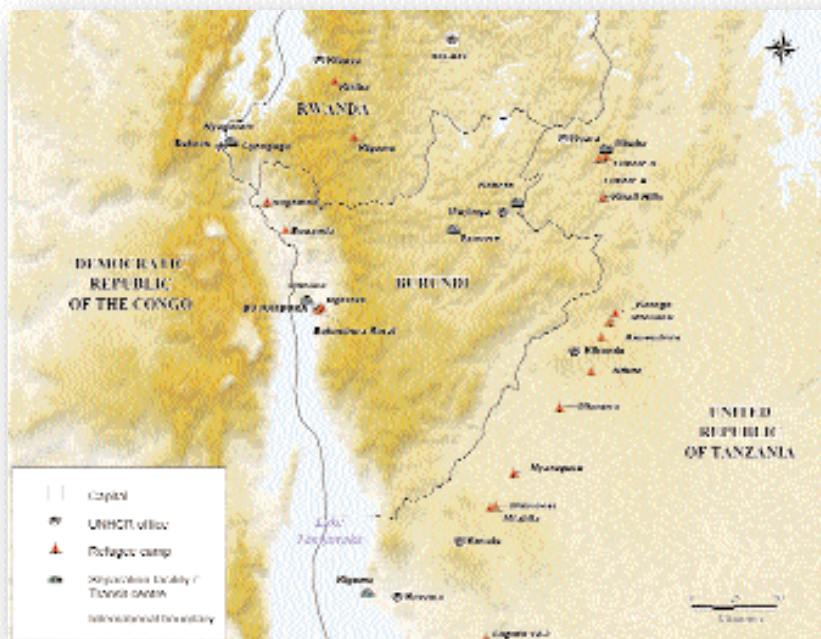


Burundi

Main Objectives

- Uphold the rights of asylum-seekers in Burundi, particularly those fleeing conflict in neighbouring countries, and provide them with essential assistance and services where security conditions permit.
- Review the need for continued protection of refugee populations caught up in protracted situations in exile.
- Undertake systematic reviews of the planned repatriation of Burundian refugees from Tanzania to ensure sustainable return and reintegration if and when conditions permit.
- Ensure sustainable reintegration of returning populations and assist internally displaced populations in areas of return.



WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Recent Developments

Progress toward peace in Burundi remains dependent on regional initiatives, particularly the Arusha peace process and the Lusaka process for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where conflict is still an important cause of regional instability. The Arusha peace process, facilitated by Nelson Mandela, took a significant turn in July 2001 with the announcement of the anticipated establishment on 1 November of a three-year transitional government. However, there were outstanding issues, such as the size and composition of the ‘protection force’ for the transitional government and the question of amnesty for certain political exiles. The transitional government has been established, and it is hoped that the Implementation Monitoring Committee will begin discharging its duties in Burundi. These include arbitrating and settling disagreements between the signatories, guiding and co-ordinating the activities of all the commissions and the sub-commissions established under the different protocols, and aiding the transitional government in the diplomatic mobilisation of resources.

PLANNING FIGURES

Population	Jan. 2002	Dec. 2002
Congolese Refugees (DRC)	26,963	26,963
Rwandan Refugees	1,261	1,227
Urban Refugees	24	24
Burundi Returnees	0	200,000
Assisted IDPs	80,000	40,000
Total	108,248	268,214

TOTAL REQUIREMENTS • USD 6,516,928

Political progress notwithstanding, sustainable peace in Burundi can only be reached if all factions of the armed rebellion agree to a cease-fire. To date, all attempts by various mediators to shepherd the adversaries towards diplomatic remedies have failed. However, there is still hope that repatriation could start in early 2002.

Constraints

The Government is preoccupied with widespread insecurity in the country and pays scant attention to matters affecting asylum-seekers and returnees. There are administrative structures which in past years catered for refugees and returnees, but most now exist in name only. Government forces are continually engaged in combat against rebel forces in the province of Bujumbura Rural as well as in areas of the south-east. Many of the potential areas of return are plagued by sporadic violence, which often blocks access to populations of concern to UNHCR.

Strategy

Repatriation, whether spontaneous or organised, will present enormous challenges to affected populations, the Government and the international community. UNHCR's programme in Burundi is directed mainly at preparing for the reception and reintegration of returnees once conditions permit. Rapidly changing political and military factors in Burundi call for constant analysis to allow appropriate adjustments in levels of preparedness. Tripartite and bilateral meetings between the Governments of Burundi and Tanzania and UNHCR have continued at the ministerial and regional levels. Close links have been established with development partners, principally UNDP and the World Bank, in order to prepare for a well-timed exit strategy, which will enable rehabilitation and reintegration activities initiated by UNHCR to continue.

Protection and Solutions

Burundi hosts some 28,580 refugees of mainly Congolese (DRC) and Rwandan origin. According to the Government, more than 20,000 urban refugees have been residing in Bujumbura for over 20 years. UNHCR is to review the situation of the 3,742 urban refugees to determine the need for continued assistance and explore any local integration options. UNHCR assists another 7,280 refugees in the provinces of Bujumbura Mairie and Citiboke. Over 3,000 live at Rugambo camp some two km from the DRC border. Proximity to the border puts refugees at great risk from cross-border attacks and undermines the humanitarian character of the camp. The Government of Burundi has agreed to allocate a site (as yet unidentified) to which some of the refugees will be relocated in 2002.

Meanwhile, measures will be taken to reinforce the capacity of the judiciary in preparation for the additional demands that repatriation will impose, particularly with regard to restitution of property. Similarly, capacity-building initiatives will target those Government ministries that are concerned with social welfare, namely, Interior and Public Security, Human Rights, Social Services, and Education. UNHCR will put in place mechanisms for the systematic monitoring of returnees to ensure they are not unjustly targeted. Refugee law training will be provided for members of the Consultative Commission for Foreigners, the body responsible for determining the eligibility of asylum-seekers.

Vocational training classes for Rwandan refugees in Muyinga province. *UNHCR/A. Hollmann.*



Assistance

The groundwork for the voluntary repatriation operation has involved working with humanitarian and development partners to identify various activities which take into account the needs of displaced populations in the areas of return. UNHCR's programme is designed to meet the most pressing needs during the first critical months after return. Initial assistance will include repatriation packages consisting of jerry cans, blankets, plastic sheeting, soap, kitchen sets and cash grants, which will be distributed to returnees upon arrival at various locations. Community-based reintegration activities will encourage a sense of ownership among returnees and local populations, and include rehabilitation of infrastructure such as schools, water points, clinics and health centres in the areas of return. UNHCR will contract a number of NGOs to undertake small-scale projects, mainly the construction of emergency shelters.

UNHCR will continue to provide refugees with protection and essential services. When security conditions permit, these will be extended to those refugees who are currently in inaccessible locations. To date, assistance has been limited to the provision of health, water, education, non-food items and community services. Small-scale income-generating activities are organised for urban refugees.

Desired Impact

UNHCR's plans aim to create conditions that minimise the negative effects of repatriation on both the refugees and local communities. The Office also aims to enable the judiciary and related institutions to cope with associated demands. Sensitisation campaigns and community-based projects will promote co-existence. Training activities will enhance awareness of refugee law and the right of return. UNHCR will endeavour to maintain the general well-being of refugees in accessible provinces through the provision of basic services.

Management Structure

In 2002 a total of 61 staff (eight international and 53 national) and three UNVs will administer UNHCR's programme in Burundi.

Co-ordination

UNHCR plans to work with nine Government agencies as well as one national and seven international NGOs. Close co-operation will continue with FAO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and the World Bank. The Contact Group, which includes UN agencies, NGOs and donors, will continue to hold weekly meetings to ensure co-ordination of humanitarian and developmental activities in preparation for the voluntary repatriation operation. In addition, several sub-committees (with NGO representation) will continue to deal with technical issues at the sectoral level. The

Security Management Team also meets once a week to discuss and co-ordinate issues related to security in Burundi.

OFFICES

Bujumbura

Muyinga

PARTNERS

Government Agencies

Ministère de l'action sociale et de la promotion de la femme

Ministère de la justice et garde des Sceaux

Ministère de la réforme institutionnelle et des droits de l'homme.

Ministère de la réinsertion et de la réinstallation des déplacés et des rapatriés

Ministère de la santé publique

Ministère de l'intérieur et de la sécurité publique

Office of Education Project (BPE)

Police de l'air, des frontières et des étrangers

Provincial Direction of Agriculture and Breeding

NGOs

Austrian Relief Programme

INTERSOS

International Rescue Committee

OXFAM Québec

Association française des volontaires du progrès

Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development

Association for Social Development and Environment Protection

Others

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

BUDGET (USD)

Activities and Services	Annual Programme
Protection, Monitoring and Co-ordination	584,300
Community Services	277,000
Crop Production	75,000
Domestic Needs	796,996
Education	547,000
Food	13,596
Health	488,570
Income Generation	62,500
Legal Assistance	411,539
Operational Support (to Agencies)	256,595
Sanitation	87,589
Shelter/Other Infrastructure	554,247
Transport/Logistics	955,684
Water	182,384
Total Operations	5,293,000
Programme Support	1,223,928
Total	6,516,928