

BURUNDI SITUATION

28 FEBRUARY 2019

347,309

Total Burundian refugees residing in the main hosting countries (United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda, the DRC, Uganda).

3,477

Burundian refugees assisted to voluntarily return in February 2019.

712

Total Burundian refugee arrivals recorded in February 2019.

61,685

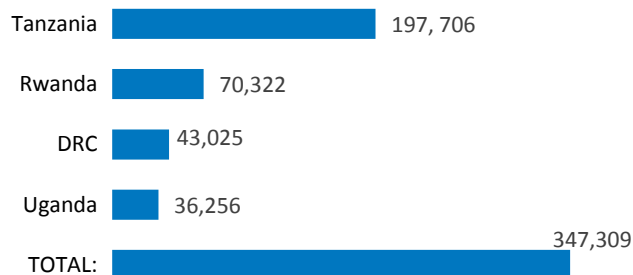
Total Burundian refugees assisted to return as of 28 February 2019, including in 2017 and 2018, mainly from Tanzania.

130,562

Number of IDPs in Burundi as of February 2019 according to IOM's Data Tracking Matrix, 75 per cent are linked to natural disasters, 25 per cent are linked to the socio political situation.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

Host Countries

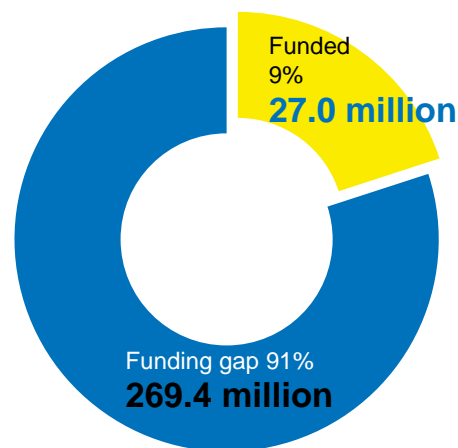


* Figures reflect current number of registered Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers pre- and post-2015 who are assisted through the 2019-2020 Burundi RRRP. The total above does not include some 43,200 Burundian refugees who are registered in Kenya and Southern Africa and assisted within the respective country level programmes, as well as a further 42,000 Burundian refugees who have lived for decades in Tanzania and no longer receive assistance.

BURUNDI REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING

(as of February 2019)

USD 296.4 million



New Arrivals

	In 2018 (Jan to Dec)	In 2019 (as of February)
DRC	2,141	0
Rwanda	2,966	570
Tanzania	1	0
Uganda	2,851	887
TOTAL	7,959	1,457

Highlights and Operational Context

- **The 2019-2020 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan was launched in Nairobi on 21st February. The key note speaker was a refugee from Burundi living in Uganda. In addition to the Regional Refugee Coordinator, remarks were also given by a representative from the East African Community Secretariat, Regional Director for the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and UNDP Sub-regional Platform Coordinator. Refugees were at the center of the launch with remarks and performances by Queen Lissa, a Burundian rapper and youth development activist, and the Amahoro drummers. A market with products made by Burundian entrepreneurs, including soap maker Innocent Havyarimana, was a highlight of the event.** The RRRP calls for USD 296 million in 2019, in a collective effort of 35 partner organizations supporting host governments to provide protection and assistance to some 391,355 Burundian refugees by the end of 2019 in Tanzania, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda.
- **The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, undertook a four-day visit to Tanzania from 5th to 8th February.** The High Commissioner met with the President of Tanzania and other senior government officials, donors and partners, and refugees in Nyarugusu Camp. Citing Tanzania as “one of the most important refugee asylum countries in Africa,” the High Commissioner expressed his satisfaction with government assurances that the country would continue its long tradition of welcoming refugees fleeing conflict and persecution, and that any return of refugees from Tanzania to Burundi or the DRC would remain voluntary. In the context of the Global Compact on Refugees, he “pledged to mobilize more support for humanitarian efforts and for host community development, enhanced camp security and environmental projects”.

Update on voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from the United Republic of Tanzania

Background

- UNHCR and partners are not promoting return to Burundi, but are working with the governments involved to ensure that returns are based on the principles of voluntariness and informed decisions, and take place in safety and dignity.
- The current return operation is taking place under the framework of a Tripartite Agreement between the two governments and UNHCR in which all parties have acknowledged that while some refugees may opt to return now, others may still have well-founded reasons not to return at the present time and will continue to be in need of international protection.

Update

- Assisted voluntary repatriation resumed in February after being halted throughout January 2019 due to funding shortfalls faced by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the partner responsible for transportation and other logistics aspects of the programme.
- There is an emerging trend of Burundian refugees in Kenya and Tanzania who had initially opted to return deregistering from voluntary repatriation. The reasons cited include uncertainty about the situation in Burundi, the upcoming harvest season at refugee garden plots inside the camps in Tanzania, and the school calendar as parents prefer for children to finish the school year before repatriating.

Partners

- In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNHCR and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania work in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), HelpAge International, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Plan International, and the World Food Programme (WFP).
- In Burundi, UNHCR is collaborating with the Department of Repatriation under the Government of Burundi, World Food Programme (WFP), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Caritas and the Civil Volunteer Group (GVC).

Achievements during the Reporting Period

TANZANIA

Latest Developments

- **In February, the common markets in Nduta, Mtendeli and Nyarugusu camps were closed down by the Government of Tanzania who cited security reasons and their locations outside the camps close to the host community areas.** The closure of the markets reduces opportunities for refugees' self-reliance and increases the risk of refugees resorting to negative coping mechanisms. Partners are advocating with the Government of Tanzania on solutions to enable the markets to reopen, such as moving them within the boundaries of the camps.

Achievements and Challenges

- **Internet access has been enhanced following continued investments at the refugee inter-agency help desks in Nduta and Mtendeli camps.** This improvement allowed to strengthen information sharing between focal points as well as resulted in more systematic and efficient referrals.

RWANDA

Latest Developments

- **Due to continued new arrivals from Burundi into Rwanda, albeit in small numbers, additional space is needed to ensure a camp extension in Mahama.** The camp is designed for 60,000 refugees and the camp population has reached 59,319 as of 28 February 2019.

Achievements and Challenges

- **Out of 33,563 school aged refugee children from Burundi, a total of 24,030 are enrolled in an educational institution.** Out of this number 14,533 (7,458 boys, 7,075 girls) are in primary schools, 4,766 (2,162 boys, 2,386 girls) are in Early Childhood Development Programs (ECD) and 4,731 (2,728 males, 2,003 female) are in secondary school. Classrooms are however overcrowded with over 140 students per room, which is affecting children learning outcomes.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Achievements and Challenges

- **In February, two football fields, two basketball fields and a dancing area were finalised in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement.** These infrastructures are to benefit both Burundian refugees and local youth as part of UNHCR's Sports for Protection project, funded by the International Olympic Committee.
- **The Monge-Monge Transit Center for Burundian asylum-seekers was renovated in early February with a reinforced perimeter wall for enhanced security.** Due to bad weather, some

parts of the compound and some community hangars had been damaged, exposing asylum-seekers to insecurity and protection risks.

UGANDA

Latest Developments

- **To enhance connectivity of 60 protection desks in settlements across the country, solar stations will be installed next to six protection desks, funded by UNHCR's Innovation Service through its community connectivity fund.** The project includes the establishment of phone booths, charging stations, and internet, and will reinforce refugees' access to information, communication channels and the inter-agency helpline.

Achievements and Challenges

- **On 18-19 February, UNHCR participated in the National Consultation on the Development of the Refugee Management Policy for the East African Community in Kampala.** During the meeting, an inception report on the development of the East African Refugee Management Policy was adopted which entailed recommendations to be used as background information during the drafting of the policy.

2019 Burundi Regional Refugee Response Plan Partners

The 2019 RRRP brings together the following 35 partners across the four main countries of asylum:

Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène | African Initiatives for Relief & Development | American Refugee Committee | Care and Assistance For Forced Migrants | CARE International | Caritas | Church World Service | Community Environmental Management and Development Organization | Danish Refugee Council | Food and Agriculture Organisation | Global Humanitarian and Development Foundation | Good Neighbours Tanzania | Handicap International | HelpAge International | Impact Initiatives | International Organisation for Migration | International Rescue Committee | Medical Teams International | Norwegian Refugee Council | Oxfam | Plan International | Relief to Development Society | Save the Children International | Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service | Uganda Red Cross Society | United Nations Capital Development Fund | United Nations Development Programme | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | United Nations Children's Fund | United Nations Population Fund | UN Women | Water Mission | Women Legal Aid Center | World Food Programme | World Health Organisation

External / Donors Relations

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LINKS

Regional Data Portal: <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/burundi>

UNHCR Burundi Page: <https://www.unhcr.org/burundi-situation.html>

UNHCR Burundi Global Focus : <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/8488>

Recent News Story: <https://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2019/2/5c5d6ed44/unhcr-chief-calls-international-support-tanzania.html>