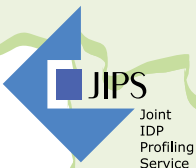




**Profile**  
at a glance

# Burundi



**2012**

*“Once all parties were confident with the methodology, and the fieldwork started, everybody was looking forward to the results.”*

Martin Blaise Bekono, Profiling Coordinator



Following a crisis in 1993 and subsequent fighting between 1995-2008, many in Burundi were forced to leave their homes. Some fled to neighbouring countries and others established temporary settlements in existing communities within the country.

Today, many refugees have returned and a good number of displaced, ex-combatants and demobilized soldiers have also come back to reclaim their homes. As the country moves towards stability, reminders of the crisis years still remain. Once “settled” back home, returnees have realized that their livelihood opportunities and the social fabric they knew has been changed by conflict. Many face permanent insecurity, fearing expulsion.

In response to the challenges many returnees faced in 2010, the Government of Burundi launched a National Reintegration Strategy, validated by the council of ministers in 2012. In order to implement this strategy, it was important for all stakeholders to update their knowledge of the IDP and returnee population. A profiling survey, commissioned by NRC, was intended to inform the development of a policy and to provide stakeholders with an estimate of the displaced and returnee populations, their characteristics and intentions.

# Which methods were used?

The survey implemented sampling methods that aimed to produce accurate population estimates for IDP settlements in Burundi, and to achieve a representative understanding about survey respondents' settlement intentions.

A two-staged process was designed, including an enumeration of all settlement households coupled with

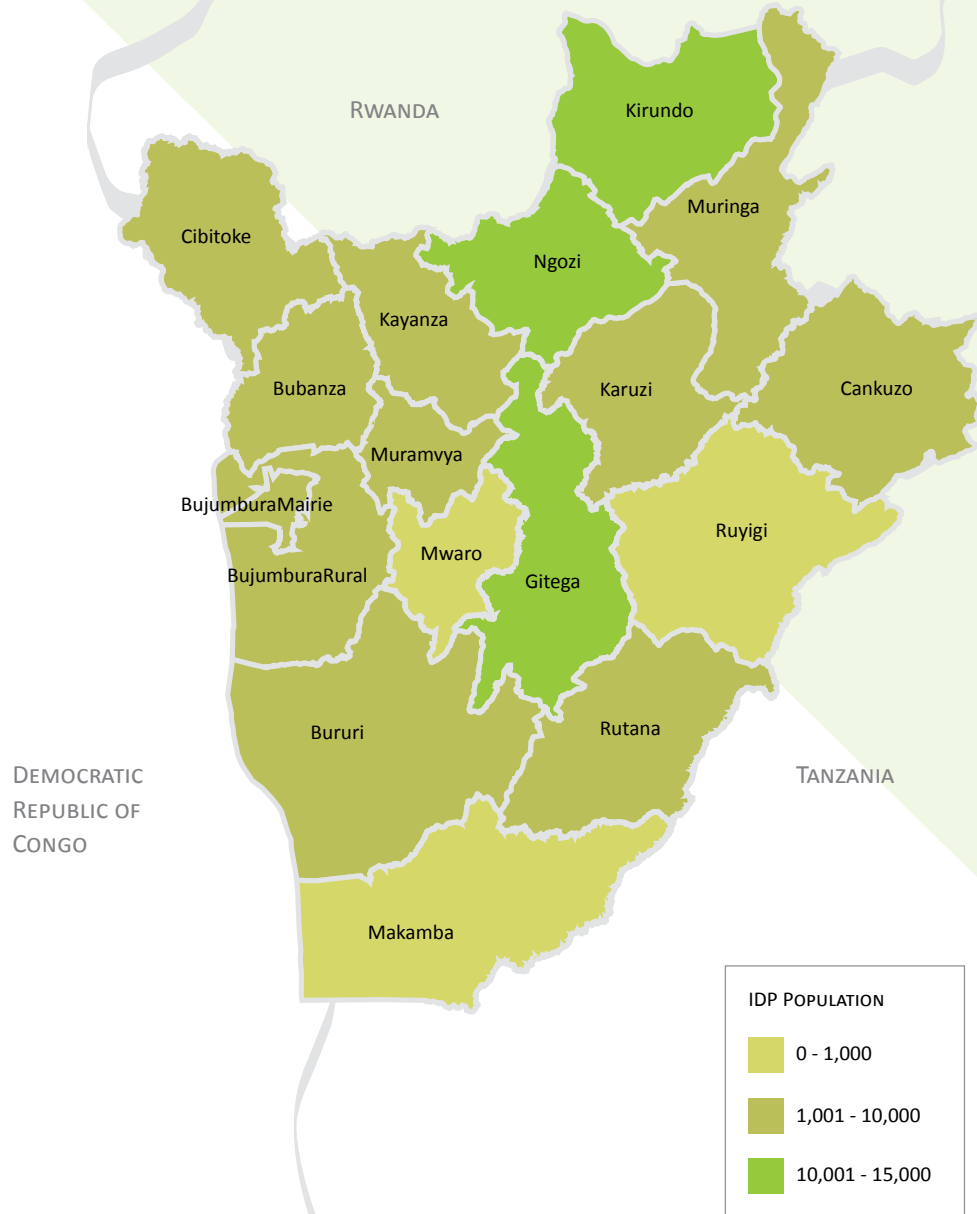
a household survey, and a community questionnaire administered to settlement leaders, as well as focus group discussions with men, women, and children. Planned and implemented in a collaborative manner, the fieldwork activities also included targeted meetings with local authorities on the survey objectives to enhance participation.

**120** IDP settlements surveyed

**2,316** households surveyed

**120** male focus groups discussions

**120** female focus groups discussions



## What was the impact?

- From the beginning, the results of this profiling exercise were to be used in the policy level implementation of the National Reintegration Strategy. Its process allowed stakeholders to come together to identify the key protection concerns related to displacement, under a technical framework. This was a major feat in itself.
- The thematic working group for IDPs in Burundi is using profiling results for their ongoing planning and advocacy activities in the country.

## What were the findings?

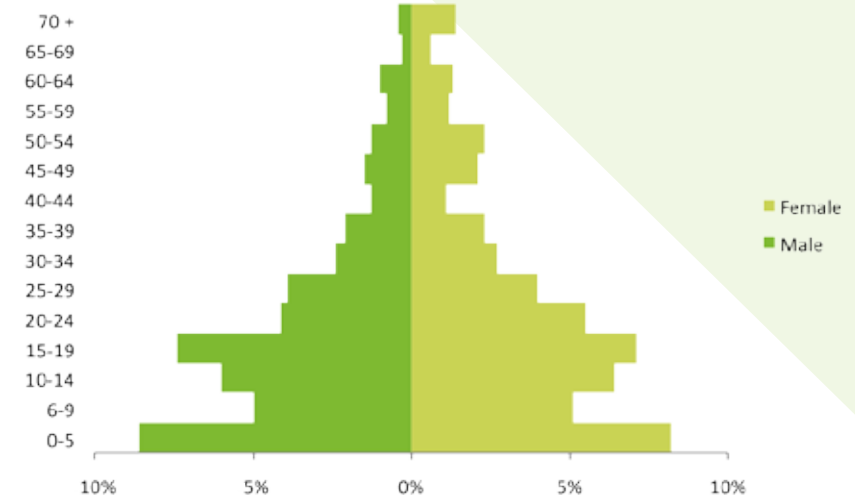
Following inter-ethnic conflict in the 1990s and subsequent fighting between government and rebel forces until 2008, over 19,000 households were displaced and are still living in settlements across Burundi.

From the research findings, it seems that IDPs in Burundi are not ready to return to their place of origin, many preferring to stay in settlements in spite of limited sanitation and low levels of legal documentation of housing tenure.

## Disaggregated numbers

There are between 78,000 to 79,000 displaced persons living in 120 settlements around Burundi. When comparing the IDP population pyramid (figure 1) with that of Burundi as a whole, the difference in shape is clear. Notably, there are less children aged 0-9 among the IDP population, which can be explained by lower birth rates during the times of crisis. There are also fewer men than women over 30 amongst the displaced population, which is sometimes explained by increased war-related mortality.

Figure 1: Burundi IDP population pyramid



## Education

School attendance rates are relatively high with over 80% children aged 6-9 attending school. For 10-14 year olds, this number goes up to 85%. Across the age groups (6-19 years old), it strikes that there is no difference in male/ female attendance rates.

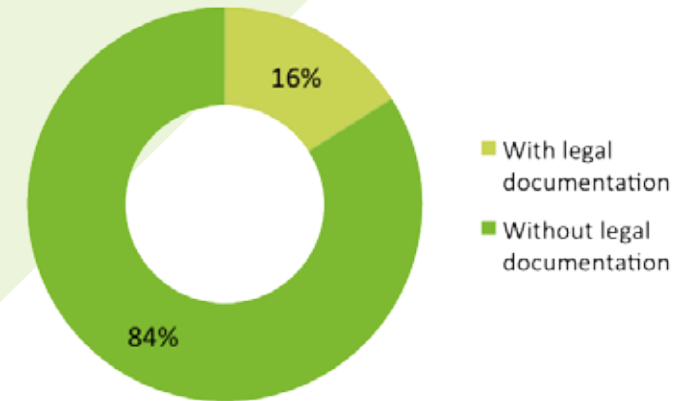
## Livelihoods

Women surveyed were more likely to work in the agricultural sector than men. Of the women that are employed, 83% work in the agricultural sector, while only 54% of men work in this sector. Other sectors that provide employment to men include business/ administration and crafts.

## Housing, land & property

Housing and land issues are contentious in the Burundi context. When the displaced households arrived in their new settlements, 81% of households were provided with a housing solution by the local administration. As figure 2 shows, the majority do not have legal documentation (ie. rental agreement, lease, property deed etc.).

Figure 2: Percentage with and without legal documentation on property status



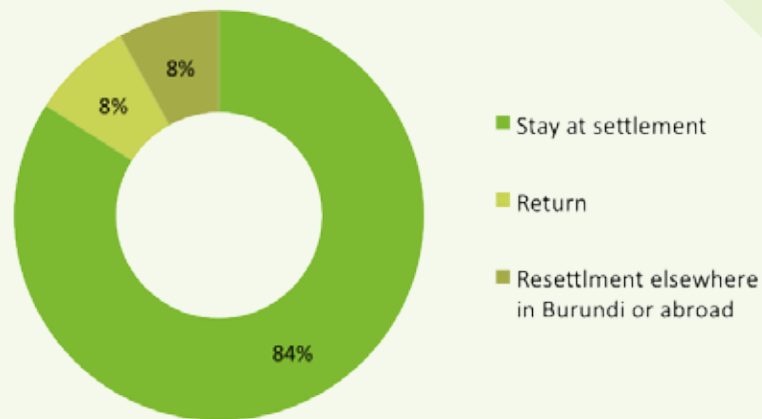
75% of the households have land available to them for cultivation, usually at their place of origin. Whilst overall more men own property for cultivation than women, when comparing female-headed with male-headed households more women (78%) own land than men (73%). This highlights the importance of land and property for female-headed households, who rely even more on land and cultivation to meet their subsistence needs.

9% of all households have experienced conflict over land

# Solutions/ return intentions

According to the survey results, only 8% of all those living in settlements intend to return to their place of origin and 84% prefer to stay where they are (figure 3).

Figure 3: Settlement intentions



Whilst these figures do vary from province to province, it is a significant finding for actors supporting displaced communities to secure solutions. Interestingly, 11% of those who plan to return home plan to do so in the next year. As for incentives that might encourage return, 90% of all surveyed indicated they would return if they received support to reconstruct their houses.

# What were the profiling lessons?

- The profiling process in Burundi and the delays concerning the publication of the report, highlight the importance of undertaking a political risk assessment in advance of implementation. A good understanding of the political dynamics and the different interests of each stakeholder is crucial to facilitating consensus.
- Similar to the profiling of IDP situations in Yemen, 2010, the Burundi results emphasize the importance of understanding beneficiary settlement and return intentions before planning for massive resettlement campaigns. Prior to any type of return planning, the population of concern should be informed about the resettlement/ reintegration process and asked about their preferences.
- The results of this exercise show that socio-economically, IDPs and refugee returnees in Burundi are not a homogeneous community. Agreeing on a definition of vulnerability thresholds would have added insight into the status of these populations of concern so that humanitarian organizations can target assistance.
- Like many short-term humanitarian activities, the profiling process in Burundi suffered from discontinuity of in-country leadership. It therefore demonstrates the importance of devising approaches to leadership and management that can be handed over with relative ease.

The full report, containing further analysis, and the profiling tools can be found at: [www.idp-profiling.org](http://www.idp-profiling.org)  
The profiling data is also available upon request.

This summary provides a glimpse into a collaborative IDP profiling process. Governmental and non-governmental actors contributed to the process, worked together to outline its objectives, to develop its tools, and to collect and analyse the required data.

JIPS supported a process whereby these actors came together to reach consensus on the conditions of displaced communities in Burundi through an internationally endorsed methodology for profiling IDP situations.

This glance into the profile of displaced persons in Burundi hopes to spark interest in both the specific findings of this exercise, and profiling of IDP situations in general.

