

CONTEXT

Burundi has one of the highest population densities among the world's poorest countries and has witnessed substantial civil conflicts, which resulted in large migration flows.

Burundi is also facing a weakening socio-economic situation exacerbated by the devastating effects of natural disasters and climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and recurrent gas shortages. It is among the world's 20 most vulnerable countries to climate change, with over 91 per cent of internal displacements caused by natural disasters. Floods and landslides triggered by torrential rains and strong winds cause severe damages to households and essential crops in the country, where over 90 per cent of the population relies on subsistence farming.

According to the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), there are over 75,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) as of October 2022, of which 55 per cent are women and 56 per cent are children. Regularly updated figures can be found on the [DTM website](#). Based on its Emergency Event Tracking (EET), IOM estimates that from January to December 2021, 113,469 persons were affected by natural disasters, including 35,727 displaced.

In addition, over 185,700 Burundians have returned through a voluntary repatriation programme from the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other neighbouring countries since September 2017. The voluntary return of refugees has increased in 2021, and over 70,000 are expected to return from neighbouring states in 2022 thus placing additional burden on vulnerable communities in areas of return that are already scarce in available land, resources, and livelihoods.

The country continues to host around 86,000 refugees and asylum seekers (according to UNHCR, July 2022), mainly from

the DRC. Burundi has become a departure point for refugees seeking to resettle to third countries. It also sees high volumes of cross-border movement of goods and people – primarily traders, workers, refugees and travelers.

The needs of IDPs and returnees in terms of life-saving assistance range from shelter, non-food items (NFI), and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) support, to access to housing, land and property (HLP) and protection. Several generations of post-conflict trauma have resulted in untreated and stigmatized ill mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, as well as sexual and gender-based violence and domestic violence at the community level, thus requiring psychosocial support. The protection needs of vulnerable migrants in this context are high and manifold. The displacement, combined with the low access to basic services and assistance, creates risks for trafficking and exploitation in their search for safety and better opportunities. Notably, 64% of people exposed to protection risks in 2022 are affected by Gender-Based Violence (GBV) (HNO 2022) which is a root cause of trafficking and exploitation. Internal and cross-border trafficking in persons persist. An estimated 82 per cent of the victims are women and girls, often for forced domestic labour, sexual exploitation and forced marriage in neighbouring countries or the Gulf states. Burundian refugees, IDPs, and those residing in border provinces are most at risk of human trafficking.

Lastly, Burundi continues to grapple with the spread of COVID-19, alongside other health risks such as malaria and cholera and the continued risk of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) transmission from the neighboring DRC. These health risks are exacerbated by the high migration flows of people and goods and low resources to manage them with Burundi's porous borders.



BURUNDI IN NUMBERS

13.0M
Total population

1.8M
People in need
in 2022 (HRP)

+75,000
Internally Displaced Persons
as of October 2022 (DTM)

+70,000
Expected returnees from
neighbouring states in 2022 (JRRRP)

+89%
Internal displacement caused
by natural disasters (DTM)

IOM BURUNDI INTERVENTIONS

IOM works closely with the Government of Burundi (GoB) and other partners to implement a well-coordinated response to the country's core migration-related challenges.



MIGRATION HEALTH

Preparedness and response to internal or cross-border health risks

In the wake of recent epidemic outbreaks in the East Africa region, notably EVD and COVID-19, IOM Burundi, along with the GoB and other partners, continues to implement a comprehensive programme to support ongoing efforts to prevent, detect and respond to health threats along the mobility continuum, from points of origin and transit to destination and return. Psychological first aid activities and mental health care are a key component of the support provided. IOM Burundi's work is anchored in the Health, Border and Mobility Management (HBMM) framework and Manual on Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies and Displacement.

SHELTER / NFI / WASH

Providing aid in emergencies

IOM Burundi directly provides and promotes appropriate shelter, NFI and WASH interventions (drinking water treatment, latrine design/construction, and hygiene promotion). IOM co-leads inter-agency shelter sector coordination and supports the Government to coordinate humanitarian assistance on NFI and WASH. It is also a key member of the Cash Transfer and Durable Solutions technical working groups, and a key participant in the National Platform for Risk Prevention and Disaster Management coordination mechanism, led by the Ministry of Public Security. IOM Burundi also complements this response through camp coordination and camp management activities in internal displacement sites.

HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

Ensuring access to land and land security

Access to land and land tenure security are key for social and economic development and in the assistance of returnees and IDPs. IOM Burundi is supporting the GoB to promote access to safe land and land tenure security to further reduce land-related tensions while continuing to inform communities on the importance of land property. IOM co-leads the sub sector on HLP along with the Ministry of Interior.

MIGRANT PROTECTION & ASSISTANCE

Ensuring protection and restoring dignity

To respond adequately to the protection needs and necessities of beneficiaries, including IDPs, returnees, refugees, victims of human trafficking and gender-based violence, IOM's Migrant Protection and Assistance (MPA) department offers a diverse spectrum of assistance focused on protection and reintegration of the most vulnerable through the prism of individual, household, community and structural approaches. By mainstreaming protection across all its sectors of intervention, MPA aims to improve access to protection knowledge, skills and competencies, products, and services among the partners and targeted populations.

The MPA unit collaborates with the government and civil society organizations to strengthen the national capacity to better respond to and govern numerous migration challenges. MPA is also a member of the Strategic Advisory Group of the Protection Sector, the sub-sector for Child Protection, and for Prevention of gender-based violence (GBV) and the chair of the Anti-Trafficking Working Group.

DISPLACEMENT MONITORING

Tracking internal or cross-border displacement

The DTM is the sole monitoring mechanism in Burundi that gathers and analyzes data to disseminate critical information on the mobility, vulnerabilities, and needs of displaced and mobile populations to enable decision makers and responders to provide better context-specific assistance. It mainly collects data on internally displaced populations, emergency events (natural hazards). The DTM collaborates with the Government of Burundi to coordinate periodical data collection exercises carried out by enumerators and supervisors from the Burundian Red Cross with the support of local authorities who are DTM's main key informants.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Preventing, preparing for and responding to disasters

IOM's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) department, in line with the sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030, aims at advancing mobility-based strategies and resilience in the implementation of its activities. Presently in

Burundi, 91 per cent of total internal displacement in the country is due to natural hazards. The DRR department stemmed from the need for prevention, adaptation and mitigation actions to avert, minimize and address displacement in the context of climate change and disasters. Currently, IOM Burundi undertakes several nationwide actions, including disaster risk mapping, institutional and local capacity building, prevention and mitigation works, to strengthen Burundi's resilience towards climate change.

TRANSITION & RECOVERY

Building locally-driven socioeconomic reintegration and social cohesion

IOM Burundi is building a locally-driven and contextualized portfolio of longer-term development-principled activities in parallel to humanitarian efforts to assist displaced populations. It implements project activities, including infrastructure rehabilitations, cash-for-work modalities and livelihoods support, designed to empower vulnerable populations, especially local communities that host larger numbers of Burundian returnees, mainly in border provinces. In this way, IOM focuses on stabilization and resilience; durable solutions and recovery; transition and peacebuilding; and reducing disaster risk and environmental degradation.

IMMIGRATION & BORDER MANAGEMENT

Improving migration governance via communities

IOM supports Member States in improving the policy, legislation, operational systems, human resources, administrative and technical structures required to respond more effectively to diverse migration and border management challenges. IOM Burundi supports the GoB through the General Commission for Migration within the Ministry of Interior, Public Security and Community Development. It does this by implementing Humanitarian Border Management (HBM) and HBMM interventions across the country's borders with the DRC, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Supporting the establishment of modern and efficient border control posts will facilitate safe and orderly migration of citizens, enhance the relationship between bordering countries, provide protection, and increase the political and socio-economic stability between Burundi and its neighbors.

LABOUR MIGRATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Driving economic growth through migration

IOM promotes the view that migration and diaspora can contribute to poverty alleviation and individuals' growth and prosperity. IOM's Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development outlines a whole-of-organization approach to comprehensively integrate migration and development into policymaking and programming. IOM Burundi is committed to protecting migrants' rights by working with government partners to provide migrants with the services and support they need to become an integral part of their new society.

RESETTLEMENT AND MOVEMENT MANAGEMENT

Helping refugees to resettle to third countries

The safe and dignified resettlement of refugees and other humanitarian entrants requires a comprehensive, humane and protection-oriented approach – one which recognizes the interdependencies of travel, health and integration as integral components. Burundi has become a departure point for many refugees resettling to third countries. IOM Burundi facilitates resettlement by providing transportation, pre-departure medical screening (through its migration health assessment center), cultural orientation, travel assistance and logistical support to refugees.

