VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION OF BURUNDIAN REFUGEES from Tanzania to Burundi

On 31 August 2017 at the Tripartite Commission Meeting for the Voluntary Repatriation of Burundian Refugees in Tanzania, the United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Burundi, and UNHCR issued a joint communiqué and agreed to implement a work plan from 7 September to 31 December 2017, which entailed the voluntary repatriation of approximately 12,000 Burundian refugees who had by then registered their desire to return to Burundi.

The Tripartite Commission also acknowledged that while some refugees may opt to return now, others may still have well-founded reasons for not seeking to return at the present time and will continue to be in need of international protection.

While UNHCR is not promoting voluntary return to Burundi, it is supporting the operation to ensure that returns are based on the principles of voluntariness and informed decisions, and take place in safety and dignity.

In Burundi, UNHCR and partners set up a returnee monitoring framework that includes surveys with returnees as well as interviews with local authorities. In analysing the reintegration status of the returnees, the monitoring also serves as an ongoing needs assessment for further protection and reintegration needs.

OVERALL RETURN FIGURES AND TRENDS

The voluntary repatriation operation took place in two phases between 7 September and 31 December 2017 and a total number of 13,104 refugees (109% of the original planning figure) returned to Burundi in 31 convoys.

MONITORING OF BURUNDIAN RETURNEES IN BURUNDI

UNHCR and Caritas set up a monitoring system with 139 monitors covering all areas of returns. By the 14 January 2018, 3,131 families have been monitored (out of 4,516), which represent 69% of those assisted to return.

For more information please contact:

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