UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

UNHCR Appeal

Voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from Tanzania and other countries.

January - June 2026

CONTENTS

3 Key figures

4 Overview

4 On-going and planned response

5 Coordination and partnership

7 Financial requirements

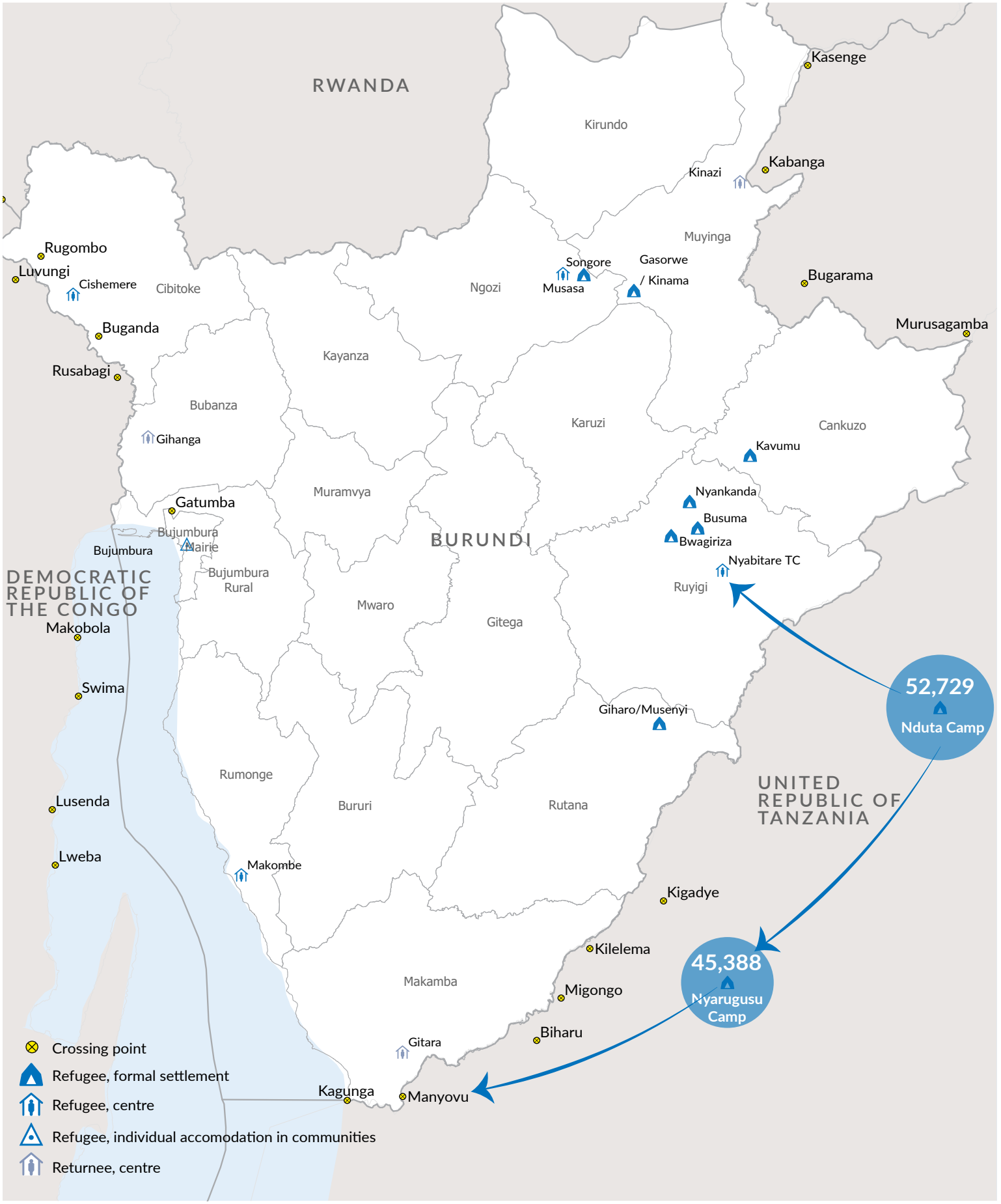
Key figures

98,177 Burundian refugees in Nduta and Nyarugusu camp as of 31 December 2025.

7,721 Burundian refugees repatriated from Tanzania in 2025.

3,000 Burundian refugees to return from Tanzania per week until 30 June 2026.

USD 38.8 million required for the return of Burundian refugees from Tanzania and other countries.



Overview

Tanzania is currently host to some 98,117 Burundian refugees, staying in Nduta and Nyaragusu camps for around a decade, following several waves of violence and political instability in Burundi.

Voluntary returns of Burundians began in 2017 following assurances of improved security in Burundi. As of 31 January 2026, some 198,705 Burundians were supported to return back home from Tanzania and 85,519 from other countries, mainly to Cakunzo, Kirundo, Makamba, Muyinga, Rumonge, Rutana, and Ruyigi. Yet recent surveys indicate that the vast majority of returnees struggle with access to essential services such as housing, healthcare, education and livelihoods, and often find themselves caught in precarious economic circumstances once back in Burundi's under-resourced communities.

At the Tripartite Commission meetings held in Tanzania and Burundi between 2023 and 2025, UNHCR, the Governments of Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania agreed to promote and accelerate the voluntary returns of Burundian refugees, while ensuring that these are informed, voluntary, safe, and dignified.

This critical injection of resources will ensure that some 93,000 Burundian refugees from Tanzania are supported to go back home and can start to rebuild their lives in a sustainable manner. This appeal also includes the requirements to receive an additional 11,600 Burundian refugees returning from Kenya, DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, and from other countries in Southern Africa. Without comprehensive support, including access to basic services, economic opportunities, community reconciliation and tailored protection assistance, there is a heightened risk that returnees will face renewed displacement or resort to onward movements in search of safety and stability.

On-going and planned response

UNHCR and partners are present in Tanzania and Burundi where they provide assistance and protection services to refugees and returnees.

In Tanzania, UNHCR will continue to support refugees to make informed decisions to go home through information campaigns, protection monitoring and counseling, and the distribution of different promotional materials. Refugees will be provided with documentation support and go through medical screenings before their return. Persons with specific needs, such as unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of violence, persons with disability or older persons will receive further cash assistance. UNHCR will also support returns through the provision of transportation and maintenance of buses and trucks used to transport returnees. In addition, UNHCR will maintain departure centers, which include security, general maintenance of structures, cooking energy, electrification of the centers, and water and sanitation services for returnees.

In Burundi, UNHCR will continue to rehabilitate, maintain and expand the reception centers. At the transit centers, returnee families will undergo a screening, including identity verification, vulnerability assessment, medical triage, and protection risk screening, through which protection needs will be identified. Returnees will receive protection counselling and return assistance. They will also be issued with the Carte d'Assurance Maladie (CAM), ensuring access to basic health care services, while health and nutrition screening will be conducted for those with chronic diseases, children, pregnant women, and other individuals with specific needs will then be referred to public health facilities.

Women at risk, separated and unaccompanied children, persons with disability and older persons will receive tailored assistance, including shelter kits, and specialized protection services. Return grants will also be provided to facilitate returnees' access to livelihood opportunities, other services, such as health and education, as well as land dispute resolution. UNHCR teams will also conduct post return monitoring to track the protection, well-being, and reintegration progress of returnees.

In an effort to streamline the voluntary repatriation process, strengthen efficiencies and make the best use of resources, UNHCR and partners are also exploring the possibility of extending transportation directly from departure points in Tanzania to areas of return in Burundi, where returnees would receive assistance - mainly return grants, protection and medical assistance. This approach would improve the flow of returns, reduce the length of stay in the transit centres and mitigate risks of logistical bottlenecks along the way. (Some of the resource requirements for transport and logistics would then shift from Tanzania to Burundi.)

A Burundian refugee woman leaves a community information session on voluntary repatriation, equipped with materials in Nyarugusu Camp, Tanzania. © UNHCR/Maimuna Mtengela

Coordination and partnership

UNHCR works closely with government counterparts, UN agencies, international and national non-governmental organizations, refugees and host communities to support the safe and dignified returns of Burundian refugees and their access to land, services, and livelihoods.

In Burundi, an Inter-Agency Response Plan for large scale returns has been finalized for the Voluntary Repatriation of 104,600 Burundians from Tanzania and other countries. It focuses on preparedness, protection, assistance and early solutions and covers the interventions of UNHCR and nine other UN

agencies, including FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, WHO and UNAIDS, with overall requirements totaling US$ 82.3 million.

In Tanzania, UNHCR works with five partners on voluntary repatriation including the Ministry of Home Affairs, African Initiative for Relief and Development (AIRD), HelpAge Tanzania, Tanganyika Christian Refugee Services (TCRS), and Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS).

UNHCR will also further strengthen its engagements with development actors, international financial institutions, and bilateral partners to support returnees' sustainable reintegration, through service delivery, and local development in return areas in Burundi.

Burundi refugees sit on a bus leaving Nduta Camp, Tanzania during a UNHCR-supported voluntary return movement, after more than a decade in exile. © UNHCR/Maimuna Mtengela

Financial requirements

Country	Urgent Needs (USD)
Burundi	**$ 35.6M**
Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance	$ 21.5M
Health and Nutrition	$ 2.5M
Protection	$ 5.4M
Transport and Logistics	$ 6.2M
Tanzania	**$ 3.2M**
Voluntary repatriation (Protection, Transport and Logistics)	$ 3.2M
Total	**$ 38.8M**

UNHCR Appeal

Voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from Tanzania and other countries.

January - June 2026

COVER PHOTO: Buchumi, a Burundian refugee, made the decision to return to Burundi after living for a decade in Nyarugusu Refugee Camp. © UNHCR/Maimuna Mtengela

Contact:

UNHCR Regional Bureau for Eastern and Southern Africa- External Engagement
rbesa-ee@unhcr.org

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Scan the QR code here to link to UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Eastern and Southern Africa Operational Data Portal; this Appeal and other documents can also be accessed from the data portal.