SITUATION REPORT: INFLUX OF POPULATIONS FROM EASTERN DRC TO BURUNDI

Update as of December 9, 2025

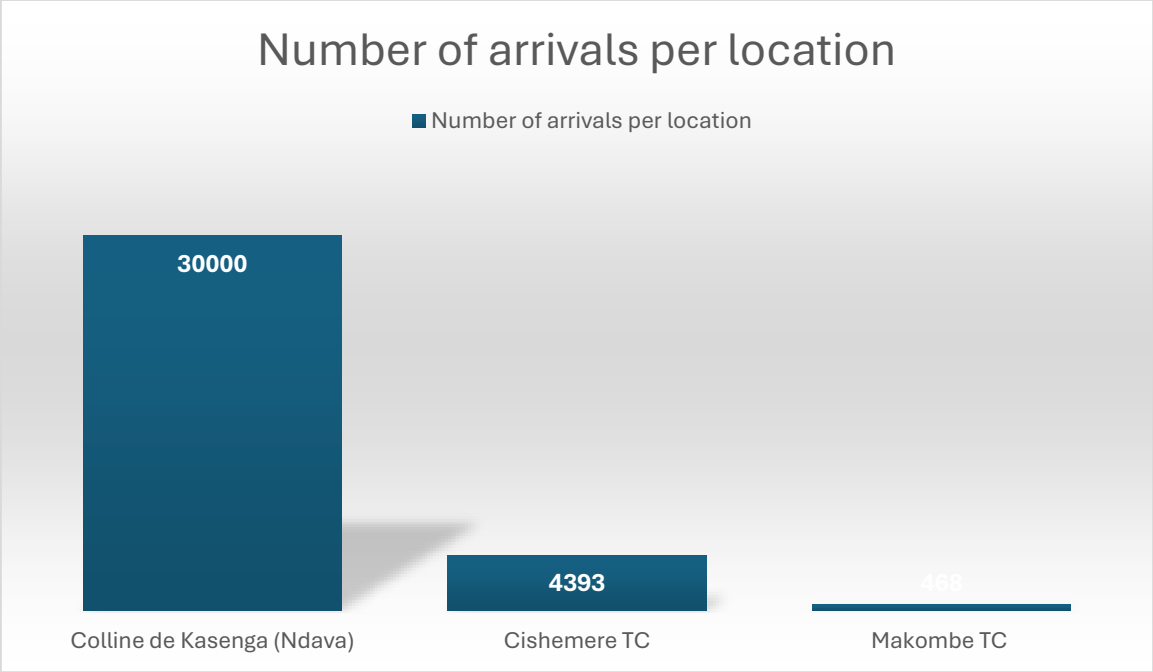
People fleeing DRC and crossing the border into Burundi @B.Ntwari

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Since December 5, 2025, the escalation of conflict in Kamanyola, Luvungi, and Katogota (South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo) has triggered a massive influx of people into Burundi. The Burundian authorities reported that the Buganda border crossing has experienced unprecedented movement, with **33,600 new arrivals** estimated in just a few days. The upward trend continues, placing significant strain on operational capacities at the border.

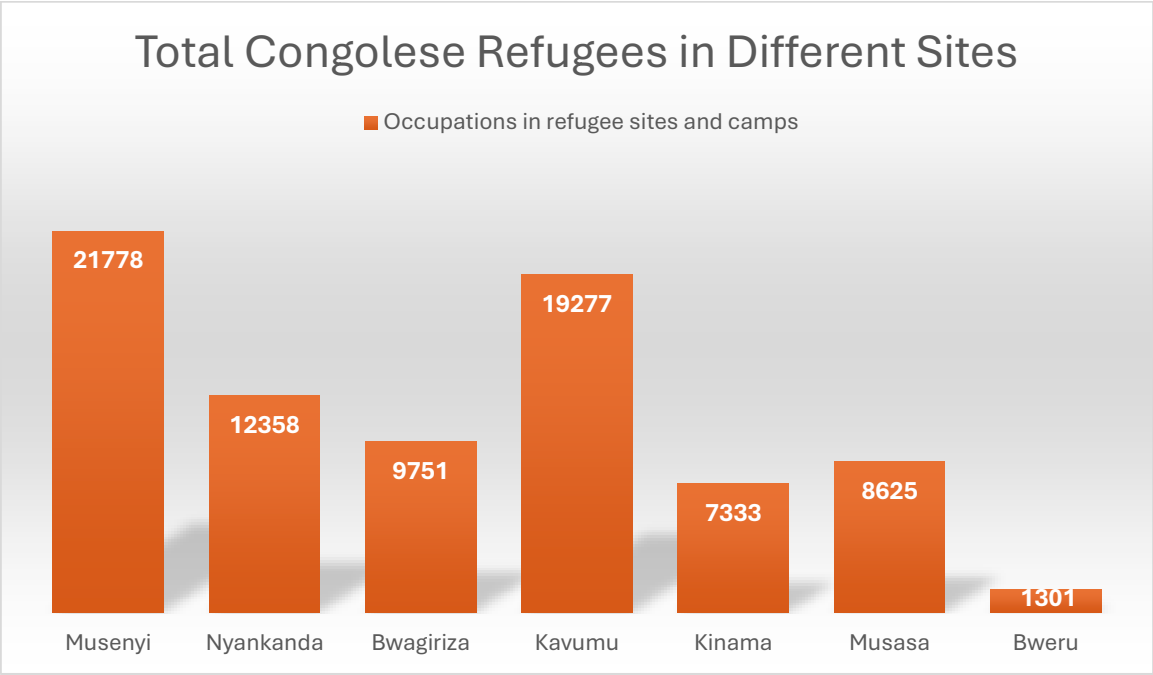
KEY FIGURES

According to Burundian authorities, an estimated 33,600 individuals—including asylum seekers, refugees, and returnees—have arrived since December 5. Among them, **29,397 are Congolese displaced by the deteriorating security situation**, while **4,203 are spontaneous returnees**—Burundians who had previously sought refuge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and are now returning. Demographically, the population is nearly evenly split between women (51%) and men (49%), with **48% being children under the age of 18**.



ARRIVALS, AND RELOCATION

New arrivals are concentrated at four border points: **Rumonge, Ruhagarika, Kaburantwa, and Gatumba**. **Ndava** location is overwhelmed, hosting some **30,000 people**—far exceeding capacity. To alleviate pressure, **1,300 individuals** have already been relocated from Ndava to Bweru, following the decision of the Burundian government.

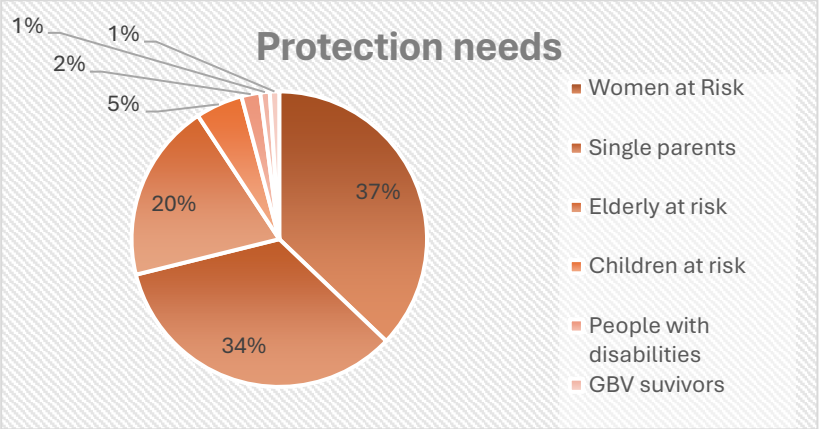


Other transit centers, such as **Cishemere (4,393 people)** and **Makombe (468 people)**, are also under significant strain. Refugee sites like **Musenyi, Nyankanda, Bwagiriza, Kavumu, and Kinama** are saturated and unable to accommodate additional arrivals. For instance, Musenyi has already received **14,517 new arrivals in 2025**, bringing its total population to **21,778**. Other sites, such as

Nyankanda, Bwagiriza, Kavumu, and Kinama, are only receiving confirmed family reunification cases.

The **Bweru site**, designated by the Government as the main relocation point, remains under development. Although **1,301 people** have been transferred there, infrastructure is still limited. UNHCR has installed **Refugee Housing Units (RHUs)** and a **water tank** to meet basic needs. The partner organization **COPED** is working to improve road access, clear the site, and prepare space for additional RHUs and temporary communal shelters. These efforts aim to facilitate the reception of new arrivals and support identity verification and prima facie refugee registration processes.

PROTECTION PROFILE



Based on provisional data, vulnerabilities among new arrivals are significant. **Women at risk** account for **36%** of the population, followed by **single parents (33%)**, **elderly individuals (19%)**, **children and adolescents (5%)**, **persons with disabilities (2%)**, self-identified **survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (1%)**, and **unaccompanied or separated children (1%)**. Notably, **45% of household focal points are women**, highlighting the need for targeted protection measures. UNHCR teams are prioritizing risk identification, border protection monitoring, family reunification, and support for individuals with specific needs.

ORIGIN OF ARRIVALS

Most new arrivals reportedly originate from areas of the DRC directly affected by recent clashes, including **Luvungi, Lubarika, Sange, Bwegera, Uvira, and Kamanyola**.

COORDINATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The humanitarian response to the current influx of displaced populations from eastern DRC is **led by UNHCR**, in partnership with **UN agencies** (including UNICEF, UNFPA, and IOM), **international NGOs** (Save the Children, Médecins Sans Frontières, and HealthNet TPO), and **Burundian authorities**, each contributing specialized expertise in protection, health, child protection, and logistics. Immediate priorities focus on **decongesting the overcrowded Ndava location**, **accelerating relocations**, **enhancing protection for vulnerable groups—particularly survivors of gender-based violence, unaccompanied children, and individuals with specific needs**—and **expanding reception capacities**, including the rapid development of the Bweru site to ensure safe, dignified, and sustainable conditions for new arrivals. This collaborative, multi-agency approach aims to ensures a comprehensive and coordinated response to the crisis.