

URGENT Requirements to support the Voluntary Repatriation of Burundian Refugees in 2023

November 2023 – June 2024



Refugee families alight from a bus at the Gitara Transit Centre in Makamba. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

Introduction

The East, Horn of Africa, and Great Lakes region and other neighboring countries have hosted a large number of Burundian refugees for many years. Following peaceful national elections in June 2020, Burundian refugees have been returning home. As of 31 August 2023, a total of **220,834** refugees, had been assisted to return since 2017. Approximately 325,000 remain in exile, many of whom are willing to return home. In 2023 alone, 15,633 Burundians have returned home between January and mid-September.

UNHCR had planned to support an additional 23,000 Burundians returnees between September and December 2023 but lacks the financial resources to do so. Additional funding is required to maintain the momentum of voluntary repatriation and ensure that this relatively rare opportunity to support a durable solution is not lost or put on hold.

This note highlights the funding requirements to support the safe and dignified repatriation of Burundian refugees returning from Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and other countries of asylum, and to promote their resilience and sustainable reintegration in Burundi.

Urgent Needs and Activities

The voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees from **Tanzania** started in September 2017. As of 31 August 2023, a total of 153,443 Burundian refugees had been assisted to return home from Tanzania. An increase in returns has been observed since January 2023. It is anticipated that over 15,031 refugees would return from Tanzania between September and December 2023. Support to the returnees includes transport and logistics, documentation, cash grant packages, dry food rations and water, as well as sanitary materials for women and girls.

In **Rwanda**, 325 Burundian refugees were assisted to return to Burundi this year, as of 31 August 2023. An additional 204 refugees wish to return before the end of 2023. The returnees need assistance in the form of transport and logistics, medical screening and medical escort, accommodation before departure, hot meals, and breakfast, stopover costs and maintenance. Additionally, individuals with health conditions require medical care.

As of 31 August, 14,770 Burundian refugees had returned to Burundi from **Uganda**, 570 of whom returned in 2023 with the support of UNHCR. Over 5,430 wish to return between September and December 2023. The support needed by the returnees includes transport and logistics. In addition, they require in-kind support in the form of high-energy biscuits, soda/water, diapers for children and adults (on a needs basis) as well as sanitary materials.

From September 2017 through August 2023, UNHCR has assisted 3,149 Burundian refugees to return from **Kenya**. From January to August 2023, 68 refugees were supported to return to Burundi. At least 552 Burundian refugees wish to return from Kenya before the end of 2023. The support needed for the returnees includes cash assistance, transportation, and logistical support, as well as accommodation at the transit centre.

BURUNDI



Cash assistance

Distribution of cash to returnees in transit centres.



Management of transit centres and distribution of Non-food Items (NFIs)

Hot meals/kitchen and construction of 28 temporary communal shelters each with a capacity of 72 persons. Distribution of NFIs to returnees.



Protection, monitoring and provision of reintegration assistance

Production and distribution of certificates of recognition of repatriation.



Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Improving hygiene and sanitation conditions.

RWANDA



Logistics

Transportation (buses and trucks) as well as luggage management and casual labours.



Cash assistance

Stopover cost and maintenance.



Protection

Documentation, reports (school reports, birth certificates) and Voluntary Repatriation Forms.



Food Security and Nutrition

Provision of hot meals.



Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Accommodation in the departure center (1 night).



Health

Medical screening and medical escort, initial 3-month package for individuals with medical conditions.

KENYA



Logistics

Nairobi: Transportation (flight). Costs range from USD 200 to USD 300 per person.
Kakuma: Transportation (flight). Based on use of a 50-seat chartered airplane at a cost of USD 29,920 per flight. Transport for Covid-19 testing and departure.



Cash assistance

Distribution of cash used for food during transit, pre-departure purchases (luggage, clothes, shoes) and settling of debts etc.



Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Accommodation at the transit centre (1 night).



Protection and Documentation

Documentation

TANZANIA



Logistics

Transportation (Road - buses and trucks) including luggage management and casual labours.



Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Provision of dry ration of food and water. For 2023-women and girls of reproductive age will receive disposable sanitary towels/pads.



Protection and Documentation

Documentation

UGANDA



Logistics

Transportation (buses and trucks) including luggage management and casual labour.



Shelter and Non-food Items (NFIs)

Provision of high-energy biscuits, soda/water, diapers for children and adults (on a needs basis) and sanitary materials.

Funding the response

Financial requirements | November 2023 – June 2024

Country	Outcome Areas	Total requirements USD millions
Burundi	Protection and Assistance	13,919,133.00
Kenya	Protection and Assistance	741,768.00
Rwanda	Protection and Assistance	16,300.00
Tanzania	Protection and Assistance	2,575,000.00
Uganda	Protection and Assistance	1,204,020.00
		18,928,921.00