



THE BURUNDI REFUGEE SITUATION



Introduction

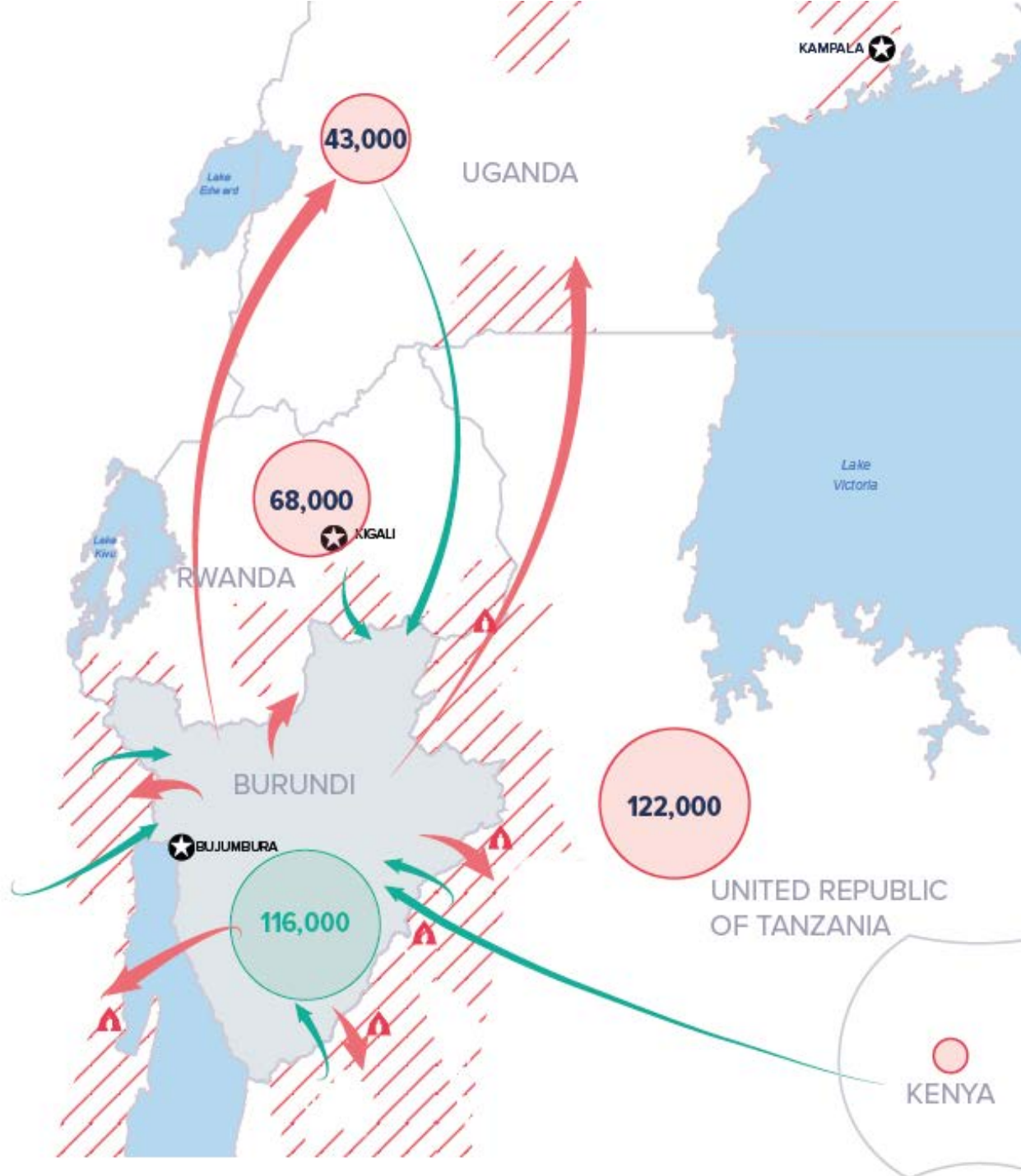
- Entering 5th year since 2015 refugee outflow, **349,000** Burundi refugees are hosted in the region:
 - United Republic of Tanzania – **200,000**
 - Rwanda – **70,000**
 - Democratic Republic of Congo – **43,000**
 - Uganda – **36,000**
- Also in:
 - Kenya – **13,000**
 - Southern Africa (South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia) – **30,000**
- Over **60,000** Burundian refugees have been assisted to return since 2017. Others have returned without assistance.
- New arrivals seeking asylum continue in relatively smaller numbers.
- ***Protracted Burundi refugee population from 1972 and 1990s still in the region – 50,000 to 75,000**



DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC
OF THE CONGO

45,000

- Refugees
- Assisted returns
- Refugee camp
- Refugee crossing
- Refugee returning
- Refugee locations



2019 Planning Figures

394,000 Burundians
to be supported in
2019 thru the Regional
Refugee Response
Plan including:

- **278,000** refugees remaining in countries of asylum by end 2019
- **116,000** projected returnees



Legal and Policy Framework of Asylum Countries

- Most countries in the region have moved from *prima facie* recognition of Burundian refugees to individual status determination.
- All countries have national laws largely in line with relevant conventions.
- Policies range from full freedom of movement to strict encampment.
- Different procedures around the right to work and own businesses.
- Some countries are moving toward full inclusion in national social services.
- Refugees are included in National Development Plans in several countries.
- Countries have started to provide nationally recognized identity documents.
- Legal provisions do exist for formal local integration but have been utilized to varying degrees.



Durable Solutions Prospects

Voluntary Repatriation

- UNHCR is not promoting returns to Burundi at this time.
- Working with the Government of Burundi and host countries to assist voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity for those who have made a free and informed choice to return.
- Since 2017, more than 60,000 Burundian refugees assisted to return voluntarily, mainly from Tanzania, with several hundred assisted to return from Kenya (586) and DRC (88).
- Others returning on their own from Rwanda and elsewhere.
- Up to 116,000 more are projected to return in 2019.
- 11,000 Burundian refugees are signed up and awaiting assistance to return from Tanzania.
- Several hundred in DRC, Kenya, and Rwanda have requested assistance to return.



Durable Solutions Prospects

Tripartite Agreements

- Returns from Tanzania are happening under the framework of a Tripartite Commission and Agreement (signed in 2001 and reactivated in 2017)
- With DRC, Standard Operating Procedures (*arrangements particuliers*) were developed for a group of Burundian refugees repatriated from Lusenda in August 2017. (a Tripartite Agreement from 2009 has not been re-activated)
- Additional tripartite meetings or structured dialogue at technical level with Government of Burundi and other governments would be useful to establish a framework and modalities for the return process.

2017-2018 Voluntary Repatriation

KEY FIGURES – ASSISTED REPATRIATION



58,546*
individuals



19,376
households



98 convoys

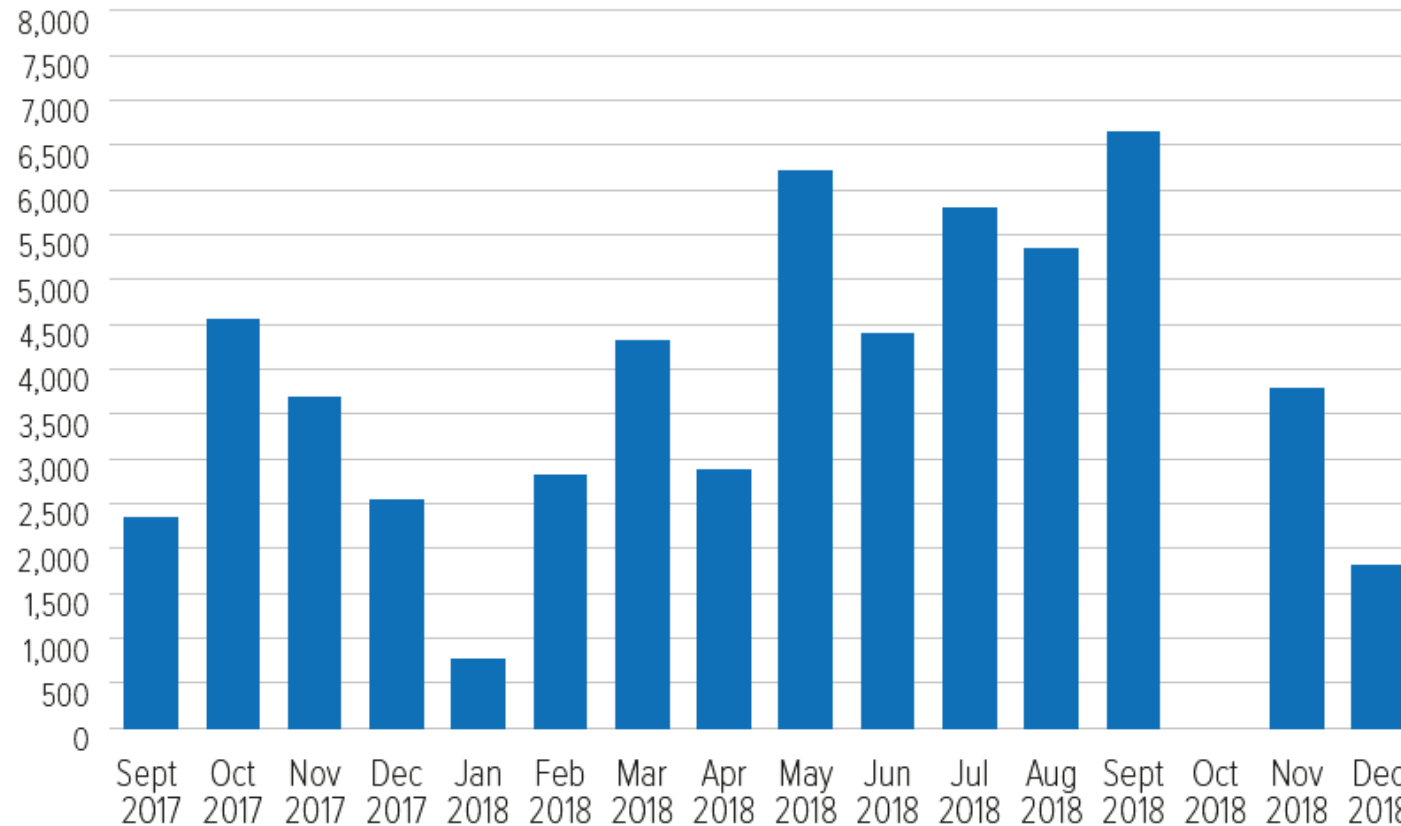


49.4%
male

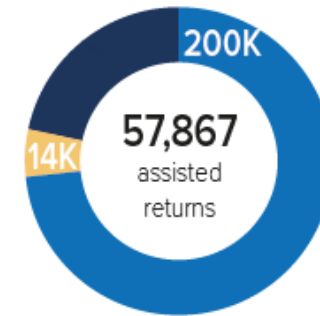


50.6%
female

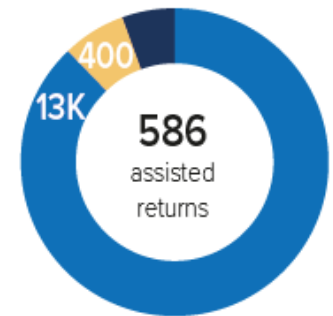
RETURN TRENDS BY MONTH SINCE SEPTEMBER 2017



RETURNS BY COUNTRY OF ASYLUM



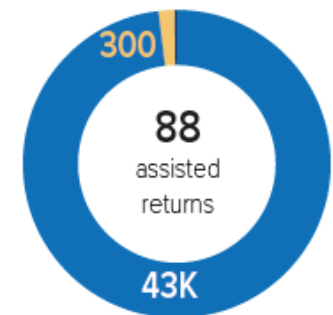
Tanzania



Kenya



Rwanda



DRC

■ # of registered Burundian refugees

■ # of assisted returns since September 2017

■ # of Burundian refugees pre-registered for VolRep



Durable Solutions Prospects (Cont'd)

Reintegration of returnees in Burundi

- Returnees receive a modest return package.
- Returnees are going back to communities that are facing challenging socio-economic conditions.
- Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan to strengthen the resilience of return areas is being finalized, in line with:
 - National Strategy for the Reintegration of Disaster Affected People
 - National Development Plan
- Improvements to returnee monitoring are needed.

Durable Solutions Prospects (Cont'd)

Local Integration

■ In Tanzania:

- Tanzania naturalized 162,000 Burundian refugees who arrived in 1972:
 - Tanzania Comprehensive Solutions Strategy (TANCOSS) developed in 2007
 - Tanzania Strategic Plan for Local Integration of New Citizens (TANSPLI)
- In 2018 an additional 40,455 individuals were verified as members of the 1972 Burundian refugee population.

■ In Rwanda:

- The legal framework makes generous provision for the acquisition of Rwandan nationality by various groups of applicants.
- Government has indicated openness to local integration for some refugees.
- Strategic Plan for Refugees Inclusion (education, livelihoods, urban refugees' access to health insurance, and documentation)
- Joint Government of Rwanda-UNHCR Strategy for Economic Inclusion of Refugees



Durable Solutions Prospects (Cont'd)

Local Integration

■ In DRC:

- Current emphasis is on socio-economic integration through investment in host communities and strengthening of self-reliance programmes.
- Progressive implementation of the “alternative to camps” policy, building on the freedoms and rights established by law.
- Health and education services are integrated into the national system; Joint agriculture initiatives.
- Local integration in a permanent legal sense may be an option in the future.

■ In Uganda:

- Refugees who have remained in Uganda for long periods may qualify for local integration – legal provisions for naturalization provided for in the 2006 Refugee Act and the Citizenship and Immigration control Act.
- Ugandan authorities also considering the possibility of offering alternative legal options, i.e. issuance of special residential permits for refugees with long periods of residence.

Durable Solutions Prospects (Cont'd)

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways – extremely limited

- **In Tanzania:**
 - No Burundian refugee recommended yet for resettlement. Will be considered on an exceptional basis for those with protection concerns (women/girls at risk, persons with albinism, medical cases, etc).
- **In Rwanda:**
 - No resettlement yet envisioned for Burundian refugees.
- **In DRC**
 - No cases submitted in 2018 for resettlement but the identification process is underway. There is also one case in the pipeline since 2015.
- **In Uganda:**
 - A few cases have been assessed for resettlement.
- **In Kenya:**
 - During the last five years, 237 Burundians were resettled; 121 refugees were submitted in 2018. Kakuma intends to submit 50 individuals to the US in 2019.



Concluding Remarks

- The multi-agency response for Burundi refugees is acutely underfunded.
- The UN is working with Governments in the region in line with SDGs (*leaving no one behind*) & the Global Compact on Refugees to mobilize more humanitarian *and* development resources for more equitable burden and responsibility sharing to support the countries hosting Burundian refugees.
- More investment is needed to support the resilience, skills & talents of Burundian refugees:
 - 1) Economically - as producers, consumers, employees or potential employers – to foster self-reliance.
 - 2) Education – not just primary, but secondary and tertiary including distance learning and scholarships.
- UNHCR stands ready to support countries to implement their existing pledges (from the 2011 Ministerial Intergovernmental Event on Refugees and Stateless Persons & 2016 Leaders' Summit on Refugees).
- Prospects for durable solutions should be considered in the preparation of commitments and pledges prepared for the 1st Global Refugee Forum in December 2019.

THANK YOU