UNHCR and partners began to assist the voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in September 2017 as a durable solution for those refugees who indicate a desire to return home. The vast majority of returns have been from Tanzania, with smaller numbers assisted to return from Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Almost all returns from Rwanda and Uganda have so far been self-organized.

**KEY FIGURES – ASSISTED REPATRIATION**

- **79,720** individuals
- **27,267** households
- **174** convoys
- **48%** male
- **52%** female

**RETURNS BY COUNTRY OF ASYLUM**

- Tanzania: 166,978
- Rwanda: 72,932
- DRC: 47,259
- Uganda: 45,671
- Kenya: 13,800

**POPULATION PROFILE AT A GLANCE**

- 1,576 returnees are unaccompanied and separated children
- 57% are children
- 25% of Burundian returnees had sought asylum in 2015
- 42% of Burundian returnees had sought asylum in 2016
- 29% of Burundian returnees had sought asylum in 2017
- 4% of Burundian returnees had sought asylum in 2018

**OVERVIEW**

1. 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.

2. Additional funding is critically needed to ensure that returns can continue as well as to strengthen return monitoring and support sustainable reintegration.

3. The voluntary return operation from Tanzania to Burundi is taking place under the framework of a Tripartite Agreement between the two governments and UNHCR. All parties have agreed to ensure returns are voluntary.

4. While the governments of Burundi and Tanzania have undertaken activities to promote and support refugee return, all actors in the region acknowledge the importance of refugees having the opportunity to make a free and informed choice about repatriation.

5. 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.
RETURN MONITORING IN BURUNDI

METHODOLOGY

Protection monitoring of returnees to Burundi is an essential protection activity and UNHCR’s 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). It was initially established in September 2017 after the repatriation started in Tanzania and was revised in early 2019 to better meet operational needs.

MONITORING PROGRESS

By 31 December 2019, 23,964 interviews with returnee families were conducted (see below the breakdown by province).

CIVIL DOCUMENTATION

- 35% of returnee HHs report that HH members have a national identification card.
- 48% of returnee HHs report their children received a birth certificate.
- 90% of refugees returned to their place of origin.
- 9% returnee HHs have vulnerabilities, most often characterized by chronically ill and/or disabled family members.

EDUCATION

- 46% of returnee children attend school, of which 34% primary school and 12% secondary school.

LIVELIHOODS

- 94% of returnee heads of households are subsistence farmers.

ACCESS TO LAND

- 82% of returnee HHs report having access to land.
- 6% HHs have a problem accessing land and 12% HHs did not own land before leaving.

ACCESS TO HOUSING

- 33% returnee HHs could access housing they owned prior to fleeing.
- 46% could not access it after arrival (another 19% did not own housing before flight). 83% of those who cannot access previous housing report it being inhabitable upon arrival.

HEALTH CARE

- 79% of returnee HHs have access to health care.
- 93% returnee HHs have access to water.
- 56% of those having access to water use public wells/fountains.

WATER

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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 financial grant, basic household supplies, and food items. Returnees report the cash grant was used for the following top priority expenses:

1. Household items (39%)
2. Land rental (18%)
3. Shelter (17%)

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For more information please contact:
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