

BURUNDI

 **18,154**

As of October 31st, Musenyi refugee site hosts **18,154** refugees (5,025 households including 9,957 women, 9,413 men). 53% are children.

 **5,025**

Moreover, during the reporting period, **3,302 Burundian refugees were voluntarily repatriated to their home country, Burundi** and the majority coming from Tanzania.

 **1,089**

In addition, 1,089 refugee identity cards were distributed to refugees by UNHCR and ONPRA ensuring that each refugee is officially recognized within the country of asylum and has access to rights and protection.



The European Union Ambassador and UNHCR Representative visited facilities at the Kavumu refugee camp powered by the solar mini-plant system funded by the EU in Burundi @UNHCR/Burundi

Operational Context

The security situation in Burundi remained calm, although tainted by various incidents across the country. These did not affect UNHCR's operations in Burundi UNHCR and its partners provided protection and assistance to Burundian returnees and newly arrived refugees in transit centers and Musenyi site as well as long-time refugees in the five camps of Nyakanda, Kinama, Musasa, Bwagiriza, and Kavumu. Refugees and returnees remain in need of continued support to ensure their protection and access to basic services.

Update on Achievements and impact



Protection

- In September and October 2025, a total of **1,089 refugees received their identity cards issued** by UNHCR and ONPRA and 3402 received proof of registration. **These documents provide refugees with legal recognition** in the country of asylum and **allow them to enjoy their fundamental rights**. Their issuance reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen legal protection for refugees in Burundi.
- During the reporting period, a total of **479 refugees were received during protection listening sessions** in refugee camps. The main needs included family reunification, documentation, access to justice, security concerns, assistance issues, birth and marriage registration, and health-related problems. Cases requiring specialized intervention were referred to the appropriate services.
- In October, **as part of ongoing family reunification efforts, 23 newly arrived refugees** were transferred from the Cishemere Transit Centre to the refugee camps of Nyankanda, Bwagiriza and Kavumu in eastern Burundi as well as in Kinama and Musasa in the north allowing them to **reunite with their family members** and to restore a sense of stability.
- During the reporting period, **UNHCR's legal partner**, Bujumbura Bar Association, **provided legal assistance to 76 refugees** for issues including GBV, violence, theft, and family matters. Refugees were referred to relevant authorities for investigation, prosecution, legal advice, and access to competent courts. The partner also assisted 32 Burundian returnees at the Nyabitare Transit Center with legal and judicial issues, including land disputes, inheritance matters, paternity cases and child support. These interventions ensured that refugees and returnees could access justice and receive guidance on navigating the legal system.
- In September, **as part of efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) within schools, two awareness sessions were held in refugee camps** of Nyankanda, Bwagiriza, and Kavumu in eastern Burundi. A total of 240 education staff (175 men and 65 women) including teachers, school administrators, classroom assistants, and night guards took part in the training to help strengthen child protection and foster a safer and more respectful learning environment.
- During the reporting period, **UNHCR and its partners, Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee (IRC), responded to over 71 reported GBV incidents** across the five refugee camps. **Women remain the most affected**, with most incidents perpetrated by individuals known to the survivors. **GBV cases reflect the impact of cultural attitudes and morals that limit women, as well as their economic dependency**. In addition, as part of ongoing efforts to prevent GBV and raise awareness, the partner IRC conducted community sensitization sessions targeting men, women, boys, and girls. These sessions focused on sexual and economic violence, early marriage and pregnancies, psychosocial support, girls' education, women's empowerment, and peaceful coexistence.
- As part of ongoing child protection efforts, **UNHCR and Save the Children conducted over 265 home visits across the five refugee camps to monitor the well-being of children with specific needs** and ensure proper care by foster families. These visits led to 14 best-interest determinations being finalized and submitted to the panel. 17 unaccompanied children and 61 separated children received school supplies and clothing in Bwagiriza, Kavumu and Nyakanda refugee camps. In Kinama and Musasa camps, IRC provided material support to 44 foster families to encourage continued care of those children. Additionally, the children's forum in Kinama and Musasa camps was officially launched on 22–23 October 2025, giving children representative a platform to address challenges affecting children's well-being and serve as role models in the camps.
- On 23 October 2025, the **European Union Ambassador and the UNHCR Representative officially launched a new project aimed at strengthening the protection and resilience of newly arrived refugees**. This two-year project will improve their living conditions through key sectors namely health, shelter, water, hygiene and sanitation, and livelihoods while also supporting the host community.



Education

- **As part of efforts to support the sustainable school reintegration of returnee children, UNHCR and partner COPED completed the construction of Kigage Primary school in Buhumuza province.** Funded by KOICA, the new school includes classrooms, toilets, and an administrative building. The school was officially handed over to the Government on 7 October 2025, during a ceremony attended by KOICA, the Governor of Buhumuza Province, representative of the Minister of the Interior. Both authorities and the beneficiary community expressed their gratitude to UNHCR and KOICA.



- In October, **UNHCR, together with ONPRA, PRODECI-Turikumwe, and MINERS, organized workshop in Muyinga and Ngozi for key education actors on the inclusion of refugees from camps into the Burundian National Education System.** The discussions will continue and focused on strategies to strengthen social cohesion and support the integration of refugee students.
- **UNHCR continues to guide refugee students on complementary education pathways** despite limited opportunities. During the reporting period, counselling sessions were held at Nyankanda Refugee Camp, where concerned students received support to complete university applications, explore additional eligible institutions, and learn about available scholarship options.



Health

- Between September and October 2025, a total of **14,565 medical consultations were carried out by UNHCR health partner HealthNetTPO** in Nyakanda, Bwagiriza, and Kavumu refugee camps (6,235 in September and 8,294 in October), with an additional 1,166 consultations for the surrounding host communities. During this period, the most common health issues among refugees were respiratory infections followed by malaria, and intestinal parasitoses. All patients identified with medical needs received appropriate treatment and follow-up care when required. These consultations reflect ongoing efforts to ensure essential healthcare for vulnerable populations.
- During the reporting period, a total of **791 malnutrition cases were recorded across refugee camps**, particularly in Bwagiriza, Nyankanda, and Kavumu. Of these, 726 were cases of moderate acute malnutrition, including 162 pregnant and breastfeeding women, while 65 were identified as severe acute malnutrition without medical complications. **All individuals diagnosed have received appropriate treatment and follow-up. However, nutritional needs remain significant** especially among the most vulnerable groups, including young children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and persons with specific needs. Continued support and sustained interventions are essential.



Livelihood

- In terms of partner implementation, UNHCR in collaboration with WVI and Safe Inclusion made considerable progress in productive asset transfers, capacity building and monitoring. **Over 20 community groups and more than 70 individual beneficiaries received a combined package of 961 animals** (800 laying hens, 136 goats, 25 pigs), **380 kg of cereal seeds, 100 bottles of mushroom seed, 53 truckloads of organic manure, 5,340 kg of poultry feed and a wide range of agricultural tools, construction materials and equipment. These investments substantially strengthen the productive base of refugee and host communities** across Musasa, Nyankanda, Kavumu, Gisuru, Busoni, Cibitoke, Giteranyi, Muyange-Nyanza Lac and Musenyi, with anticipated impacts on food security, income generation and resilience for the next agricultural seasons.
- During the reporting period, **UNHCR, in collaboration with FinBank and World Vision International (WVI), continued efforts to strengthen access to credit for refugees and returnees to support self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods.** A total of 22 businesses including 5 led by returnees and 17 by refugees, and comprising 10 group enterprises and 12 individual initiatives were assessed and validated for microloans. Once disbursed, the loans are expected to strengthen and expand refugee and returnee activities, create jobs within host and return communities, and contribute to diversify income sources. To strengthen inclusiveness and application quality, feedback was provided to non-selected applicants, allowing for informed resubmission. A joint campaign by UNHCR, WVI, DGRRR, FinBank was conducted in the northern provinces to raise awareness of the loan facility and encourage eligible participation.



Shelter and NFIs

- As part of ongoing efforts to support the reintegration of Burundian returnees, UNHCR and partner COPED** continued distributing shelter kits in Ruyigi commune. During the reporting period, an additional 50 returnee households received kits consisting of iron sheets, roofing nails, regular nails and wooden poles as well as doors and windows. Beneficiaries are required to build the walls of their homes before receiving the roofing materials, ensuring a collaborative approach to reconstruction. **Shelter support is essential to restoring safety, dignity, and stability for families returning home** and plays a key role in their long-term reintegration and protection.



Durable Solutions

- As part of resettlement, **15 refugees from Bwagiriza refugee camp were relocated to Australia** on 13 October 2025. Resettlement is a durable solution for refugees who cannot return to their home country or locally integrate. However, opportunities for resettlement remain very limited, highlighting the need to continue exploring all avenues of protection and support for refugees.
- **As part of ongoing efforts to expand access to complementary pathways, in October, UNHCR organized a family reunification information session at Kavumu Refugee Camp.** During the activity, two refugees received support to complete applications to join their relatives in Australia. **This initiative aims to help eligible refugees access safe and legal pathways,** reunite with their family and have long-term protection prospects.
- During the reporting period, **3,302 Burundian refugees were voluntarily repatriated to their home country, Burundi** (1456 in September and 1846 in October and the majority coming from Tanzania) **as a durable solution ending forced displacement.** Upon arrival at the Transit centres, returnees were received in safety and dignity by UNHCR, and partners and they were provided with certificates of recognition as returnees issued by the Direction Générale du Rapatriement, de la Réintégration et de la Réinsertion (DGRRR). These certificates enable returnees to access essential civil documentation in their communities of return. Prior to their departure from transit centers, all returnees received food assistance and cash assistance to help them meet a variety of needs in their respective areas of return.
- During the reception of voluntary return convoys, mainly at the Nyabitare transit center, UNHCR and partners conducted protection interviews to identify specific needs, and returnees requiring additional support were referred to appropriate service in their areas of return. Among them, twelve unaccompanied and separated children were identified and provided with tailored material assistance based on their specific needs. It is in this context that in October, **a KOICA delegation, accompanied by the UNHCR Representative visited the Nyabitare Transit Centre to observe the reception and assistance process for returnees and to view infrastructure constructed with KOICA's support.**
- On 23 October 2025, **UNHCR and DGRRR organized a livestream on education at the Nyabitare Transit Center** in Gisuru, Buhumuza Province. **The event, funded by the European Union,** was attended by the European Union Ambassador, senior officials from the Ministry of National Education, and local authorities, **brought together Burundian refugees joining online from several host countries, as well as returnees in Burundi.** The livestream created a space for dialogue between returnees and Burundian refugees still in exile. Participants shared experiences and asked questions about access to school, diploma recognition, and learning opportunities in Burundi. Returnees, including a school director, teachers, a DAFI scholarship holder, a beneficiary of diploma equivalence, and students shared testimonies about their reintegration journey. **This initiative aims to provide reliable information,** reassurance and hope, so refugee families can make informed decisions about their return, their future.

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