

Burundi



Population: 10,888,321 (July 2012 est.)

Population Growth Rate: 3.104 % (2012 est.)

Birth Rate: 40.58births/1,000 population (2012 est.)

Life Expectancy: total: 59.24 years

male: 57.52 years

female: 61.02 years (2012 est.)

Literacy Rate: total population: 67.2%

male: 72.9%

female: 61.8% (2010 est.)

Net Migration Rate: -0.18migrant(s)/1,000

population (2012 est.)

Unemployment Rate: NA%

Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$6,00 (2012 est.)

Religions: Christian 82.8% (Roman Catholic 61.4%, Protestant 21.4%), Adventist 2.3%, Other 6.5%, unknown 5.9% (2008 census) 23%, Muslim 2.5%

Languages: Kirundi (official), French (official), Swahili (along Lake Tanganyika and in the Bujumbura area)

Ethnic Groups: Hutu (Bantu) 85%, Tutsi (Hamitic) 14%, Twa (Pygmy) 1%, Europeans 3,000, South Asians 2,000

Capital: Bujumbura¹

Trafficking Routes

Human trafficking has been increasing in Eastern Africa over the past decade.² Burundi—bordered by Rwanda, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo—continues to be a source and regional destination country for trafficking in persons.³ Burundi is also a transit country for trafficking to other countries in the area. There have been incidents of Burundi traffickers transporting people from Ethiopia to South Africa.⁴ As a country that has suffered years of civil strife and conflict since 1993, Burundi is also a host to internal trafficking.⁵ Trafficking of children for the purpose of child soldiers is present in Burundi. The

¹ CIA, "World Factbook – Burundi (2013). Available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/by.html>.

² International Organization for Migration, "Human Trafficking in Eastern Africa: Research Assessment and Baseline Information in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi. Available at: Human_Trafficking_in_Eastern_Africa[1].pdf. .

³ Id.

⁴ "Police Hold Two Burundi Nationals, Tanzanian for Human Trafficking." *Daily News: Tanzania's Leading Online News Edition*. Jan. 15, 2013. Available at: <http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/local-news/13652-police-hold-three-for-human-trafficking>.

⁵ "Burundi Civil War." *Global Security :Military*. 2011. Available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/burundi.htm#>. Last accessed: April 4, 2013.

practice of child soldier recruitment is becoming an increasingly common form of trafficking in the country.⁶

Burundi is also a key source country of persons, especially women, trafficked into Kenya for the purposes of forced labor and sexual exploitation.⁷ In recent years, Burundi has also become a source country of women and girls trafficked to Lebanon for the purpose of domestic servitude and prostitution.⁸

Factors that Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

The country's history of civil war and political instability contributes to conditions that aggravate vulnerability of its population, especially women and children.⁹ Tensions between the Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups have been ongoing since the country's independence in 1962. However, since the 1994 assassination of the first Burundian Hutu head of state, this small country has been plagued with a conflict that has cost hundreds of thousands of Burundian lives.¹⁰ Though the Civil War officially ended in 2005, the disputed elections that took place in 2010 and the authoritarian behavior of the new Hutu government have contributed to a renewal of tensions in Burundi.¹¹ Burundi's geographic placement and population structure increases the precarious positions of some of its citizens. In Burundi, half of the population lives below the international poverty line¹² and Burundi was listed as the country with the highest level of hunger in the 2012 Global Hunger Index.¹³ As of 2012, Burundi's population is approximately 8.5 million. Burundi has one of the highest population densities in Africa and the world with over 257 people per square kilometer.¹⁴ With a growth rate of about three percent a year, Burundi's population is on track to double in the next two decades if it remains unchecked.¹⁵ Moreover, Burundi has been a destination for thousands of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, with as many as 6,000 refugees crossing the border from eastern Congo to Burundi between January and October 2012, according to the estimates United Nations Refugee Agency¹⁶. This brings the total number of Congolese refugees residing in Burundi to over 35,000.¹⁷

Burundi has one of the poorest economies in the world and ninety percent of the population relies on subsistence farming for survival. In addition, the country lacks a robust

⁶ The World Bank. "Social Development Notes: Conflict, Crime and Violence." No. 122, Dec. 2009. Available at: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEVELOPMENT/Resources/244362-1239390842422/6012763-1239905793229/Human_Trafficking.pdf.

⁷ "Burundi Trafficking in Persons." *Index Mundi*, Available at: http://www.indexmundi.com/burundi/trafficking_in_persons.html . Last accessed: April 4, 2013.

⁸Id.

⁹ *Supra* "Burundi Civil War", Global Security

¹⁰ BBC Monitoring, "Burundi Profile." *BBC News: Africa*, Nov. 29, 2012. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13085064>..

¹¹ Id.

¹² Id.

¹³ Irin: Humanitarian News and Analysis, "Burundi: Towards Greater Food Security." Oct. 29, 2012. Available at : <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/96592/BURUNDI-Towards-greater-food-security>.

¹⁴ Id.

¹⁵ Id.

¹⁶ UNHCR. "Burundi Struggles to Cope with Congolese Influx." Oct. 24, 2012, Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/5087e9c66.html>.

¹⁷ UNHCR. "Burundi: 2013 UNHCR Country Operations Profile." Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45c056.html>.

private sector and there are few jobs available.¹⁸ Conditions of extreme poverty like those that exist in Burundi lead to children dropping out of school to work or beg on the streets. Such children are highly vulnerable to trafficking.

Burundian women often face discrimination and serious violations of women's rights.¹⁹ Violence against women is common, and Burundian legislation discriminates them by preventing women from having the same fundamental rights as men.²⁰ The embedded system of patriarchy and the lack of gender equality make Burundian women particularly vulnerable to being trafficked.²¹

Forms of Trafficking

Most Burundians are victims of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, domestic work and child soldiering. Child soldiers are recruited because they are easily manipulated due to their physical and emotional immaturity. Burundi's political instability and poverty make it easier for armed groups to separate children from their families and recruit or kidnap them into soldiering.²² Young girls, as well as boys, were vulnerable for trafficking during the civil conflict and many were kidnapped as "wives" for the soldiers. These girls, some younger than twelve years old, were subjected to rape by the soldiers and forced to perform domestic tasks.²³

Burundian girls and women trafficked to Lebanon are often victims in 'an intricate dragnet' that uses Congolese passports.²⁴ The girls and women are misled into believing that they are immigrating to Europe for better work opportunities but end up enslaved and exploited as maids, gardeners, or prostitutes.²⁵

Government response

In 2009, the government adopted a revised penal code that addressed UNSC Resolution 1612, which calls for member states to protect children from armed conflict. In the revised legislation, the recruitment of children less than 16 years old is a war crime.²⁶

¹⁸ IRIN: Humanitarian News and Analyses, "In-depth: More to it than just land-Lessons from Burundi." Nov. 21, 2012. Available at: <http://www.irinnews.org/Report/96788/In-Depth-More-to-it-than-just-land-lessons-from-Burundi>.

¹⁹ OMCT: World Organization Against Torture. "Violence against Women in Burundi: The UN Confirms Concerns of OMCT and ACAT." Feb. 7, 2008. Available at: <http://www.omct.org/violence-against-women/urgent-interventions/burundi/2008/02/d19126/>.

²⁰ Id.

²¹ Id.

²² Mt. Holyoke. "Information About Child Soldiers." Available at: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~aelapine/ChildSoldiersInfo.html>. Last Accessed: April 5, 2013.

²³ Amnesty International. "Stories from Children Associated with Fighting Forces." Available at: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/issues/children-s-rights/child-soldiers/stories-from-children-associated-with-fighting-forces>. Last Accessed: April 5, 2013.

²⁴ "Burundian's Ordeal in Lebanon." *BBC News*. 27 June, 2007. Available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6241214.stm>.

²⁵ Id.

²⁶ "Progress in protecting Burundi children affected by conflict." Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. 13 March 2007. available at: <http://www.crin.org/resources/infoDetail.asp?ID=12788>.

Currently, inciting the prostitution, debauchery, or corruption of persons of either sex is prohibited. Punishment is a fine and imprisonment for 3 months to 5 years. The penalty may be increased to 10 years in cases involving a minor under the age of 21.²⁷ The penalty applies irrespective of the consent of the victim to the debauchery or prostitution. The code penalizes any person who by threat, duress, trickery, or any other means, impedes the prevention, control, assistance, or reduction efforts to aid persons in danger of becoming prostitutes. Punishment is a fine and imprisonment for 6 months to 5 years.²⁸

Exploiting prostitution is also a criminal act. Exploiting prostitution includes operating, managing, or financing a house of prostitution²⁹ and sharing in the profits from the prostitution of another person, whether that person is a minor or an adult.³⁰

Facilitating prostitution, which is aiding, assisting, or protecting the prostitution of others or soliciting for the purpose of prostitution, is punishable by a fine and imprisonment for 3 months to 3 years.³¹ Similarly, facilitating prostitution by serving as an intermediary between persons regularly engaging in prostitution and others who exploit or remunerate the prostitution of others is prohibited.³² The code also prohibits facilitating prostitution by leasing any premises for the purpose of prostitution.³³

The code lists several aggravating circumstances, which are punishable by an enhanced punishment. Aggravating circumstances include cases in which the offense is committed against a minor below the age of 18; against a nonconsenting person; by threats of violence; by sexual perpetrators or accomplices; by a parent, grandparent, or servant of the victim; by a person having authority over the victim; or by a public employee or clergyman.³⁴

Any offense against public decency that is committed against a minor (below 18) and that involves deception or threats of violence is punished by 5 to 15 years' imprisonment.³⁵

In 2004, Burundi's then-state prosecutor sent a commission to Lebanese judicial authorities regarding the trafficking of Burundian girls and women to Lebanon, where they are forced into slavery or become victims of other exploitation. The prosecutor's action prompted human rights groups to call for state action.³⁶ Burundian courts were investigating the trafficking of girls and women to Lebanon in 2007.³⁷

Nongovernmental and International Organization Responses

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has worked closely with Burundi and Tanzanian officials since the end of the civil war to repatriate over 8,000 Burundian refugees

²⁷ *Loi N°1 / 05 du 22 Avril 2009 portant Revision du Code Penal* [Burundi], Loi N°1 / 05, 22 April 2009, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/4c31b05d2.html> [accessed 10 April 2013].

²⁸ *Supra.* Burundi Article 374.

²⁹ *Supra.* Burundi Article 375.

³⁰ *Supra.* Burundi Article 376. The punishment for the offense is a fine and imprisonment for 1 to 5 years. The same punishment applies to any person who receives subsidies from any person who regularly engages in prostitution.

³¹ *Supra.* Burundi Article 377.

³² *Supra.* Burundi Article 378. The punishment for the offense is a fine, imprisonment for 1 to 3 years, or both.

³³ *Supra.* Burundi Article 379. The punishment for the offense is a fine, imprisonment for 1 to 3 years, or both.

³⁴ *Supra.* Burundi Article 380.

³⁵ *Supra.* Burundi Article 382.

³⁶ *Supra.* "Burundian's Ordeal in Lebanon

³⁷ *Id.*

in Western Tanzania to the United States and other countries.³⁸ The NGO hopes that by moving these refugees, it will help combat the trafficking of these individuals.

Several NGOs have also worked to create annual reports on the treatment of women and children in Burundi as well as ensuring that steps are made to protect women and children from potential traffickers.³⁹ CEDAW has worked with Burundian officials to ensure that affirmative actions are taken against violence against women.

Other active NGOs in Burundi include the Human Rights Watch and Action Aid.⁴⁰ These organizations have worked both in Burundi and in the international community to try to combat trafficking in the country.

UNICEF has also worked in Burundi focusing on education, victim care, and relieving poverty. This work has become important as the links between education, poverty, and trafficking become more apparent.⁴¹

Multilateral initiatives

In July 2006, Burundi joined an agreement with 25 other African countries to counter trafficking in persons, especially children and women for the purpose of forced labor and prostitution. The Action Plan, the product of a one-day meeting on trafficking held in Abuja, Nigeria, aims to improve border control, documentation of citizens, funding in those two areas, and sensitize people to the problem of trafficking.⁴²

Burundi is a member of both the Peace and Security Commission of the African Union and the East African Union (joined February 2008 and June 2007, respectively).⁴³ Burundi's membership in the East African Union involves signing protocols on intelligence exchange, joint operations, and the customs union, which will eventually ease restrictions on the movement of people within the region with the use of one passport.⁴⁴

INTERPOL, the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Co-operation Organization (EAPCCO) and the South African Police Service met in August 2007 and discussed during the first day how they might better work together to fight trans-border crimes.⁴⁵

Burundi's relationships with China and the United States have implications on the country's infrastructure development – and possibly, its trafficking problem. Three schools

³⁸ International Organization for Migration. "Burundi." 2011. Available at: <http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/africa-and-the-middle-east/east-africa/burundi.html>. Last Accessed : April 10th, 2013..

³⁹ CEDAW, "NGO Report on Violence Against Women in Burundi," January 2008. Available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/acatomctburundi.pdf>.

⁴⁰ UNICEF. "Evaluation Report: 2010 Burundi." *UNICEF Evaluation Database*. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_67790.html. Last Accessed: April 10th, 2013.

⁴¹ Id. .

⁴² Goujon, Emmanuel. "African states sign up to fight human trafficking." *Agence France Presse*. 7 July 2006. Available at www.lexisnexis.com.

⁴³ "Burundi; National Council Calls On Govt to Pay More Attention to Security Issues." *Africa News/Burundi Réalités*. 2 February 2008. Available at: http://www.burundirealite.org/news_flash.cfm?ID=2198. Last Accessed April 10th, 2013.

⁴⁴ "East Africa; Rwanda, Burundi Join East African Union." *allAfrica*. Available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200706180019.html> . Last Accessed: April 10th, 2013.. 17 June 2007. Available at www.lexisnexis.com.

⁴⁵ INTERPOL press release. INTERPOL. Accessed online on 12 May 2010. Available at <http://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News-media-releases/2010/PR031>.

supported by China were built in 2008: the primary school is called “Sino-Burundian School of Friendship.”⁴⁶ As of 2013, China is increasing aid to Burundi and the two nations are strengthening political and diplomatic ties.⁴⁷ The schools’ construction fall under the framework of a plan outlined at a recent Beijing summit on Sino-African cooperation.⁴⁸ The United States tripled its aid to Burundi from less than \$10 million to \$28.6 million, to be channeled through USAID.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ BBC Monitoring International Reports/text of report by Burundi news agency ABP. 10 January 2008. Available at www.lexisnexis.com.

⁴⁷“Burundi: China, Burundi Vow to Push Forward Ties.” *allAfrica*. Sept. 3, 2012. Available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201209060237.html>

⁴⁸ *Supra*. BBC Monitoring International Reports. I.

⁴⁹ “US to triple aid.” *Burundi Realites*. 13 December 2007. Available at www.lexisnexis.com.