



VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION OF BURUNDIAN REFUGEES

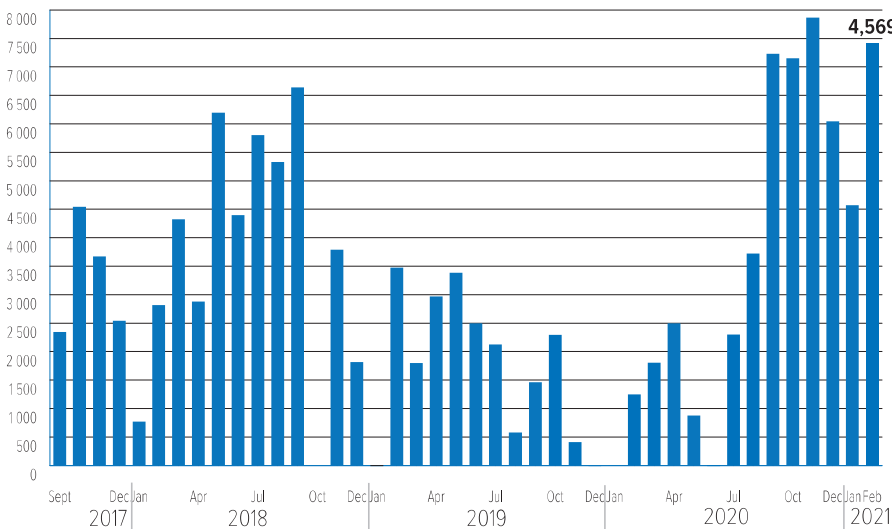
UPDATE AS OF 28 FEBRUARY 2021

UNHCR and partners have facilitated voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees since 2017, with the majority being from Tanzania, and smaller numbers assisted to return from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Kenya. Until recently almost all returns from Rwanda and Uganda were self-organized. Following the conclusion of elections in Burundi in May 2020, increased interest in voluntary return has been expressed by refugees living in several countries. Based on tripartite consultations and assessments to ensure the voluntariness of return, UNHCR began to facilitate returns from Rwanda in August 2020, and recommenced returns from the DRC in September 2020. There are ongoing plans to initiate facilitated returns from Namibia and potentially other countries in East and Southern Africa in 2021.

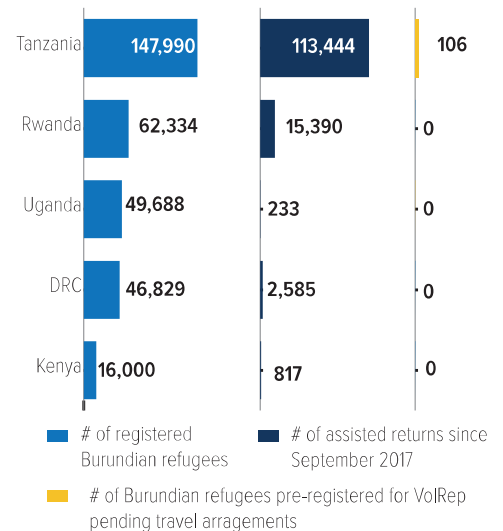
KEY FIGURES – ASSISTED REPATRIATION



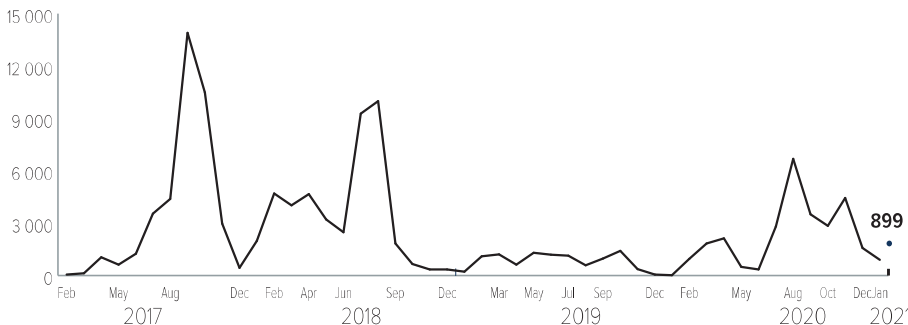
RETURN TRENDS BY MONTH SINCE SEPTEMBER 2017



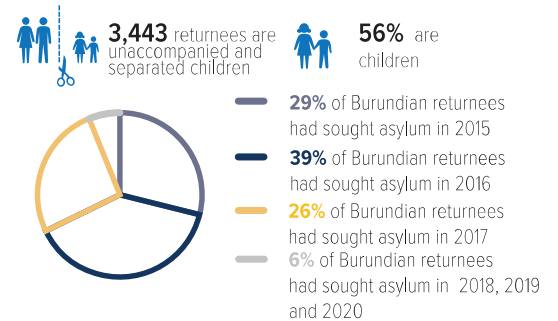
RETURNS BY COUNTRY OF ASYLUM**



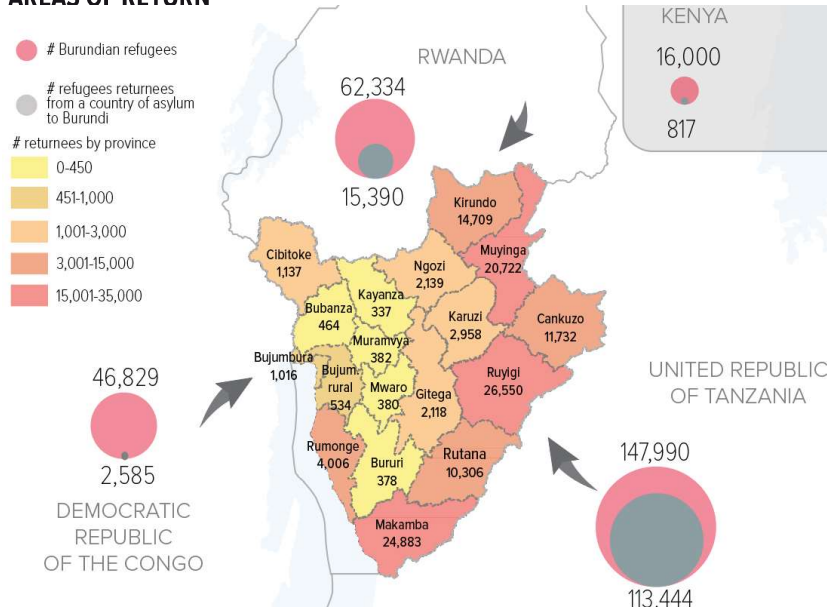
REGISTRATION FOR VOLREP IN TANZANIA 2017-2021



POPULATION PROFILE AT A GLANCE



AREAS OF RETURN***



OVERVIEW

- UNHCR and partners are providing assistance to refugees who have decided to return to Burundi so that they may do so in safety and dignity, as well as to support social cohesion and sustainable return at the community level.
- Additional funding is critically needed to ensure that returns can continue as well as to strengthen returnee monitoring and support sustainable reintegration.
- The voluntary return operations from Tanzania, DRC and Rwanda to Burundi are taking place under the framework of the Tripartite Agreements between these governments and UNHCR. All parties have agreed to ensure returns are voluntary.
- While the governments of Burundi and Tanzania have undertaken to promote refugee return, neither UNHCR nor other governments are doing so at this time. All have acknowledged the importance of refugees having the opportunity to make a free and informed choice about repatriation.
- While returnees are generally being welcomed back by the Government of Burundi and their communities of origin without incident, returnee monitoring indicates many do face a number of reintegration challenges.

* Includes assisted returns from Tanzania (113,444), Rwanda (15,390), DRC (2,585), Kenya (817), Uganda (233), Zambia (5), Cameroon (2), Gabon (1), Senegal (1) and Burkina Faso (1).

** Excludes number of refugees from Zambia, Senegal, Cameroon and Burkina Faso.

*** Excludes number of refugees from DRC, Cameroon and Burkina Faso.

RETURN MONITORING IN BURUNDI

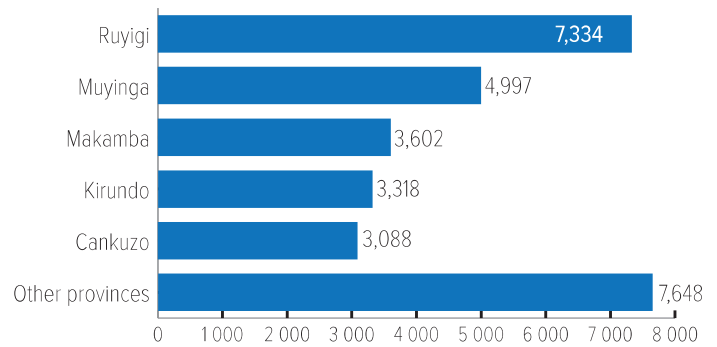
METHODOLOGY

Protection monitoring of returnees to Burundi is an essential protection activity for UNHCR and its commitment under the Tripartite Agreement. It aims to collect, process, analyse and disseminate in a systematic and regular way, the data and information on: 1) The conditions of return of assisted returnees; and 2) The level of reintegration in return areas.

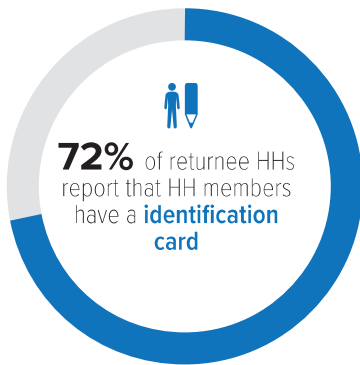
The purpose is to propose an effective protection response by area of intervention and for advocacy purposes (towards sectors of intervention, development actors, donors and government authorities). The figures below reflect data collected from January 2020 to January 2021.

MONITORING PROGRESS

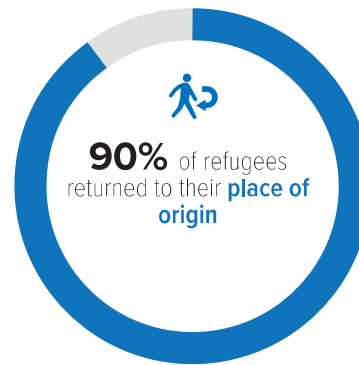
By 28 February 2021, **30,147** interviews with returnee families were conducted (see below the breakdown by province).



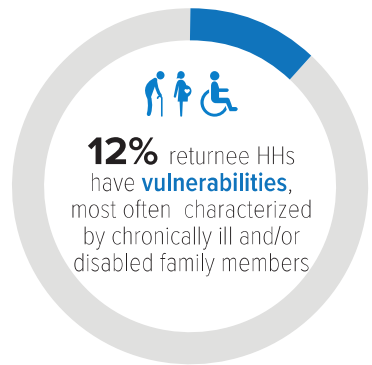
CIVIL DOCUMENTATION



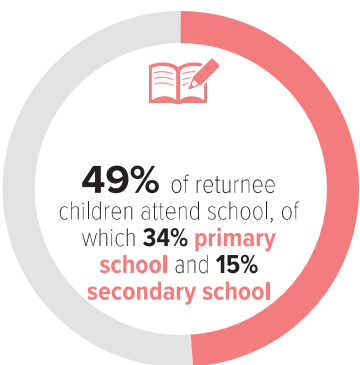
DISPLACEMENT



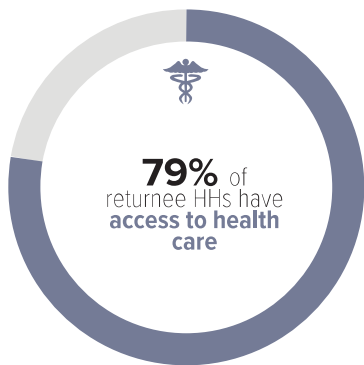
VULNERABILITY



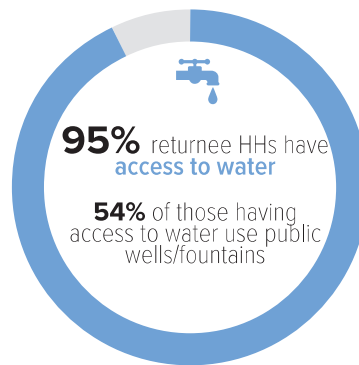
EDUCATION



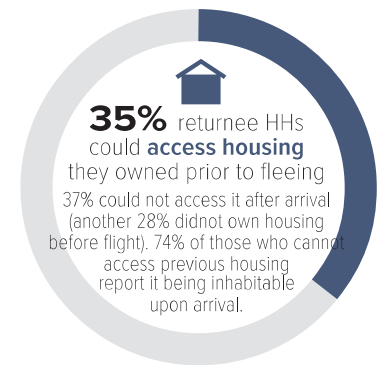
HEALTH CARE



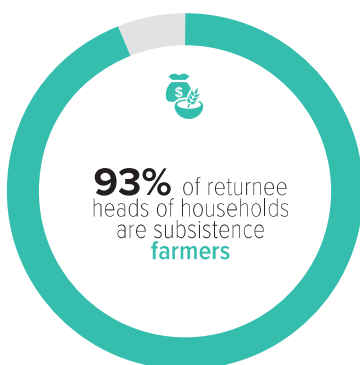
WATER



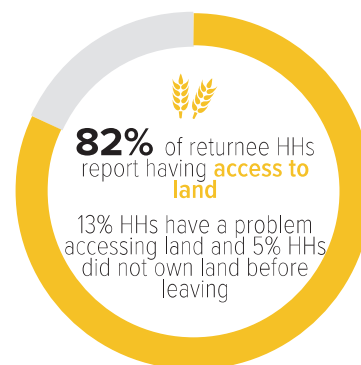
ACCESS TO HOUSING



LIVELIHOODS



ACCESS TO LAND



TOP 3 PRIORITIES IN THE USE OF CASH ASSISTANCE

All refugees who have returned with the assistance of UNHCR receive an initial return package in Burundi consisting of a cash grant, basic household supplies, and food items. Returnees report the cash grant was used for the following top priority expenses:

- 1. Household items** (37%)
- 2. Shelter** (24%)
- 3. Land rental** (20%)

For more information please contact:

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