000</b>	Estimated number of refugee returnees
 <b>89 K</b> Refugees from DRC in Burundi prior Jan 2025	 <b>39,753</b> Not yet verified	<b>4,000</b>	Migrants
	<b>1,744</b> No Show	<b>90,000</b>	Pre-existing refugee population

<sup>1</sup> Figures as of 21 March 2025



## Context and summary situational analysis

Since early 2025, the Great Lakes region has witnessed a significant escalation in violence in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Intense clashes between armed groups, notably the M23 rebel group and other local militias, have led to massive displacement of civilian populations. With this situation, many refugees are heading for neighboring countries, particularly Burundi, which shares a 236 km long border with the DRC region of South Kivu.

When articulating the above planning figures, the following high-risk scenarios were considered:

- A. If the conflict continues without cessation of hostilities through political dialogue,
- B. Conflict spilling into Uvira and surrounding territories (new conflict zones leading to mass displacement),
- C. Interruption of life-saving humanitarian assistance/services for displaced and vulnerable members of the community leading to displacement within and out of the DRC seeking life-saving assistance and
- D. Supplies and public service interruptions in large and medium-sized urban areas triggering displacement.

This response plan is based on the activated inter-agency contingency plan that was developed in coordination with the authorities and partners. It reflects the third scenario of the contingency plan (Scenario C) based on the number of new arrivals in February 2025 alone, which reached 67,000 individuals seeking international protection as of March 19, 2025.

As the refugee influx into Burundi reached a critical point, with thousands of individuals fleeing conflict and instability in the DRC, the country faces a significant humanitarian challenge. Struggling to accommodate a growing number of refugees arriving at various sites and transit centres who are often displaced by violence and insecurity, and require immediate assistance, including protection, shelter, food assistance and medical care.

As the situation worsens, the burden on Burundi's resources intensifies, compelling international organizations and humanitarian actors to step in and provide support. The scale of the crisis highlights the urgent need for comprehensive solutions, both in terms of emergency relief and long-term strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of the displaced population. The situation remains fluid, with new arrivals continuing to pour in, making it imperative for both national and international communities to respond swiftly and effectively.

In light of the existing arrivals and the projected new arrivals, this plan proposes responses to this situation. All these measures form part of an integrated, multi-sectoral response, mobilizing substantial financial and human resources to cope with the massive influx of refugees and ensure their protection, dignity and access to vital services in a region beset by protracted conflict and heightened tension.

This response plan has been incorporated into the Democratic Republic of the Congo Regional Refugee Response Plan (DRC RRP), which addresses both the 90,000 pre-existing Congolese refugee population in Burundi and the anticipated 90,000 new refugee arrivals in 2025.

## **Profile of the new arrivals**

In 2025, Burundi continues to face a significant influx of individuals seeking refuge, many of whom come from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Among these new arrivals, the majority are women, children, and older persons, whose vulnerability is heightened by the arduous realities of fleeing their homes and crossing the Rusizi River in deplorable conditions.

Most refugees are arriving through Gatumba, predominantly from the urban agglomeration of Uvira, while those entering via Rugombo are largely from rural areas, including villages in the Rusizi Plain such as Sange, Luvungi, Katogota, Luberizi, Kamanyola, etc. as well as the city of Bukavu and its surroundings.

It is estimated that 60 per cent of the total Congolese refugee population are from rural areas of the DRC while 40 per cent are estimated to be from urban areas. There could be a mass arrival through Gatumba if Uvira is attacked and / or if the population feels threatened. In this case, the refugee population will be mainly of the following ethnic groups: Bavira, Bafulero, Babembe, Bashi, Barundi and Banyamulenge.

Based on the trends of new arrivals.<sup>2</sup> It is also predicted that the percentages of women and children under 18 will be high among new arrivals. It is anticipated that many children will be separated from their families during their flight and that survivors of sexual violence will be among the new arrivals as well as people with chronic diseases, and it is likely that there will be a significant number of those sick as a result of the flight conditions.

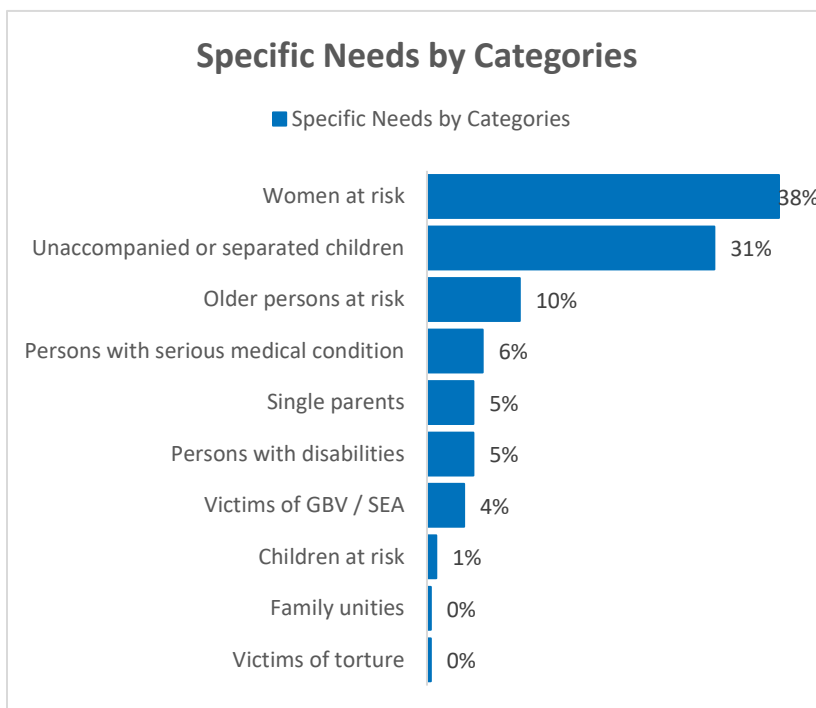
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<sup>2</sup> Registration of Refugees out of Eastern DRC Influx into Burundi: Rugombo Emergency

In addition, people are said to come from Bukavu via the Kamanyola mountains, and asylum seekers might arrive from Baraka and Mboko.

Burundian returnees, migrants back from the DRC, and third-country nationals living in the DRC are fleeing in the same movement with Congolese refugees due to the ongoing security threat. The strategy is to provide initial protection and assistance for all new arrivals. Upon determination of status, the types of services and assistance that will be provided will differ, given that the four categories of new arrivals will have different needs.

As per the existing strategy, Burundian returnees' response will fall under the UNHCR Multi-Year Multi-Partners Strategy 2024-2027 'Repatriation process and return assistance package for 3 months'. Beyond 3 months, their humanitarian needs will be considered in the different sectorial responses based on the availability of resources.



Since maintaining the civilian character of asylum is critical, the provincial authorities and the ICRC will address any combatants arriving.

## Key features of expected arrival area

While authorities have designated official entry points, the nature of the conflict and ongoing displacement has led many new arrivals to cross into Burundi through informal routes. As observed during the current influx, a significant number of refugees are using the Rusizi River to reach Burundi, often at great personal risk, including the danger of drowning. To mitigate these risks, response efforts will include coordination with authorities to enhance safe passage and protection measures.

Many of these refugees originate from rural villages in the expansive Rusizi Plain, which stretches across both the DRC and Burundi, as well as from the "Hauts et Moyens Plateaux" region. Others are expected to cross Lake Tanganyika, arriving in the Rumonge and Nyanza-Lac regions. Meanwhile, those fleeing from Uvira will likely travel by road through Gatumba before being transferred to a transit centre.

As a result, the main host localities for new arrivals are situated in the western plains of Burundi, spanning from Cibitoke to Nyanza-Lac. These areas primarily consist of rural villages with dispersed settlements interspersed with small agglomerations, with the exception of Bujumbura, Rumonge, Cibitoke, and Nyanza-Lac, which are classified as urban centres of varying sizes.



*Riziki fled the conflict in eastern DRC with her children. Now on her way to a safer refugee site in Burundi, she looks forward to a more secure environment for them. ©UNHCR/Charity Nzomo*

## Country Strategic Objectives

To uphold the civilian character of asylum, the Commissariat Général des Migrations (CGM) will be responsible for the security screening of all arrivals at the border entry points, in full respect of the principle of nonrefoulement. Authorities will handle any combatants identified with support from ICRC.

Considering that persons fleeing may be Congolese seeking refuge, Burundian refugee returnees, migrants, and third-country nationals returning from the DRC, the CGM will be responsible for screening new arrivals by country of origin, specifying which category an individual will be considered. The main authorities and agencies involved in these processes are ONPRA/UNHCR, DGRRR/UNHCR, and IOM.

ONPRA will conduct the refugee prima facie process for Congolese asylum seekers in the transit centres and at the settlements when the need arises.

Burundian refugee returnees identified by the Government of Burundi and UNHCR will be transferred to returnee transit centres, where they will undergo the existing procedures for facilitated returns.

The needs of third-country nationals fleeing violence in the DRC will be given due consideration, in particular, if they seek voluntary return to their country of origin. This will require the establishment of a separate processing system which is different from the assistance system for asylum seekers and refugees. The Government of Burundi and IOM will coordinate to identify third-country nationals with specific protection needs, while IOM will coordinate with all actors and process migrant-related assistance

measures, including a voluntary return to their country of origin and travel health assistance. This would also include health and psychosocial support to migrants in Burundi. As far as migrants are concerned, they will be referred to the IOM.

If there is a situation whereby a given third country national avails him/herself to ONPRA and UNHCR that due to protection concerns, return to the country of origin is not safe, a refugee status determination will be conducted.

As indicated above, the response plan will specifically examine tailored responses to refugees, returnees, third-country nationals, and migrants.

The refugee response framework aims to provide processes and prioritized activities that need to take place from the entry point → Transit centre → relocation → final destination of designed settlements. As such, detailed response activities and agencies that will implement these activities will be articulated so that the flow of the response process from the entry point to the settlements is clear and put in place.

As to structure the response plan, 5 objectives that will inform and formulate the critical activities are as follows:

#### **Strategic Objective 1: Ensure protection environment**

Efforts will focus on strengthening the protection response capacity to provide timely and inclusive life-saving assistance, particularly through registration, border monitoring, and the identification of individuals at heightened risk. Specialized protection interventions will be reinforced to support those in need, including child protection measures and targeted assistance for survivors of GBV and SEA, ensuring a survivor-centred approach.

#### **Strategic Objective 2: Ensure vulnerable individuals meet their basic needs**

Reception conditions will be improved to ensure the safety and dignity of new arrivals by enhancing capacity at entry points, transit centres, and settlements. A multisectoral approach will be adopted to provide essential assistance, including food and other life-saving services, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable individuals, especially those affected by or at risk of GBV. As part of these efforts, site planning and infrastructure will be strengthened to accommodate relocated new arrivals, ensuring they have access to adequate services, protection, and a dignified living environment.

#### **Strategic Objective 3: Strengthen coordination at the National and Sub-National level**

Through the Refugee Coordination Model, continue to strengthen existing coordination forums at the National and Sub-National levels to ensure urgent unmet needs are identified through systematic information management tools.

#### **Strategic Objective 4: Enhance operational capacity, including advocacy and resource mobilization efforts**

Through a collective approach, ensure advocacy and resource mobilization efforts continue to be a priority to ensure resources that contribute to the refugee emergency response are advocated for through an evidence-based advocacy approach.



## Cross-Cutting Priorities



### Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

A participatory assessment will be conducted from the onset of the emergency to inform the design of the response. Focus group discussions will be conducted considering age, gender, disability and diversity among the new arrivals. Regular meetings will be held with the new arrivals and feedback and response mechanisms will be established. Community structures will be engaged in the response strategy.



### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

All stakeholders' staff and refugees will be sensitized to protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment and to the zero-tolerance policy. The PSEAH network will ensure new arrivals have access to a community complaint mechanism for reporting, feedback, and any referral pathway. The organizations will activate their internal mechanisms to respond to the SEA.



### Protection Mainstreaming

All partners responding to this emergency share an ethical responsibility for mainstreaming protection across the response plan. It is a way of designing and implementing all programs considering protection risks and potential violations and ensuring that the protective impact of aid programming is maximized. By incorporating protection principles into aid delivery, humanitarian actors in Cox's Bazar ensure that their activities target the most vulnerable individuals, enhance safety and dignity, and promote and protect the rights and needs of new arrivals, encouraging inclusiveness without contributing to or perpetuating discrimination, abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation. It is not a one-time activity but a continuous exercise while interventions are designed, implemented, and evaluated.

Sector lead agencies and partners are responsible for ensuring that activities within their respective sectors are carried out with a "protection lens," particularly ensuring that their activities integrate protection principles. Mainstreaming Protection within Sectors and Working Groups does not require specific protection expertise, but if needed, the Protection Sector in Burundi can provide advice, guidance, and training on Protection mainstreaming.

When mainstreaming Protection into the program cycle, the following four principles must be taken into account in all humanitarian activities:

- 1) Prioritize Safety and Dignity and Avoid Causing Harm.
- 2) Meaningful Access/
- 3) Accountability.
- 4) Participation and Empowerment.



### Cash-Based Interventions

Emergency cash assistance (CBI) will be provided to individuals with specific needs, including unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), women at risk, elderly individuals, persons with

disabilities, and those with serious medical conditions. Additionally, cash-plus activities will be implemented to promote economic opportunities and strengthen community resilience.

This response plan aims to expand the use of cash assistance across multiple sectors, including Food Security, Livelihoods, Shelter, NFIs, Protection, and Domestic Fuel. A market assessment will be conducted to ensure that refugee sites and migrant transit centres have adequate supplies of food and NFIs to meet the needs of both the existing and newly arrived populations. If necessary, adjustments will be made to provide in-kind assistance instead of cash-based support. For Burundian returnees, cash assistance has already been implemented and will continue.

Enhancing the Cash Working Group will be prioritized to improve coordination and synergies among partners using cash as a response modality. Cash-for-livelihoods initiatives will empower refugees to engage in income-generating activities based on their skills and experience, fostering self-reliance. Additionally, efforts will be made to explore financial inclusion opportunities, enabling refugees to become less dependent on humanitarian aid.



### Natural Hazards

Burundi witnessed a flooding crisis due to the effects of El Niño in 2024. Given the lessons learned from this experience and the likelihood that climate-induced crisis continues to be shared in the region, it is recommended to integrate natural hazards mitigative measures when agencies are strategizing a response to the DRC crisis.

## Country Sectoral Response



### PROTECTION

- **Access to territory and asylum**

UNHCR Burundi will work with the Burundian Government to ensure access to territory and asylum for displaced populations. In conjunction with ONPRA, UNHCR will oversee the management of Transit Centres, all of which are situated at a reasonable distance from the borders. All the asylum seekers will undergo medical and nutrition screening at the transit Centres.

The new arrivals' stay in the Transit Centres should take 3-5 days, after which they will leave, provided that the new refugee site is ready to accommodate them. Child-friendly procedures are ensured in collaboration with ONPRA, UNICEF, and members of the Child Protection subsector, such as Save the Children. Refugees who want to remain in an urban setting will take charge of themselves.

- **Protection and border monitoring**

UNHCR and ONPRA will monitor the border at the various entry points to ensure that the principles of admission and non-refoulement of refugees at Burundian borders are respected and applied.

#### Partners in Protection sector

ONPRA, CGM, DGRRR, MSNASDPHG, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNAIDS, IOM, ICRC (CICR), Red Cross, Save the Children, IRC, Caritas Burundi, World Relief Burundi, World Vision International.

- **Registration and documentation**

CGM will screen populations seeking refuge in Burundi at the entry points. Arriving individuals will be provided with information on UNHCR and ONPRA registration services. After a period of stay, not exceeding 5 days, in one of the transit centres, refugees will be relocated to the refugee site.

Joint ONPRA/UNHCR registration teams will be established in the transit centres, enabling the identification of persons with specific needs, including unaccompanied minors and separated children. For the latter, this will be done in coordination and collaboration with UNICEF and MSNASDPHG.

The emergency registration applicable for prima facie (level 2) will be conducted at the Transit centres, right upon arrival, using biometrics. Joint registration teams composed of ONPRA and UNHCR staff will be in charge of this procedure. The workforce will consist of 2 scheduling, 3 crowd control, 6 proGres entry, 4 biometrics, 2 quality control, and 3 protection staffs.

- **Civilian character of asylum**

At the entry point, the Burundian security services search new arrivals' belongings to ensure that no military effect is carried. They will also be called upon to identify possible combatants in the transit centres and separate them from the civilians. New arrivals will be sensitized to the civilian character of asylum and to their rights and obligations.

**Key activities to consider under the response at the entry points includes:**

- Border monitoring and production of population movement trend analysis documents: increase the number of staff for border monitoring and or number of staff from local authorities, border officials, and partners to support monitoring in border crossing points (including informal)
- In collaboration with local authorities and partners, establish mitigative measures to remedy the risk of drowning (SOPs and action plans to be developed)
- Continued advocacy for access to territory and asylum.
- Provision of information on available services including asylum and registration processes
- Capacity-building initiatives for newly deployed partner staff and authorities at the entry points include training on refugee law (rights/obligations/procedures) and responding to security/protection incidents (international and national legal instruments).
- Social cohesion and peace-building activities with the host community to ensure the continuity of safe passage.
- Support local authorities in conducting screening and maintaining the civilian character of entry points
- Ensure mechanisms and systems for speedy identification and transportation of identified vulnerable individuals at the entry point who urgently need life-saving assistance and, to the extent possible., establish referral systems.
- Logistics and communication. Provide transport services from entry points to transit centres for persons with specific needs and vulnerable individuals with reduced mobility.

After new arrivals cross through the entry points, transit centres will provide assistance and service until refugees are relocated to the settlement sites. Agencies, government institutions, and inter-agency organizations that will operate in each of the transit or reception centres are recommended to implement the following prioritized activities at the transit centres: The coordination platform at each of the transit centres will regularly revise the below prioritized activities.

### **Relocation exercise:**

After refugees are received at the transit centre, they are relocated to the Musenyi and Bweru refugee sites. Musenyi, an existing settlement, is designed to accommodate up to 15,000 individuals, and as of 22 March, over 12,000 individuals have already been relocated there. Given that Musenyi was initially designed by the government for durable solutions, the government and UNHCR are revising the site plan to resize the existing family plots to accommodate the new arrivals.

Bweru, a new settlement, requires significant multi-sectoral investment to provide refugees with sufficient household space for shelter construction and to establish essential services proportional to the population. The current priority is to develop Musenyi further, but as Musenyi reaches full capacity, Bweru will be used to relocate refugees. Bweru has the capacity to host up to 20,000 individuals.

The settlement development approach will follow the "solutions from the start" strategy, ensuring a sustainable system of services and assistance is in place. Services will be expanded based on inter-agency assessments conducted by ONPRA and UNHCR, in collaboration with line ministries, development actors, and other stakeholders. National-level guidelines and SOPs will be developed to ensure the effective implementation of this strategy.

Given the current population at temporary collection sites and transit centres exceeds the available land capacity in Musenyi and Bweru, and considering the expected influx of new arrivals, there is a need to advocate for additional land for settlement development. Musenyi and Bweru can host 35,000 individuals, and efforts are underway to identify new land for an additional 30,000 as an emergency land reserve. This would bring the total capacity to 65,000 individuals.

To expand settlements or establish new ones, site planning, resource mobilization, and staff capacity will need to be considered. Establishing more than three new settlements for this emergency response is not recommended, so expanding existing settlements is preferred once the third proposed settlement reaches full capacity.

Information Management Tools, such as 4Ws (Who, What, Where, and When), will be regularly updated to track real-time activities across agencies and settlements, ensuring transparency and coordination.

For refugees, the primary relocation process will involve moving from entry points → transit centres → destination settlements. Agencies involved in the relocation of refugees include ONPRA, UNHCR, IOM, and AIRD. For refugee returnees, transportation will be provided from the transit centres to their respective provincial capitals, with an exception made for those with specific protection concerns or reduced mobility, ensuring they are assisted until their destination.

For third-country nationals and migrants, IOM and other partners will primarily manage transportation needs. Commercial passenger transport will be identified, and frame agreements will be signed to ensure reliable transport for new arrivals and their belongings.



### **Sub-Sector: Child Protection**

Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) will be identified, assessed, and documented at transit centres. Best Interests Procedures (BIP) will be conducted in refugee sites, IOM transit centres, or communities of return as applicable. Alternative care arrangements will be established based on identified needs, ensuring family- and community-based care options are prioritized.

To prevent family separation, tracing and reunification mechanisms will be implemented in collaboration with the ICRC, UNICEF, and other actors. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and child protection case management tools, harmonized and validated by the Ministry in charge of child protection, will guide all interventions. Case management will be conducted jointly with social services, with UNICEF support, and child protection information management will be strengthened.

Specialized social workers will be deployed to provide life-saving child protection services and monitor at-risk children until their relocation to settlement sites. Additional Community-Based Child Protection Networks (CBCPNs) will be established to enhance community-led child protection mechanisms.

Child-Friendly Spaces (CFSs) will be set up to create a protective environment, provide psychosocial support to children affected by trauma, and ensure prevention and response services for those at risk or survivors of violence, abuse, and exploitation. Awareness-raising campaigns on child rights will be conducted, and child-friendly information on procedures and services will be provided.

Sectoral service providers, child protection committees, and social workers will receive specialized training. Birth registration services will be made available to unregistered children.

At entry points, new arrivals will receive face masks and sanitizers before being registered and transported to transit centres. Special attention will be given to persons with specific needs (PSN). Initial assistance, including food, health, nutrition, water, and sanitation, will be provided at transit centres before relocation to refugee sites, urban settings, IOM transit centres, or returnee transit centres for Burundian refugees. Road conditions will be monitored due to Burundi's long rainy season.



### **Sub-sector: Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

A comprehensive approach to the prevention of and response to gender-based violence (GBV) will be implemented. All new arrivals will be sensitized on GBV issues and informed about available referral pathways. Counselling services will be provided to those who come forward, and their cases will be documented and managed using harmonized and validated case management tools.

GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) response services, tailored to the needs of women and girls of reproductive age, will be established. Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) kits will be available for the clinical management of rape survivors. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and tools will be developed or adapted and disseminated to all stakeholders, alongside targeted training to ensure effective implementation.

Reception conditions for refugees and other persons of concern will be improved as part of the broader protection response. Structured preparedness and response activities will be implemented at official entry points and transit centres, particularly along the Rusizi River, a key border crossing point between the DRC and Burundi.

Referral mechanisms for GBV survivors will be expanded, updated, and linked to existing services to ensure timely access to medical, legal, and psychosocial support. Case management will be strengthened, with a focus on providing survivor-centred care, including emergency medical treatment, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and legal assistance.

Health practitioners will receive refresher training on GBV survivor emergency screening, following Ministry of Health protocols and in collaboration with health partners. Specialized clinical care will be provided for child survivors, and life-skills support will be offered to adolescent girls.

GBV prevention and risk mitigation activities will be reinforced, with targeted interventions for individuals at heightened risk. Safe spaces for women and girls, including mobile spaces in some sites, will be established to offer a secure environment for survivors and those at risk. Dedicated caseworkers will be hired to enhance psychosocial support services.

Capacity-building initiatives will be provided to authorities, partners, and community-based structures, including health practitioners and law enforcement, to improve their response to GBV. Awareness-raising campaigns will engage communities in prevention and response efforts, strengthening overall community protection.

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) kits, including Post-Rape Kits, will be procured and distributed to ensure access to essential medical care. Additionally, dignity and sanitary kits will be provided to address the hygiene needs of women and girls.

GBV response programs will be integrated with initiatives promoting resilience, self-reliance, and livelihoods for survivors and vulnerable groups at greater risk of GBV.



### **Sub-sector: Community-Based Protection (CBP)**

In line with Age, Gender, and Diversity (AGD) principles, UNHCR and its partners will integrate community-based protection approaches into all emergency sectoral responses. These efforts will prioritize gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls, men, and boys while actively involving new arrivals, government stakeholders, and partners. To strengthen community participation in protection efforts, support will be provided to existing Central Refugee Committees and new community-based structures established within settlements. These structures will receive ongoing capacity-building support through training, in-kind assistance, and incentive payments, ensuring their effective integration into emergency response teams. Protection mainstreaming will be promoted in service delivery, ensuring that all humanitarian interventions uphold dignity, safety, and inclusion. Small-scale community projects will be identified and implemented to enhance self-reliance and foster community resilience. Community engagement will be reinforced through awareness-raising campaigns and communication with communities (CwC) mechanisms, providing information on topics such as Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), fraud prevention, and available services. Additional refugee-led organizations (RLOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) will be engaged to strengthen the implementation of protection activities. Peace-building initiatives will be launched to promote social cohesion between refugees and host communities. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) activities will be implemented and mainstreamed across all sectors to address trauma and enhance well-being among affected populations.

### **EDUCATION**

Temporary Learning Structures (TLS) will be established to provide immediate educational opportunities for displaced children. The rehabilitation and maintenance of existing schools will be prioritized, along with the construction of additional classrooms and the provision of school furniture to accommodate the increasing student population.

To address the needs of new arrivals, the number of teachers will be increased, and in collaboration with WFP, the school feeding program will be expanded to ensure that children have access to nutritious meals during their studies.

#### **Partners in Education sector**

Ministry of Education, UNICEF, UNHCR,  
Save the Children, JRS, and members of EIE  
WG.

Refresher training will be provided to Ministry of Education (MoE) staff and community volunteer teachers on Education in Emergencies (EiE) and INEE minimum standards to enhance the quality of education delivery.

Essential education supplies, including blackboards, recreation kits, uniforms, and textbooks, will be distributed to support students and teachers. Additionally, the School Meal Programme (SMP) will continue to provide meals to enhance children's learning experience and overall well-being.



## FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

Hot meals will be provided to new arrivals, including supplementary feeding for pregnant and lactating women to address their nutritional needs. A nutrition screening process will be conducted to assess, report, and monitor the nutritional status of new arrivals, ensuring timely intervention where needed.

### Partners in Food Security and Livelihoods sector

WFP and UNHCR.

Nutrition commodities, such as Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), F75, and F100, will be procured to manage acute malnutrition and support the treatment of vulnerable individuals, particularly children and pregnant or lactating women.

High Energy Biscuits (HEB) will be distributed to new arrivals as an immediate source of nutrition. Monthly food distribution will continue to ensure consistent access to food for refugees. Supplementary feeding programs will be expanded to include children under the age of 5 and pregnant/lactating women.

To enhance livelihoods, refugees will be identified according to their professional profiles and capacities, with a focus on agriculture, animal husbandry, trades, and other income-generating activities (IGAs). This will help determine the needs and appropriate support required to enhance self-sufficiency and economic resilience.



## PUBLIC HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Health screening will be conducted for new arrivals to identify immediate health needs. A medical referral system will be established to ensure urgent cases are referred to appropriate healthcare facilities. Dead body management procedures will be agreed upon with the Ministry of Health to ensure dignified handling.

### Partners in Public Health and Nutrition

Ministry of Public Health, WHO, UNICEF, FAO, CONCERN, UNHCR, UNAIDS, UNFPA, HealthNet/TPO, MSF, GVC, CICR, IOM, IRC, GDCB.

Health trends will be closely monitored to track the health status of new arrivals and identify emerging issues. Basic emergency obstetric care and essential newborn care will be provided to ensure maternal and child health during the emergency response.

Primary health care and reproductive health services will be available to address the general and reproductive health needs of the population. Medical supplies will be procured to ensure healthcare facilities are equipped to handle medical cases. Medical referral costs, including transport to higher-level medical centres, will be covered for patients requiring advanced care.

Nutrition screening will be conducted to assess, report, and monitor the nutritional status of new arrivals, with particular attention to vulnerable groups. Nutrition commodities, such as Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), F75, and F100, will be procured to manage acute malnutrition.

The health outreach program will be expanded to increase access to essential health services for remote or hard-to-reach communities.



## WASH

A daily adequate supply of clean water will be provided to meet the needs of new arrivals. Communal latrines will be established to ensure access to safe sanitation facilities. Community-led waste management initiatives will be promoted to encourage sustainable and effective waste disposal practices.

### Partners in WASH sector

Municipal water authority, REGIDESO, ONPRA, COPED, CRB, HealthNet/TPO, UNICEF, UNHCR, AIRD, IRC, World Vision International Burundi, Caritas Belgique, AIDE, GDCB.

Water system management will be prioritized, including the rehabilitation of boreholes, pipelines, and networks, as well as the installation of hybrid fuel or solar-powered systems to ensure a reliable water supply. New water pipelines will also be installed to expand access to clean water.

Water quality will be regularly monitored through microbiological and chemical analyses to ensure safety and prevent waterborne diseases.

WASH Committees will be formed and strengthened to support the management of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services at the community level. WASH kits, including water storage containers and emergency water bladders, will be distributed to households to ensure safe water handling and storage.

The rehabilitation or installation of institutional latrines, both household and individual, will be prioritized to meet the needs of refugees and host communities. Hygiene promotion activities will be conducted, including capacity-building initiatives to improve knowledge and practices related to sanitation and hygiene.

Solid waste management systems and drainage systems will be improved to prevent environmental contamination and reduce health risks.

The WASH minimum package will be provided in schools and healthcare facilities to ensure that these key institutions have access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services.



## LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY

Transport services will be provided to ensure the timely and safe relocation of new arrivals to refugee sites. Storage capacity will be expanded to accommodate emergency supplies, including food, core relief items (CRIs), and other essential goods. CRIs will be distributed after household-level registration to ensure that each household receives the necessary support.

A coordinated assessment of warehouse capacities around transit centres and settlements will be conducted to ensure storage capacity aligns with the projected number of arrivals.



The second priority is to establish Frame Agreements for the procurement and distribution of NFIs and Emergency Shelter materials, ensuring they are contextually appropriate. Maintaining a stable food basket supply will also be a key focus.

Strengthening logistical transport capacity, including truck rentals for relocation and supply movement, will be critical. Additionally, a strategic approach to ensuring a continuous fuel supply will be prioritized to support operational needs.



### EMERGENCY SHELTER AND NFIS

Site planning will ensure that necessary services are allocated land for infrastructure and that household-level plots are clearly demarcated, including boundary definitions. This will help organize the settlement and provide clarity for refugees and service providers.

#### Partners in Emergency Shelter and NFIs sector

ONPRA, UNHCR, COPED, IOM, Caritas, World Relief Burundi, World Vision International Burundi.

Emergency shelter assistance will be provided at the household level, including the distribution of emergency household tents to ensure immediate protection and shelter.

In coordination with the Protection sector, efforts will be made to establish and rehabilitate key community infrastructure, such as a multi-purpose community centre, child-friendly spaces, and women's centres, to support the overall well-being of the refugee population.

At the household level, Non-Food Items (NFIs) will be distributed, ensuring that refugees have access to essential items such as cooking utensils, bedding, and hygiene materials.

Special attention will be given to persons with special needs during NFI and shelter material distribution, ensuring that they receive the necessary support and accommodations to meet their specific requirements.



### ENVIRONMENT AND DOMESTIC ENERGY

The establishment of new settlement sites in Musenyi and Bweru will involve substantial efforts to prepare and clear the land allocated by the Government. This will include the demarcation of both reopened and new sites, including access roads, common facilities, and residential plots. UNHCR and its partners will work to mitigate potential environmental degradation by conducting an environmental impact assessment as required.

#### Partners in Environment and Domestic Energy sector

Ministry of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, UNHCR, WFP, CARITAS, COPED, FAO, RET IRC, World Vision International Burundi.

To protect and enhance the environment, activities will include establishing and safeguarding green zones, creating tree nurseries at both sites, and distributing energy-saving stoves to reduce fuel consumption and environmental impact. Environmental awareness campaigns will be conducted to engage both refugees and host communities in sustainable practices.

Capacity-building initiatives will be implemented to introduce innovative environmental management approaches to new arrivals, empowering them to take ownership of environmental protection efforts.

Rehabilitation of degraded land will be supported through community-led greening initiatives, fostering local ownership and long-term sustainability.

Additionally, UNHCR and its partners will explore the possibility of procuring and distributing firewood to newly arrived households to reduce the need for firewood collection, which can often lead to environmental damage and contribute to gender-based violence (GBV) incidents.

## Response to Third Country Nationals

Third country nationals and Burundian will undergo a thorough registration and identification process. IOM will collaborate with UNHCR, under the coordination of the CGM, to conduct the registration of arriving migrants and other third-country nationals, including those in need of assisted voluntary return. While conducting the registration, IOM will rapidly survey migrants and TCNs' intention of return enabling evidence-based assistance.

Migrants and TCNs will be screened for vulnerabilities, including health conditions, protection needs, and specific risks. Those identified as vulnerable will be referred to appropriate services, including social services and UNICEF for unaccompanied minors, medical care, psychosocial support, and legal assistance.

Most vulnerable migrants and TCNs will be oriented to IOM existing Transit Centres in the capital where IOM will set up a psychosocial team to provide direct support services, including psychological first aid, and referral to specialized mental health care when necessary. In parallel, depending on the number of TCNs and migrants registered and in need of assistance, IOM is looking at setting up a safe temporary TC where IOM and partners, including WFP, will provide emergency services such as food distribution, temporary shelter, essential non-food items. This includes tents, blankets, hygiene kits, and cooking utensils. Efforts will be made to ensure that shelters are safe, dignified, and culturally appropriate. Protection measures will be implemented to safeguard the rights and well-being of migrants and TCNs. This includes protection against exploitation, abuse, and violence.

IOM will work closely with embassies/consulates in order to identify, verify and process travel documents for TCNs wishing to benefit from AVRR. IOM will arrange and book all charter flights according to nationalities and final destinations. IOM will assess their fitness for travel, arrange land transportation from the transit centre to the airport and support and assist with all pre- and post-departure procedures.

For migrants, emergency transportation services will be provided to assist in-country domestic movements based on declared voluntariness for these migrants to have a safe, secure and reliable path when leaving transit facility towards their areas of origin in Burundi.

A visual "fit to travel" verification prior departure will be done by IOM local medical staff. It will be needed to ensure the health status of travellers to undertake the journey. If cases of unaccompanied minors requiring transportation services have not been screened at the registration phase, IOM will coordinate with the ICRC, UNICEF and the relevant social services.

Emergency transportation for migrants will be provided by means of agreements with public ground transportation service providers, that will be concluded to set a price for the travel until the hub the closest to migrants' final destination for buses or collective vehicles or a combination of these. All beneficiaries will receive pre-embarkation briefing. As much as possible, returnees will be integrated into ongoing community-based reintegration and durable solution programming as facilitated not only by IOM but also by other partners of the United Nations Country Team or the Humanitarian Country Team.

## Partnership and Coordination

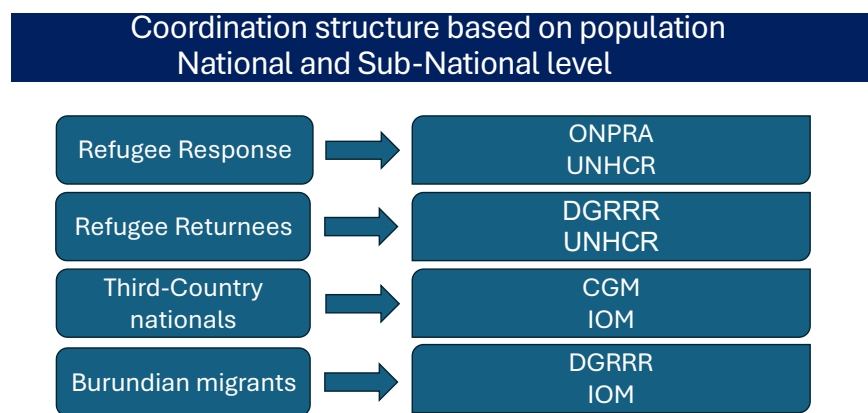
### Coordination at the national and subnational level

The Government of Burundi, through ONPRA, will coordinate all activities in response to the new refugee influx, with support from UN agencies and partners. ONPRA is responsible for managing the transit centres (Cishemere and Makombe).

In line with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), UNHCR, as the mandated agency for refugee protection, leads the coordination of the refugee response in collaboration with ONPRA. Regarding returnees, DGRRR oversees the repatriation process, with support from UNHCR and other partners. Given the mixed population movements—including refugees, refugee returnees, third-country nationals, and migrants—dedicated coordination forums have been established to address the specific needs of each group.

To ensure a timely and effective response, government officials (ONPRA, CGM, and DGRRR), UN agencies, partners, and other stakeholders will hold regular coordination meetings at both national and field levels, starting from the alert phase.

UNHCR will work closely with sector leads to develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework, ensuring that key achievements and milestones are systematically tracked to guide the response.



Active Sectors and Agency Leads Refugee and Refugee Returnees Response Transit Centres and Settlements		
Sectors		Coordinating Agencies
<b>Protection</b>	General Protection including Community-Based Protection	ONPRA, CGM, DGRRR, MSNASDPHG, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNAIDS, IOM, ICRC (CICR), Red Cross, Save the Children, IRC, Caritas Burundi, World Relief Burundi, World Vision International.
	GBV	

	Child Protection	
<b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)</b>		Municipal water authority, REGIDESO, ONPRA, COPED, CRB, HealthNet/TPO, UNICEF, UNHCR, AIRD, IRC, World Vision International Burundi, Caritas Belgique, AIDE, GDCB.
<b>Education</b>		Ministry of Education, UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children, JRS, and members of EIE WG UNHCR, UNICEF
<b>Shelter and Non-Food Items</b>		ONPRA, UNHCR, COPED, IOM, Caritas, World Relief Burundi, World Vision International Burundi.
<b>Environment &amp; Domestic energy</b>		UNHCR, WFP, CARITAS, COPED, FAO, RET IRC, World Vision International Burundi
<b>Health &amp; Nutrition</b>		Ministry of Public Health, WHO, UNICEF, FAO, CONCERN, UNHCR, UNAIDS, UNFPA, HealthNet/TPO, MSF, GVC, CICR, IOM, IRC, GDCB.
<b>Food Security and livelihoods</b>		WFP, FAO, UNHCR, UNICEF
<b>Transit Centre / Settlements Coordination</b>		UNHCR, ONPRA, DGRRR
<b>Supply and Logistic</b>		UNHCR, WFP, IOM
<b>Coordination</b>		MIDCSP (ONPRA, DGRRR, CGM), UNHCR, RCO/OCHA

To ensure the effective and timely delivery of emergency assistance and services, a structured and harmonized coordination approach will be implemented. The response will be guided by a collaborative framework that brings together government authorities, UN agencies, and humanitarian partners to ensure a comprehensive and rights-based approach across transit centres and settlements.

Coordination efforts will focus on aligning emergency preparedness and response measures to address both immediate and mid-term needs of new arrivals. Common standards and guidelines will be applied to minimize disparities in service provision across different sites, ensuring equitable access to essential services.

Decisions and actions will be informed by evidence-based assessments, with priority given to addressing the most urgent needs identified through joint assessments. Coordination mechanisms will facilitate the identification of key advocacy concerns, the development of unified messaging, and engagement with national authorities, inter-agency platforms, and donors to mobilize resources. The Burundi Inter-Agency appeal will serve as the primary tool for advocacy and funding allocation, supporting the setting of programmatic priorities, indicators, and response strategies.

Technical guidance, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and response strategies will be developed and disseminated to ensure accountability, predictability, and efficiency in emergency preparedness and response. Capacity-building initiatives will be coordinated to enhance the technical and operational capabilities of partners and community stakeholders.

Protection will remain central to all aspects of the response, with efforts made to integrate protection considerations across all sectors. Coordination forums will ensure that emerging emergency issues requiring urgent attention are addressed collectively, and mechanisms will be put in place to reduce service duplication and overlap among partners. Resources will be rationalized based on prioritized needs and gaps, with updated information management tools, including the 4Ws, used to track and coordinate activities effectively.

The Inter-Agency Forum will be supported in the production of emergency updates and information management reports, with sector coordinators providing regular updates to ensure transparency and accountability across the response.

The National Emergency Coordination Forum will determine the frequency of inter-agency coordination meetings, which will take place in Bujumbura and at the field level—primarily at transit centres and Musenyi for now, and later in Bweru once it becomes operational.

Given the urgency of the coordination efforts required to operationalize the emergency response, it is recommended to hold biweekly meetings at both the National and Sub-National levels. Field-level inter-agency coordination meetings are proposed for Tuesdays, ensuring that key issues raised can be promptly communicated to the National Coordination Meeting on Thursdays, allowing timely decision-making and response.

Additionally, weekly Sector Coordination Meetings in Bujumbura are recommended, preferably on Wednesdays, strategically placed between the Tuesday field inter-agency meetings and the Thursday National Coordination Meeting to ensure a continuous flow of information and issue resolution.

Until the emergency stabilizes, these coordination platforms should be maintained. Once stability is achieved, the National Emergency Coordination Forum may recommend shifting to a biweekly meeting schedule.

The large influx of new arrivals into Burundi is placing significant pressure on all responding agencies. Therefore, it is essential for all agencies involved in the emergency response to critically assess and strengthen their emergency staffing capacity.

Additionally, sector coordinators will continue updating their sector-specific emergency roster teams within their coordination forums, ensuring that capacity-building initiatives are implemented in parallel to enhance response effectiveness.

The 2007 Principles of Partnership shall guide all coordination forums:

- equality among partners in consultation and decision-making
- transparency among partners
- the primacy of a result-oriented approach to humanitarian action
- responsibility between partners to accomplish undertaken tasks
- complementarity between the capacity and activities of local and international actors.

The activities of members of a given coordination forum shall be guided by the Protection Principles contained in the 2011 Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response:

- avoid exposing people to further harm because of your actions
- ensure people's access to impartial assistance – in proportion to need and without discrimination
- protect people from physical and psychological harm arising from violence and coercion

- assist people to claim their rights, access available remedies, and recover from the effects of abuse.

## Inter-Agency Financial Requirements



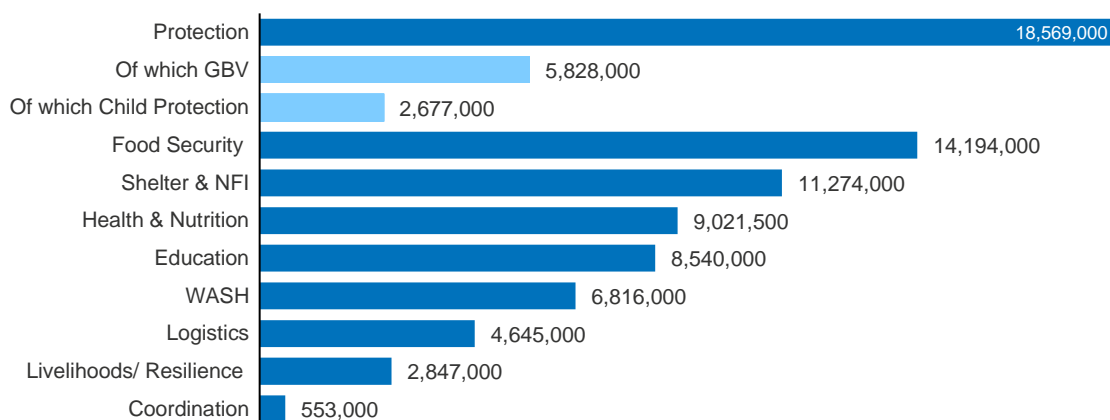
Following the activation of the Burundi contingency plan, a decision was made at the national level to develop a comprehensive response plan that reflects the scale of the emergency and includes a clearly defined budget to address the urgent needs of new arrivals. In consultation with responding agencies, the following budget requirements have been established.

As of 23 March, only 4 per cent of the estimated USD 76,5 million needed for the response was available, leaving a critical funding gap of 96 per cent. To address this shortfall and ensure the response can be effectively operationalized, an Inter-Agency appeal was launched with the facilitation of UNHCR and participating agencies. Given the rapidly evolving needs, a multi-sectoral needs assessment will continue to be conducted to identify and respond to emerging gaps. Additionally, sustained advocacy efforts will be made to mobilize funding, including accessing emergency pooled funds to address priority underfunded areas.

To implement this response plan effectively, the emergency response team will include key functions such as protection (GBV, child protection, community-based protection), program management, administration, human resources, WASH, shelter, supply, health and nutrition, information management, and external relations. These teams will support joint needs assessments and contribute to a coordinated communication strategy endorsed by the national coordination forum.

### Budget summary by sector at country level

Million in USD



## Financial requirements per partner and per sector

Partner/ Sector	Protection	Child Protection	GBV	Education	Food Security	Health & Nutrition	Livelihoods & Resilience	Logistics	Shelter & NFIs	WASH	Coord- ination	Total
<b>Caritas</b>						50,000			100,000			<b>150,000</b>
<b>COPED</b>									430,000	70,000		<b>500,000</b>
<b>DRC</b>			1,000,000				500,000		500,000			<b>2,000,000</b>
<b>FAO</b>							688,000					<b>688,000</b>
<b>IOM</b>	2,000,000					300,000	200,000	2,500,000	1,500,000	300,000	100,000	<b>6,900,000</b>
<b>IRC</b>	400,000	300,000	450,000	800,000	700,000	800,000	500,000	350,000	860,000	260,000		<b>5,420,000</b>
<b>JRS</b>				1,099,000								<b>1,099,000</b>
<b>SCI</b>		325,000	190,000									<b>515,000</b>
<b>UN Women</b>			1,800,000									<b>1,800,000</b>
<b>UNAIDS</b>						100,000						<b>100,000</b>
<b>UNFPA</b>			2,200,000									<b>2,200,000</b>
<b>UNHCR</b>	7,664,000	177,000	81,000	3,868,000		2,740,000		1,795,000	7,884,000	1,500,000	453,000	<b>26,162,000</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>		1,780,000		2,773,000		1,850,500	959,000			4,686,000		<b>12,048,500</b>
<b>WFP</b>					13,214,000	1,352,000						<b>14,566,000</b>
<b>WHO</b>						1,275,000						<b>1,275,000</b>
<b>WRB</b>		95,000	107,000		280,000	554,000						<b>1,036,000</b>
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>10,064,000</b>	<b>2,677,000</b>	<b>5,828,000</b>	<b>8,540,000</b>	<b>14,194,000</b>	<b>9,021,500</b>	<b>2,847,000</b>	<b>4,645,000</b>	<b>11,274,000</b>	<b>6,816,000</b>	<b>553,000</b>	<b>76,459,500</b>