

Burundi: Inter-Agency Monitoring Report

29 January 2016



This report incorporates inputs by the inter-sector working group and humanitarian partners in Burundi

Key Points

- The total number of Burundian refugees has increased to 239,754, whereas IDPs are now estimated to be 25,081 in view of new data from Makamba and Kirundo, and a new assessment in Rutana.
- New patterns of human rights violations have emerged, including cases of sexual violence, increased enforced disappearances and torture
- Since April 2015, OHCHR reports 439 killings, 262 arbitrary arrests, and 263 cases of torture/ill-treatment.
- As of mid-January 2016, heavy rains and floods continue to affect various parts of the country, resulting in 5,068 houses damaged/destroyed, affecting 30,408 persons.
- The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated \$13 million for life-saving activities, prioritizing Protection, Health and Food Security, followed by Nutrition, WASH and Shelter/NFI.

I. Situation Overview

The political and security situation in Burundi remains tense, with violence continuing in Bujumbura in the aftermath of President Nkurunziza's third contested term, resulting in at least 439 deaths and 264,835 displaced people since April 2015. In addition, continued heavy rains have caused localized floods and landslides, leaving at least 52 people killed and affecting 5,068 households, whose houses have been damaged or destroyed between November 2015 and January 2016.

On 19 January, the "Commission Nationale de Dialogue Interburundais" (CNDI) started its dialogue without the opposition and independent civil society, who are mostly in exile. Meanwhile the Ugandan-mediated inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue is still stalling, after the Burundian Government objected to the 6 January resumption of talks in Arusha.

On 22 January, the UN Security Council met President Nkurunziza to convince him to engage in the peace talks and accept the AU-proposed peacekeeping force (MAPROBU), but no meaningful agreements were reached. The Security Council delegation then travelled to Addis Ababa and met with AU leaders, who agreed on the need for an urgent and inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue.

II. Humanitarian Situation Overview

OHCHR highlights alarming new patterns of violations



On 15 January, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein released a press statement, warning that deeply worrying new trends are emerging in Burundi, including cases of sexual violence by security forces and a sharp increase in enforced disappearances and torture cases. He also called for an urgent investigation into the events that took place in Bujumbura on 11-12 December 2015, including the reported existence of at least nine mass graves, containing more than 100 bodies in total. OHCHR documented 55 cases of killings in October 2015, 68 in November and 130 in December and already 20 cases as of 14 January 2016, bringing the total number to at least 439 related to the current crisis since 26 April 2015.

The number of persons subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment increased substantially from 10 cases of torture in November to 29 cases of torture and 42 cases of ill-treatment documented in December, five cases of torture and eight cases of ill-treatment documented as of 14 January 2016. In total, more than 263 cases of torture or ill-treatment were documented since 26 April 2015.

Documented cases of sexual violence against women also rose to 13 during December, mostly occurring during search and arrest operations in the neighbourhoods perceived as opposing the Government, 12 of which were committed by security forces or civilians cooperating with security forces (allegedly Imbonerakure), and one case committed by members of the opposition.

OHCHR documented 262 cases of arbitrary arrest and detention and violations of due process of law in December 2015, with most people arrested having been released a few days after their arrest for lack of evidence. There have been allegations of "massive arrests" in some neighbourhoods especially on 11 December 2015 that OHCHR was not able to verify. A total of 3,671 persons have been arrested between April 2015 and December 2015, two thirds of whom were subsequently released because no charges were found against them. As of 15 January 2016, at least 120 arrests were already reported to OHCHR for January 2016. A new trend is the dramatic increase in cases of forced disappearance with 29 documented cases since December 2015, coinciding with reports about the existence of illegal detention facilities and mass graves.

Current status of refugees and IDPs

As of 26 January UNHCR reports that the total number of Burundian refugees has increased to 239,754, across Tanzania (126,206), Rwanda (72,175), DRC (20,985), Uganda (19,408) and Zambia (980), whereas the number of IDPs estimated to be around 25,081 (12,107 in Makamba, 12,860 in Rutana, 114 in Kirundo). IOM is conducting further assessments to provide more updated figures for the rest of the country, although the scope and scale of internal displacement is still unknown as many other IDPs are still unregistered for fear of reprisals, and the lack of resources has not allowed to conduct assessments outside of the 3 targeted provinces. This is in addition to a protracted caseload of 78,000 IDPs from previous conflicts in the country and 50,000 Congolese refugees hosted in Burundi. Overall, children represent about half of the people in need of protection.

Heavy rains and floods continue to hit various parts of the country

The current rainy season has been causing severe damages to housing due the El Niño climate event since November 2015, and is expected to continue until May 2016. Until mid-January 2016, heavy rains and floods resulted in the damage and/or the destruction of 5,068 houses in Burundi, affecting 30,408 persons who are in need of assistance in shelter/NFI, based on assessments conducted by the authorities with support from the Burundian Red Cross. Out of these affected 5,068 households, 276 found refuge in two IDP sites set up in November 2015 and January 2016 respectively in Rumonge province, with the majority of the households displaced in host families.

Heavy rains mixed with strong winds, landslides, floods and thunderstorms also characterized the period from 13 to 25 January all over the country, causing 28 dead and 22 wounded. 703 houses were destroyed and 24 damaged, while 36 schools and 22 bridges were also destroyed, as reported in the assessment conducted by the Provincial Platform for Risk Prevention and Disaster Management, the Red Cross of Burundi, and the Civil Protection.

III. Funding Update

On 8 January, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated an envelope of up to USD 13 million from the underfunded emergencies window for key life-saving activities in Burundi. A CERF Prioritization strategy was submitted on 22 January, which included 15 projects under 6 sectors (Protection, Health and Food Security being the most important, followed by Nutrition, WASH and Shelter/NFI). The proposal focuses on the 6 most vulnerable provinces Bujumbura Mairie, Bujumbura Rural, Makamba, Kirundo, Cibitoke, and Rumonge.

Following the IASC Emergency Director's Group (EDG) visit on 2-5 December, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in Burundi is in the process of developing a humanitarian needs overview (HNO) in view of a humanitarian response plan (HRP) to be launched at the end of February 2016.

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