

BURUNDI SITUATION

UNHCR REGIONAL UPDATE

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KEY FIGURES

27,000

Number of Burundian refugees who have sought asylum in neighboring countries since the beginning of April 2015

2,105

Number of registered and reported Burundian asylum seekers in Tanzania

PRIORITIES

- Relocation of refugees to safety from border areas
- Preparation of refugee sites allocated by governments of host countries
- Life-saving emergency protection and assistance interventions including in the sectors of registration, shelter, domestic items, food, water, sanitation, hygiene, health.
- Identification and protection of children including family tracing, family reunification and alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied and separated children.
- Prepositioning of relief items for anticipated mass outflows into neighboring countries

Highlights

Tanzania

- The number of new Burundian asylum seekers in Tanzania has crossed the 2,000 mark.
- UNHCR's Representative continues to advocate with Regional authorities to follow the government policy on keeping the borders open, and to encourage local populations to extend assistance to the Burundian asylum seekers and alert the authorities of their arrival.



These Burundian refugees fled to Tanzania in 1972 and settled spontaneously in villages in the border region of Kigoma. [UNHCR/E.Wolfcarius/2010]

- About 1,000 new arrivals were reported to be at Kabonga Island (different from Kagunga) on Lake Tanganyika and in need of urgent relocation to Kigoma. A technical team comprising UNHCR, government officials from and partner staff from TWESA and IRC travelled to Kabonga to provide support. In light of the numbers and uncertainty of how long the asylum seekers will remain on the island, the team took with them dry rations (water, biscuits and juice), available non-food items and construction materials to build latrines and if deemed necessary to erect temporary structure for reception.

Burundi influx into Tanzania (statistics)

Nyarugusu refugee camp	
Registered	603
Pending registration	71
Sub-Total	674
Reported but not yet registered	
In Kigoma- NMC Transit Centre (on the way to Nyarugusu)	288
Kigoma-Herishingo	73
Kigoma-Manyovu	70
Kigoma-Kabonga island	1,000
TOTAL	2,105

Source: UNHCR, 3 May 2015

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Operational Context (Tanzania)

- UNHCR continues to rely to a large extent on information received by immigration department officials in Kigoma on the whereabouts of groups of asylum seekers at border points. The Tanzania Red Cross society has also indicated it would activate its volunteer network in the region.
- The border monitoring team in Ngara district have been informed by villagers that there are unspecified numbers of Burundian asylum seekers within various villages who at the moment are unwilling to report their presence, for fear of being returned to Burundi.
- The District commissioner for Ngara district indicated to the border monitoring team that Lukole A and B (former refugee camps) would ideal for the establishment of a transit centre to accommodate asylum seekers on transit. He indicated that there was ample space available at the location and that there is a fully operational health facility.



Protection

- A truck has been positioned at Kigoma NMC transit centre to ensure that arriving asylum seekers to Nyarugusu refugee camp are transferred as soon as possible. There is currently no possibility of hosting arriving asylum seekers at NMC transit center due to congestion for those under process to depart on resettlement and secondly the Regional authorities have requested that arriving asylum seekers should not be accommodated in Kigoma town.
- UNHCR purchased clothes for the new arrivals, given that most arrived with only those they were wearing. 5,000 straw sleeping mats and 100 plastic sleeping mats procured were also locally for use by families. Kitchen sets, solar lamps, plastic sheeting etc are urgently needed.



Health

- Medical screening is being done at Nyarugusu and vaccination against measles has been provided as necessary.
- As the islands on Lake Tanganyika are normally not inhabited, there are no medical facilities there. As numbers rise, there is a need to establish medical screening in Kigoma, prior to continuing the journey to Nyarugusu.



Shelter and Site Planning

- On 2 May, UNHCR partner TWESA completed most of the assembly of the frames to erect two Rubb halls for accommodations and the structures for reception. Tents and plastic sheeting are needed urgently as with the rainy season, mud cannot be used for the walls of the shelters.
- A survey of the land in Nyarugusu indicated that there is available space next to the reception centre to accommodate 500 families. Family plots will immediately begin to be demarcated to allow for new arrival families. There is a serious lack of construction materials. Efforts will be made to mobilize some of the “old” refugees to assist in the construction of shelters, given the large number of women and children in the new arrivals.



Logistics and Supply Chain Management

- Thus far refugees have been transported in a variety of vehicle types. At least 10 large buses will be required to transport 1,000 individuals expected to arrive in Kigoma by 4 May. This will allow the three covered trucks to carry their luggage.
- UNHCR has rented a much larger boat to ferry Burundian asylum seekers from the islands on Lake Tanganyika. With a carrying capacity of up to 700 persons, the Representative has decided to be conservative and allow only 500 asylum seekers on its first trip tomorrow, as a way to assess its performance. Upon reaching the shore, these persons will be transported to Nyarugusu Camp where they will be accommodated. The estimated cost per trip is about US\$12,000.