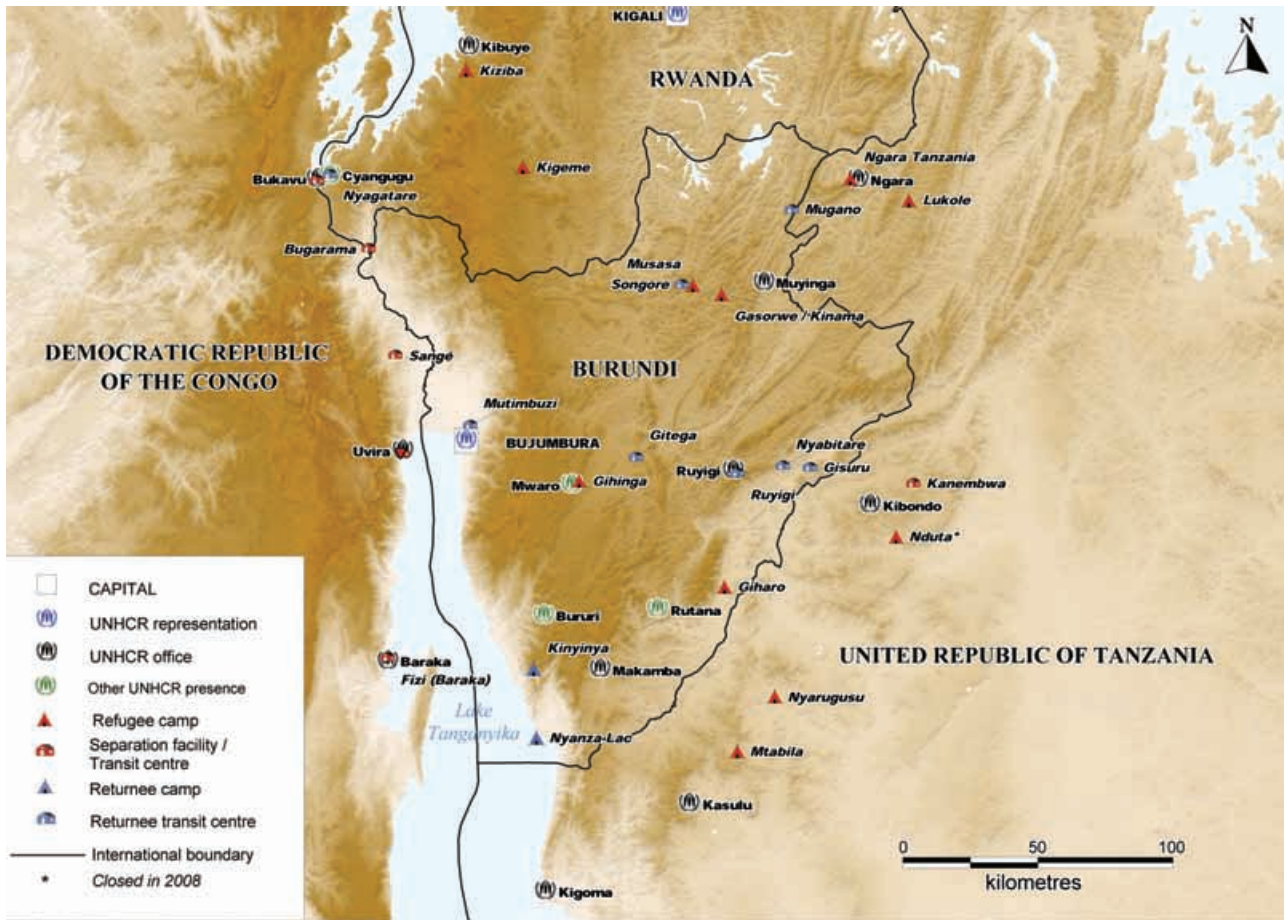


BURUNDI



Operational highlights

- UNHCR assisted some 95,000 Burundian refugees to return home, the highest number in any year since the start of voluntary repatriation in 2002.
- Returnees received cash grants, non-food items, identity-cards, shelter kits and medical assistance. UNHCR monitored the returnees throughout the country and tried to defuse conflicts between them and local communities.
- UNHCR helped the Government to respond more effectively to issues of access to land for the returnees.
- Some 26,300 refugees and asylum-seekers, mostly from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), benefited from UNHCR's protection and assistance.
- A new asylum law entered into force and the country's first asylum office was created with support from UNHCR.

Persons of concern					
Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	DRC	20,800	20,800	52	59
	Various	340	340	53	54
Asylum-seekers	DRC	5,200	5,200	51	54
	Various	60	60	44	40
Returnees (refugees) ¹	From United Rep. of Tanzania	94,900	94,700	51	56
	Various	500	250	51	56
IDPs ²		100,000	2,450	-	-
Total		221,800	123,800		

¹ In addition to the 94,900 who returned in 2008 and benefited from returnee monitoring as well as assistance to return, UNHCR assisted 45,000 people with construction materials.

² While the exact number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is not known, it was estimated to be 100,000 in 2006. Although UNHCR in Burundi did not have specific IDP programmes, at least 2,450 vulnerable IDPs benefited from UNHCR's shelter (including 235 resettled in *Villages de la Paix*) and legal assistance programmes.



Burundi returnees reconstruct their destroyed house with UNHCR shelter kit, Ruyigi province, Burundi

UNHCR / A. KIRCHHOF

| Working environment |

Peace negotiations with the country's last rebel group, Palipehutu-FNL, experienced setbacks that culminated in armed confrontations around the capital, Bujumbura, in April 2008. Talks between the Government and the rebels then resumed, raising hopes that the latter would demobilize its combatants and participate in the political process.

Socio-economic conditions in Burundi, which has the lowest per capital income in sub-Saharan Africa, were aggravated by high food and commodity prices. The economic situation has had a serious impact on the most destitute in the country, especially urban refugees and vulnerable returnees.

The lack of access to land has given rise to crime and social tensions, as well as political conflict. Returnees are among the main groups involved in land disputes. Additional pressures were posed by the return of long-term refugees from 1972 to the south of the country in 2008.

| Achievements and impact |

● Main objectives

UNHCR had planned to facilitate the repatriation to and reintegration in Burundi of 45,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. The Office also aimed to help resolve problems related to access to land for the returnees. However, some 64,500 refugees returned due to the consolidation of camps for Burundian refugees in Tanzania.

In addition, 30,500 refugees who had fled Burundi in 1972 opted for repatriation from old settlements in Tanzania.

Other objectives of UNHCR were to facilitate the voluntary return of refugees from the DRC and to support new government bodies responsible for returnees and refugees.

● Protection and solutions

The basic rights of refugees and asylum-seekers were generally respected in Burundi. Many individual cases, often concerning the detention of refugees, were resolved following UNHCR's intervention. There were significant delays in granting refugee status due to the limited capacity of national institutions. UNHCR helped the authorities to adopt a new refugee law and establish Burundi's national asylum office, the *Office National pour la Protection des Réfugiés et des Apatrides* (ONPRA).

Of the 30,500 refugees of the 1972 group who returned, a significant number were either landless or had not recovered their occupied lands. UNHCR assisted this group with temporary shelter and worked to find solutions to land problems both at the political and administrative levels.

All refugees and asylum-seekers were re-registered using digital fingerprinting techniques to avoid double registration. Small groups of newly arrived refugees from the DRC's South Kivu area as well as urban refugees asked to be accommodated in camps. A total of 121 refugees were resettled from Burundi.

○ Activities and assistance

Refugees

Community services: Refugee committees at camps, where about 50 per cent of the representatives were women, received support and were put in charge of important functions such as distribution. Sensitization campaigns against sexual and gender-based violence were organized at camp level. Vulnerable people in the camps and urban areas were identified to ensure they received special assistance.

Domestic needs and household support: Basic non-food items were distributed to camp-based refugees. Women and adolescent girls received sanitary items (10,000 units) and 1,100 urban refugees with extreme vulnerabilities received clothes, medical equipment or financial assistance.

Education: Enrolment in the camp schools rose, particularly at the primary level, due to sensitization meetings with heads of households concerning school attendance and provision of school reading materials. Some 94 per cent of children of primary-school age went to school, while the rate was 40 per cent for secondary school. The construction of 12 classrooms was completed and teachers, many of them refugee volunteers, participated in teacher-training courses. School materials were distributed to 3,400 children.

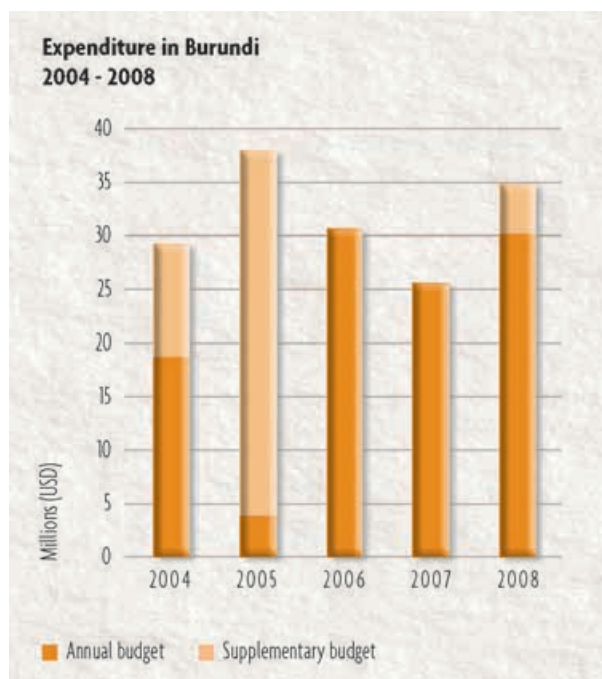
Food: All refugees in the camps received WFP food packages that provided an average of 2,100 kcal/day/person.

Health and nutrition: All camp-based refugees had access to free health services. Refugees in urban areas used the regular health structures, but UNHCR reimbursed part of the fees. Key health indicators in camps were within acceptable standards, except in Musasa camp where the malnutrition rate for children between six months and five years of age was an alarming 9 per cent. New arrivals from the DRC or urban areas in Burundi were particularly affected and UNHCR's partners provided additional nutritional support to the malnourished refugees in the camp. Refugees had access to voluntary HIV and AIDS testing centres as well as to anti-retroviral medication (ARV), though access in urban areas to ARV treatment was more limited. Some 570 HIV and AIDS sensitization sessions were carried out in the camps and condoms distributed. Testing discovered 33 new cases of HIV.

Income generation: The self-sufficiency of refugees was supported through income-generating projects, albeit on a limited scale. In the refugee camps, 109 associations received financial support as well as training.

Operational support: UNHCR supported its partners financially and helped train their staff.

Protection: The percentage of refugees in possession of identity documents remained at about 40 per cent, even though 2,700 identity cards were distributed during the year. Some 692 birth certificates were also distributed.



Sanitation: All refugees in the camp had access to sanitary structures and 250 latrines were rehabilitated or constructed.

Shelter and other infrastructure: The shelter situation was generally adequate, with the exception of Musasa and Giharo camps, where some people continued to live in hangars under plastic sheeting. Some 500 new shelters were constructed in the camps, including new individual houses. The community infrastructure was improved through the construction of administrative and community buildings, including a room for computer training.

Water: During the reporting period, an average of 20.6 litres was available per refugee per day, an improvement vis-à-vis 2007. However, the quantity of drinking water available in Musasa camp remained inadequate.

Returnees

Community services: Almost 400 unaccompanied and separated children were repatriated from Tanzania. In all but one case they were reunited with their families or relatives, or placed with foster families.

Domestic needs and household support: Returnees from camps in Tanzania received non-food items at transit centres, including blankets, kitchen sets, jerry cans, plastic sheeting and mosquito nets. Returnees received cash grants of USD 45 per person. They also benefited from WFP food rations for six months.

Education: The Office funded the visits of experts from Burundi's Ministry of Education to camps in Tanzania to ensure that the Burundian curriculum was respected so that returnees could integrate more easily into the Burundian school system.

Forestry: To compensate for the wood used by its shelter programme, UNHCR distributed some 138,000 fruit- and forest-tree seedlings to host communities and returnees.

Health and nutrition: UNHCR medically screened a total of 28,520 returnees. Chronically ill returnees received free drugs and follow-up treatment for six months. All returnees were invited to attend HIV and AIDS sensitization meetings and undergo voluntary tests. Nine public hospitals and health centres in return areas received support for personnel and medical supplies.

Income generation: Returnee associations received support for income-generating activities.

Legal assistance: UNHCR's partners received more than 4,000 reports of legal conflicts, mostly involving returnees' land claims. Mediation helped resolve some 750 cases. The UN Peacebuilding Fund supported UNHCR's efforts to assist Burundi's National Land Commission.

Protection and monitoring: Under a country-wide returnee monitoring scheme, 14,200 households were visited and interviewed. UNHCR field offices followed up on cases where returnees' rights were not respected, and referred land conflicts to relevant partners. Some 42,600 national identity cards were handed out to returnees.

Shelter and infrastructure: Shelter materials for self-construction of small mud-brick houses were given to 13,200 needy families, 90 per cent of them returnees. Persons who were not physically able to engage in construction received built houses. Two villages for landless returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) were completed.

Transport and logistics: UNHCR provided transport for the more than 95,000 returnees and their belongings.

○ **Constraints**

Movement was restricted due to the security situation, particularly in the northwest of the country. Deteriorating conditions in the eastern DRC prevented organized repatriation to the area, though a few hundred refugees expressed an interest in repatriation.

| **Financial information** |

The operation was sufficiently funded. A major contribution from the European Union (EU) ensured that some reintegration activities in border areas, particularly the shelter programme, could be strengthened. However, the high number of returnees absorbed the additional resources. The EU's contribution led to an overall rise in the budget vis-à-vis previous years.

| **Organization and implementation** |

Redeployment of staff and resources from other offices to Makamba allowed UNHCR to manage the high pace of return and face reintegration challenges in southern Burundi. Two satellite offices were opened in Bururi and Rutana. Consequently, UNHCR had one Representation Office, a sub-office, two field offices and three field units. UNHCR had 24 international staff, 108 national employees, one JPO and 11 UNVs, the majority working in remote field locations.

| **Working with others** |

Together with key government ministries, donors and other UN agencies, UNHCR developed common approaches to the main challenges in Burundi, working within the framework of the Integrated Commission for Return and Reintegration. This led to the Government's strategy to create "integrated rural villages" in which to settle landless returnees and other vulnerable people. Under the leadership of the UN Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), UNHCR contributed to the formulation of a new UNDAF for 2010-2014.

| **Overall assessment** |

UNHCR organized the return of a far higher number of refugees than originally planned. The reintegration programme is well-established and had a strong impact on conditions in several sectors. Activities were nonetheless concentrated on immediate needs after return.

More needs to be done to ensure sustainable return. At present, an increasing number of refugees are moving from urban areas to camps and becoming dependent on humanitarian aid. The camps were full at the end of the year.

Further improvements are needed in areas such as education, water and shelter and management of the environment around the camps. Due to the deteriorating situation in the eastern DRC, there was no organized repatriation from Burundi.

Partners
Implementing partners
<p>Government: <i>Ministère de l'Intérieur (Office National pour la Protection des Réfugiés et des Apatrides, Centre National d'Identification), Ministère de la solidarité nationale, du rapatriement des réfugiés et de la réintégration sociale (Projet d'Appui au Rapatriement et à la Réintégration des Sinistrés-PARES), Commission nationale des terres et autres biens</i></p> <p>NGOs: African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes, African Humanitarian Action, <i>Association des femmes juristes, Conseil pour l'Education et le Développement, Fédération Nationale des Coopératives d'Epargne et de Crédit du Burundi, Handicap International (France), International Rescue Committee, Ligue Iteka, Norwegian Refugee Council, Stop SIDA, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization – Health Net International, World Outreach Initiatives</i></p> <p>Others: <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)</i></p>
Operational partners
<p>NGOs: Norwegian Refugee Council, Refugee Education Trust, <i>Solidarités</i></p> <p>Others: BINUB, FAO, ICRC, UNICEF, WFP, WHO</p>

Budget, income and expenditure in Burundi (USD)					
	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available ¹	Total expenditure
Annual budget	31,062,820	27,823,084	2,341,765	30,164,849	30,028,742
1972 Burundian refugees in Tanzania SB	5,477,463	2,627,464	1,996,196	4,623,661	4,623,603
Anaemia control and prevention SB	94,000	0	90,420	90,420	90,420
Avian and human influenza preparedness SB	5,000	0	3,823	3,823	3,823
Supplementary budget subtotal	5,576,463	2,627,464	2,090,439	4,717,903	4,717,846
Total	36,639,283	30,450,549	4,432,204	34,882,753	34,746,588

Note: Supplementary programmes do not include seven per cent support costs that are recovered from contributions to meet indirect costs for UNHCR. Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

¹ Total funds available include currency adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Burundi (USD)				
Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects			Prior years' project
	Annual programme budget	Supplementary programme budget	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	5,274,706	475,551	5,750,257	0
Community services	400,757	0	400,757	0
Domestic needs and household support	2,944,738	1,358,591	4,303,329	464
Education	246,857	0	246,857	9,675
Forestry	71,307	0	71,307	0
Health and nutrition	1,230,228	21,413	1,251,641	(608)
Income generation	60,871	0	60,871	0
Legal assistance	1,906,543	32,163	1,938,706	15,725
Operational support (to agencies)	949,678	8,527	958,205	71,560
Sanitation	27,781	0	27,781	0
Shelter and infrastructure	6,364,060	1,673,407	8,037,467	35,219
Transport and logistics	3,760,967	881,413	4,642,380	129,822
Water	64,736	0	64,736	0
Instalments to implementing partners	2,758,372	266,781	3,025,153	(230,407)
Subtotal operational activities	26,061,601	4,717,846	30,779,447	0
Programme support	3,967,141	0	3,967,141	0
Total expenditure	30,028,742	4,717,846	34,746,588	0
Cancellation on prior years' expenditure				(22,942)
Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	12,987,526	2,140,228	15,127,754	
Reporting received	(10,229,154)	(1,873,447)	(12,102,601)	
Balance	2,758,372	266,781	3,025,153	
Outstanding 1st January				1,295,099
Reporting received				(230,407)
Refunded to UNHCR				(504,683)
Currency adjustment				(211)
Outstanding 31st December				559,798