

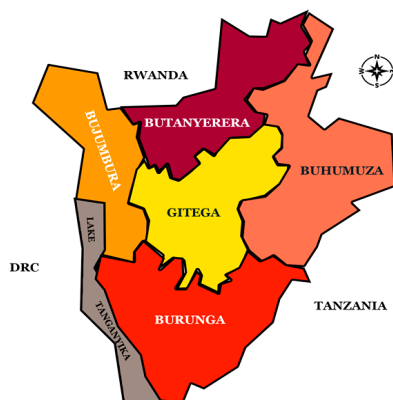


BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS “ITEKA”

Anyone should be respected

Approved by Ministerial Statutory Instrument Nr.530/0273 of November 10th,1994
revising Order Nr.550/029 of February 6th, 1991

REPORT OF THE BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA" ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURUNDI DURING THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2025



In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwizera, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to September 28, 2025, at least 838 victims of enforced disappearance have been documented by the Iteka League, at least 85 victims have reappeared, and 753 victims are still missing. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) has already communicated to the government of Burundi about at least 252 victims¹.

¹<https://docs.un.org/fr/A/HRC/57/54>

The Iteka League:

- ♦ "Is a member of the Inter-African Union for Human and Peoples' Rights (UIDH), is an affiliate member of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH).
- ♦ Has observer status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights under reference number OBS.236 and is a member of ECOSOC.
- ♦ It is decentralized into 17 federations and 32 sections."

TABLE OF CONTENT

0. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT.....	1
I. CONTEXT.....	2
I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT.....	2
I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT.....	3
I.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT.....	4
I.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT.....	5
I.5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT.....	6
II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....	6
II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE.....	6
II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE.....	6
II.1.2. KIDNAPPED AND/OR MISSING PERSONS.....	8
II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY.....	9
II.2.1 TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT..	9
II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/RAPE.....	10
II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY.....	11
II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS.....	11
III. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....	12
III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.....	12
III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION.....	13
III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH.....	14
IV.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	15

ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

UNGA	: <i>United Nations General Assembly</i>
BRARUDI	: <i>Burundi Brewery and Soft Drink Company</i>
CEEAC	: <i>Economic Community of Central African States</i>
CNDD-FDD	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy</i>
CNIDH	: <i>Independent National Human Rights Commission</i>
CNL	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
DESC	: <i>Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</i>
DRC	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
ECOFO	: <i>Elementary School</i>
FDLR	: <i>Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda</i>
FRODEBU	: <i>Front for Democracy in Burundi</i>
ISABU	: <i>Burundi Institute of Agricultural Sciences</i>
OBPE	: <i>Burundi Observatory for Environmental Protection</i>
OPJ	: <i>Judicial Police Officer</i>
PNB	: <i>Burundi National Police</i>
SNR	: <i>National Enquiry Service</i>
TGI	: <i>High Court</i>
UN	: <i>United Nations</i>
UPRONA	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>
VSBGs	: <i>Sexual and Gender-Based Violence</i>

0. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

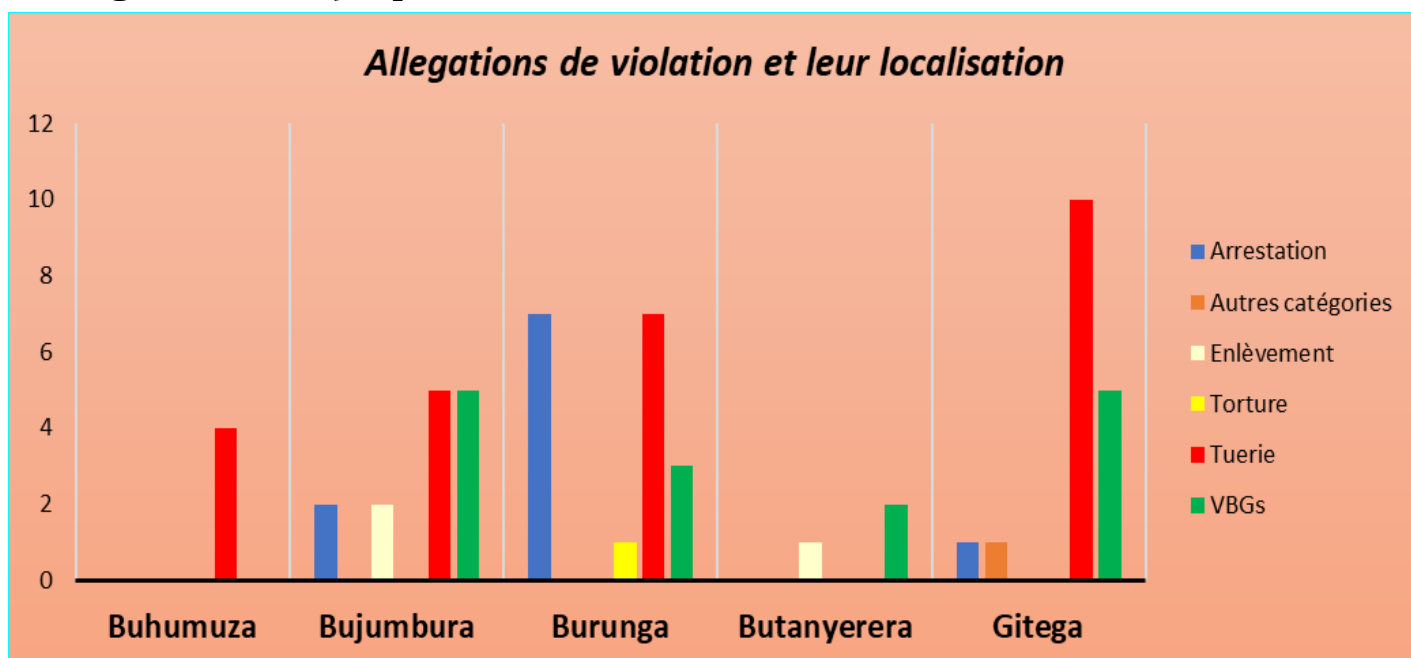
This monthly report for September 2025 is a summary of the weekly Iteka n'Ijambo bulletins from issues 490 to 493. It covers the political, security, judicial, humanitarian, and environmental context that marked this period. It also reviews civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights. The report concludes with a summary and recommendations.

The civil and political rights situation during the period covered by this report can be summarized as follows: 26 people were killed, 1 person was tortured, 3 people were abducted, 15 people were victims of gender-based violence, including 5 underage girls who were raped, and 10 people were arbitrarily arrested and detained. It should be noted that a minor drowned in the river on his way home from school.

Imbonerakure, police officers, administrative agents, SNR agents, and soldiers are identified as the alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations and murders.

0.1. Mapping of reported violations and their alleged perpetrators

Figure 1: Graph illustrating the main human rights cases observed in Burundi during the month of September 2025

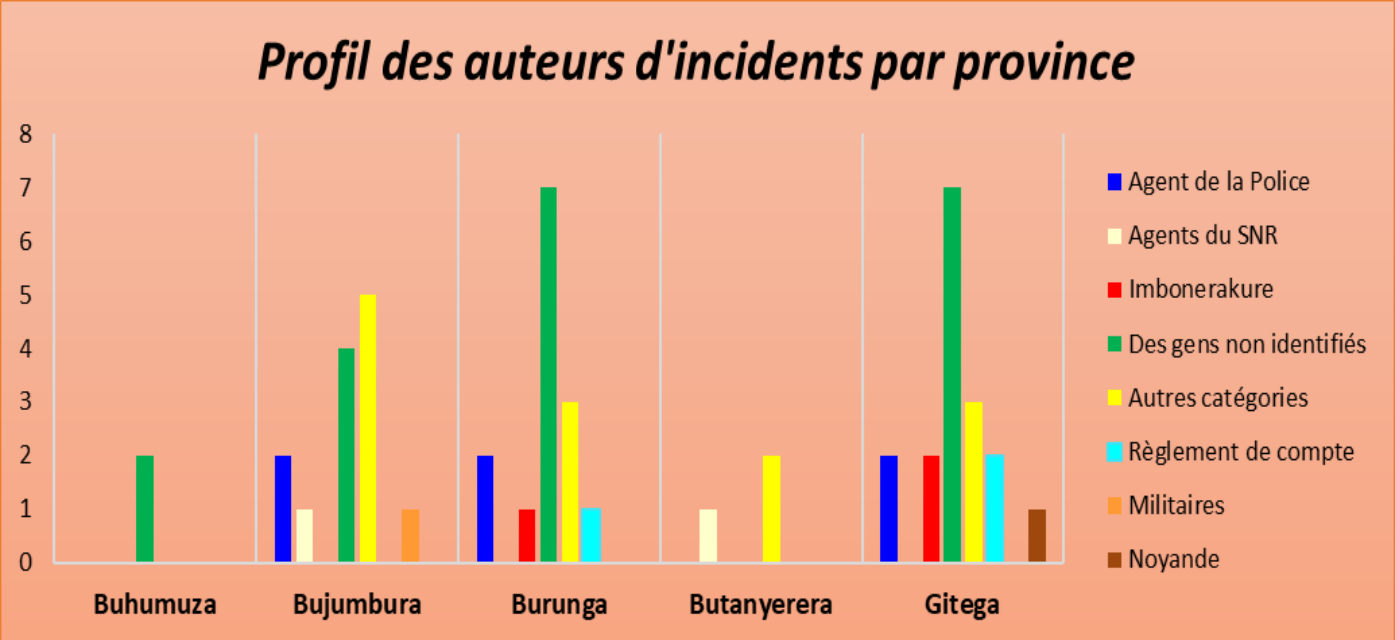


The graph above illustrates the five categories of violations in the five different provinces of the country, with Gitega experiencing the most allegations of human rights violations with 17 cases, followed by Bujumbura with 13 cases, Burunga with 12 cases, Butanyerera with three cases, and finally Buhumuza with two cases.

Thus, during the month of September 2025 covered by this report, the Iteka League recorded 47 cases of alleged civil and political rights violations throughout the country. These alleged human rights violations resulted in 56 victims and are broken down as follows: 26 people killed, 3 cases of abduction, 15 victims of gender-based violence, including 5 underage girls who were raped, 1 case of torture, 10 people arbitrarily arrested, 1 victim of torture, and 1 child who died by drowning.

The province of Burunga stands out as the most affected, with a total of 18 victims (including 7 intentional homicides, 3 cases of GBV, 7 cases of arrest, and 1 case of torture), followed by the province of Gitega with 17 victims of human rights violations (including 10 homicides, 1 case of arrest, and 5 cases of GBV). In third place is Bujumbura with 14 victims, including 5 victims of GBV (including 3 cases of sexual violence against women), 5 people killed, 2 victims of abduction, and 2 people arrested.

Figure 2: Graph illustrating the main alleged perpetrators of civil and political rights violations observed in Burundi during September 2025



According to the graph, out of 47 cases of violations involving 56 victims (graph 1): 6 cases of violations were committed by police officers, 2 cases by SNR agents, 3 cases by Imbonerakure youth, 2 cases by administrative agents, and 20 cases by unidentified individuals; 3 cases were acts of revenge, 1 case involved the drowning of infants, 1 case was committed by soldiers, and 13 cases fall into other categories involving private individuals, traders, and domestic violence, including gender-based violence.

I. CONTEXT

I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

The political context in Burundi during September 2025 proved particularly complex, characterized by several key elements. President Évariste Ndayishimiye's participation in an extraordinary session of ECCAS on September 7, 2025, brought together leaders from the region, including influential figures such as Félix Tshisekedi and Faustin-Archange Touadéra. Discussions addressed various challenges, including the security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where conflicts with armed groups persist, a call for the immediate implementation of UN resolutions, and the increased importance of regional integration through various stabilization processes.

In addition, Burundian Ambassador Ezéchiel Nibigira was appointed chair of the ECCAS Commission for a renewable five-year term, as part of a drive to strengthen democratic governance and promote regional stability.

A significant political event was the expulsion on September 5 of Davis Leyssens, director of ENABEL, by the Burundian government. This decision was motivated by the sharing of a critical article on the fuel crisis in the country. The expulsion sends a clear signal, demonstrating a desire for government censorship and raising concerns about respect for fundamental rights, particularly freedom of expression. ENABEL, as a key development partner for Burundi, is particularly affected, and organizations such as the Iteka League have expressed concern about these actions, calling on the international community to act to protect human rights and support development.

On the legislative front, on September 11, the National Assembly unanimously approved an amendment to the law establishing the Independent National Human Rights Commission (CNIDH), signaling a consensus on the need to reconfigure this institution, which recently underwent a renewal of its membership. However, this reform raises doubts about the independence and effectiveness of the CNIDH due to the lack of diversity in its leadership and its close ties to the ruling party, the CNDD-FDD.

Local incidents, such as intimidation and land confiscation on Giharo Hill, also illustrate political tensions. The violence observed against members of the UPRONA party in Musongati highlights the dangers faced by opponents, exacerbating human rights issues and increasing mistrust of local authorities.

At the same time, the appointment of administrative officials in the commune of Cankuzo has been marked by concerns about transparency and the excessive influence of the CNDD-FDD party on the administration, prompting criticism among the local population who question the impartiality of governance.

The gap between official rhetoric on peace and the need for sustainable development and the reality of violence and human rights violations reflects a growing dissonance within Burundian society, complicating efforts to build trust and foster genuine dialogue between the government and the people.

1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT

September 2025 was marked by various incidents affecting security in Burundi. First, an internal conflict within the CNDD-FDD, which arose during the local elections on August 25 in the commune of Gisuru in Buhumuza province, led to violence. Two party members, Richard Sinibagiye and Esron, were involved in a quarrel that resulted in Richard being injured and requiring medical evacuation. Richard's inability to pay the \$5 million medical bill confirmed the socio-economic difficulties faced by the victims. Although Esron was temporarily detained, he managed to escape, suggesting a failure on the part of the police.

At the same time, the province of Gitega has seen an increase in cattle theft, mainly in the Kayokwe area. Reports indicate that trucks are being used to slaughter and transport these stolen animals, using clandestine methods to avoid detection. This situation is exacerbated by the nighttime theft of empty bottle crates, revealing a climate of growing insecurity.

Another security concern has been observed in Kaburantwa, where military convoys have been reported. These movements, accompanied by a large deployment of troops, seem to point to preparations for military operations, possibly in response to local and regional threats. Reports on the composition of these troops, which include Rwandan elements and young CNDD-FDD militants, raise questions.

on geopolitical implications and regional stability.

Border areas, particularly with Rwanda, have also seen military reinforcement, raising fears of a potential escalation of tensions. Allegations that soldiers are being sent to counter armed groups, including the M23, are indicative of a broader strategy to ensure national security, but they raise concerns about the welfare of soldiers faced with broken promises.

A tragedy also unfolded in Kibira, where a landslide killed 14 gold miners, raising fears about the safety of mining operations. Efforts by the military to cover up the incident may reflect a culture of impunity and a lack of protection for workers' rights.

Violence in land disputes, such as that targeting a mother and her daughter in the commune of Cibitoke, reveals a rise in domestic violence, exacerbated by the slowness of judicial investigations. Land disputes seem to be increasingly turning into physical violence, leading to instability in communities.

The evictions of farmers in the Kaboya plain, under the pretext of security, also highlight worrying power dynamics. Accusations of collusion between farmers and rebels point to underlying socio-economic tensions, exacerbated by the involvement of the Imbonerakure and senior administrative officials in these evictions. The lack of legal protection for farmers demonstrates a critical need for reforms in conflict management.

Finally, the administration's activities in the Musongati commune, involving a curfew, appear to be a mechanism for maintaining control rather than a genuine security measure. This situation is increasing fear among the population, highlighting the potential for abuse of power under the pretext of security.

Overall, these developments underscore a period of growing tensions, where the combination of internal conflicts, violence, and military operations, coupled with fragile governance, is paving the way for widespread insecurity in Burundi.

1.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT

The judicial context in Burundi in September 2025 was marked by significant events. Frustrations were expressed by litigants in Bururi and Matana due to the absence of judicial services during the judicial recess in August 2025. Although field visits were organized to enforce judgments, fuel shortages prevented them from taking place. The Bururi court dealt with only 4 out of 55 cases, while Matana managed 8 out of 32 and Vyanda 20 out of 40. The courts in Mugamba, Songa, and Rutovu had no activity to report due to a lack of fuel.

Another problem arises at the Kayanza court, where traders are often arrested and subjected to nighttime court proceedings, forced to pay bribes for their release. The charges against them range from unjustified price increases to prohibited practices, raising concerns about judicial transparency and impunity. Regarding the murder of Thérèse Bimenyimana in Bubanza on September 7, 2025, six assailants were convicted, highlighting community tensions and testing judicial effectiveness. Although the decision is welcomed, it reveals a general feeling of bitterness towards a justice system perceived as slow.

In Burunga province, protests against injustice are disrupting the UPRONA party, notably in the case of Elias Kagoma, a farmer threatened by government officials who are abusing their authority to evict locals. A similar dynamic can be observed.

with Théoneste Juma, another member of UPRONA, pointing to worrying political violence in the region, where a climate of intimidation prevails.

Finally, the transfer of Sandra Muhoza to Ngozi Central Prison fuels the debate on the safety of journalists and freedom of expression in a tense political climate. The charges against her, related to state security, illustrate the risks for those who criticize the authorities. Overall, recent events in Burundi reveal a complex judicial system, where corruption, impunity, human rights violations, and a lack of resources create a difficult environment for citizens and political actors.

1.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

During September 2025, Burundi experienced serious humanitarian events, particularly in Bujumbura, where a large-scale police operation targeted Congolese refugees, especially in Cibitoke. Starting on September 8, police forces collaborated with the Imbonerakure to intercept refugees who had arrived after February 15, following instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Operations were reported at several border points, such as Gasenyi-Buganda, where 152 refugees were arrested on the first day, followed by 426 the next day. In other localities such as Nyakagunda and Rubuye, an additional 578 refugees were forced to flee. Movement restrictions were imposed by police forces, blocking roads and surrounding houses. The authorities offered refugees the choice of either joining official UNHCR camps or returning to Uvira in the DRC. One refugee expressed fear of living in camps deemed uninhabitable, while an anonymous police source raised concerns about links between some refugees and armed groups such as the M23, threatening Burundian security.

The return to Uvira has become problematic due to a blockade by Wazalendo fighters, leaving hundreds of refugees stranded in Gatumba in precarious conditions, without food or security. Their presence in unofficial areas fuels socio-economic tensions, exacerbated by the perception of unbalanced international aid. Returning refugees to an unstable region of the DRC raises concerns about the violence they may face there, while their detention in Gatumba is leading to a humanitarian crisis. The continuation of these operations could intensify tensions between the Burundian authorities and Congolese refugees. Mediation involving the UNHCR and regional organizations is essential to prevent a humanitarian disaster on the border between Burundi and the DRC.

On September 19, another operation in Munyika led to the arrest of 152 refugees, violating their fundamental rights under international law regarding freedom of residence. Refugees have reported inhumane living conditions in transit sites, without assistance for over a week, calling on Burundian authorities to respect their international commitments. They oppose transfer to the Rutana refugee camp because of its deplorable conditions. Refugees who remain free live in fear, being hunted down where they felt safe, preferring to return to the DRC rather than survive in degrading conditions.

1.5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

In Burundi, September was marked by worrying environmental incidents, particularly in the municipalities of Mwaro and Nyabihanga, where more than 189 hectares of forest and pastureland were burned between July and August, causing enormous environmental and economic losses. The OBPE attributed this to reckless agricultural practices and acts of vandalism, while local authorities point to impunity as exacerbating the situation. The ISABU site in Gisozi lost more than 60 hectares, impacting research and conservation. Fires are often the result of poorly controlled burning, and irresponsible use of fire could lead to disasters. Arrests remain ineffective, with suspects often released due to political influence, fueling a sense of abandonment among the population. The consequences are being felt with the reduction of grazing land and the threat to crops, prompting residents to call for sanctions to deter such behavior. Fires are becoming a recurring tragedy, raising questions about the responsibility of local authorities in prevention.

In the Vugizo area, environmental protection is precarious in the face of bush fires, exacerbated by a lack of preventive measures and personnel. Since September 10, 2025, the Nkojima reserve, created as part of a World Bank project, has been ravaged. These fires are destroying thousands of trees, causing risks of erosion and drought. In addition, the sale of juice in plastic containers raises environmental concerns, threatening to pollute the hills. It would be essential to involve juice producers in plastic waste management efforts.

In the commune of Matana, torrential rains and strong winds have damaged about fifteen houses and numerous fields, plunging residents into despair. Schools in Muheka have also been affected, creating a need for emergency aid for the residents affected. Officials, aware of the destruction, are calling for solidarity and government assistance to restore dignity to the affected families.

II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Burundi is one of the countries that acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1965) and its Optional Protocol (1976) without reservation on May 9, 1990. As part of its implementation, Burundi has taken measures in its domestic legislation, notably in its Constitution of June 7, 2018 (Main Law) in its Article 19, which guarantees that all rights proclaimed and guaranteed by duly ratified international texts are an integral part of this constitution. Implementing texts have been put in place, notably the Criminal Code of December 29, 2017, and the Code of Criminal Procedure of May 11, 2018, and other institutions for the protection of human rights in Burundi have been created.

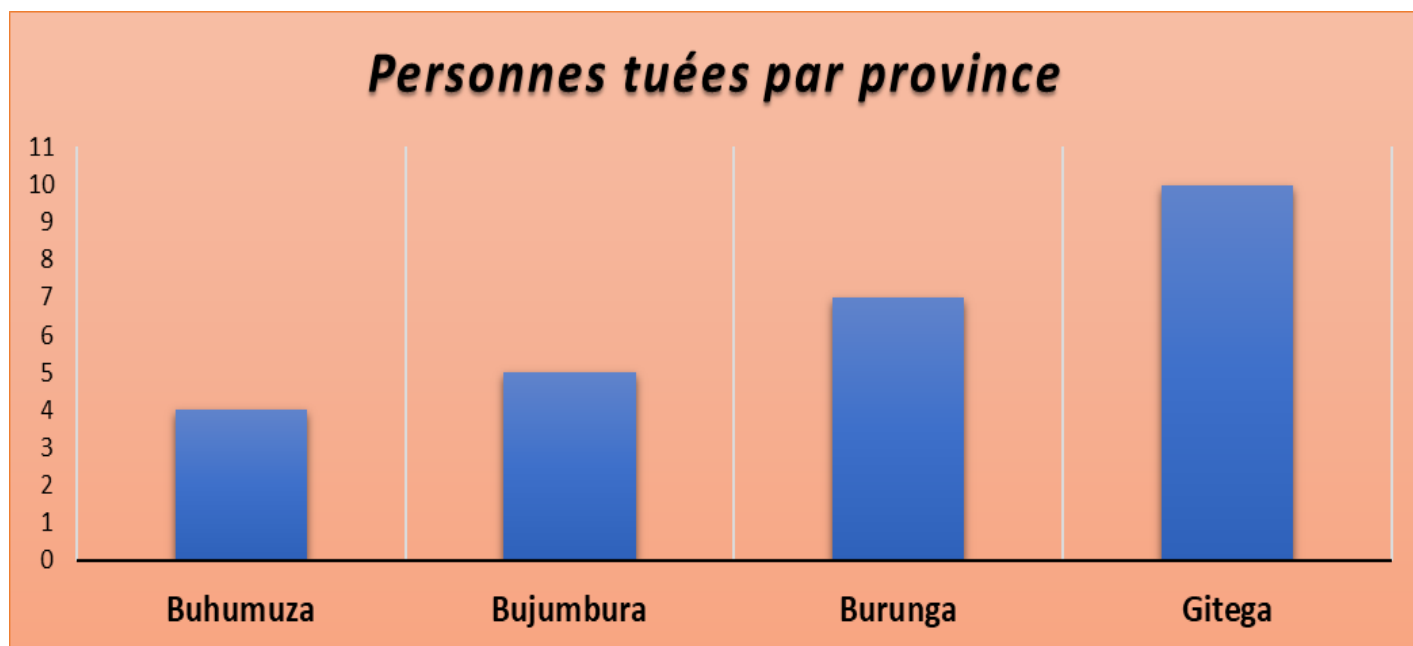
II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE

During the period covered by this report, a total of 26 cases of intentional homicide were recorded by the Iteka League throughout the country. Of the victims, 22 were men and 4 were women.

Of these cases, 23 allegations of homicide involving 26 victims, 17 people were killed by unidentified individuals and/or found dead; One case was attributed to the military, three were settling of scores, one was a person killed by the police, one was a body found, two were settling of scores, one was poisoning, and one was a woman killed by her husband.

The provinces most affected are Gitega and Burunga, with 10 and 7 victims respectively. Bujumbura comes in third place with 5 victims, followed by Buhumuza with 4 victims.



Illustrative examples :

Ex1 : On September 2, 2025, at around 5 p.m., on Nyabisaka hill, Ntobwe hill, Gitega commune and province, Rémégie MUREKAMBANZE, a native of Rweza hill, Mungwa area, motorcycle driver, and activist for the pro-Agathon Rwasa CNL party, was shot 22 times and killed by Butoyi Elie, a police officer who had just arrested him. According to local witnesses, the victim was with his friend Irakoze Sarathiel in a bar owned by Nzayumaze Pascal, a shopkeeper who also owns a store. The shopkeeper asked Rémégie and his friend for 87,000 Burundian francs, and they refused, asking instead for a bill for what they had consumed.

The shopkeeper then contacted police officer Butoyi Elie, reporting that a member of the CNL was causing trouble. The police officer, accompanied by a colleague, arrived and ordered the two young men to get on two motorcycles to take them to the police station in the Mungwa area for questioning. Rémégie Murekambanze was arrested by the police without prior explanation and was taken away on a motorcycle. He then asked the police officer who was transporting him on the motorcycle to stop for a moment so that he could buy some phone credit to tell his family that he had been intercepted. According to the same witnesses, the police officer did not accept this request and, after a brief discussion, shot Rémégie Murekambanze 22 times, killing him instantly. The victim's body was recovered by the vehicle of the administrator of the commune of Gitega, Dr. Jacques NDUWIMANA, to be taken to the morgue of the Gitega hospital, and the police officer had already fled.

Police officer Manirakiza Dismas wrote in his report that the police officer had fired because the victim had tried to grab his weapon, but this version of events is disputed by all the witnesses present, who claim that it was a premeditated murder.

Ex2 : Early in the morning of September 16, 2025, a lifeless body in an advanced state of decomposition was found on Gabiro-Ruvyagira hill, in the Rugombo area of Cibitoke commune. The victim, an unidentified man, had apparently been brutally executed before being abandoned in the bush.

According to initial evidence gathered at the scene, the victim's throat had been slit and the body covered with grass, as if to conceal the crime. Investigators believe that the man had been dead for several weeks, given the state of decomposition. The neck was even found separated from the rest of the body, a sign of a particularly brutal killing. A police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: "It is likely that criminals murdered him before abandoning him in the bush. For the moment, we have no concrete evidence to work with. It is a murder without a name."

The macabre discovery quickly fueled fear and outrage among residents. Many fear that this crime will not be solved and are calling on the authorities to act without delay. "We want to know the truth. This is not the first time such crimes have been reported here, but too often the investigations are unsuccessful," said an outraged resident near the scene of the crime.

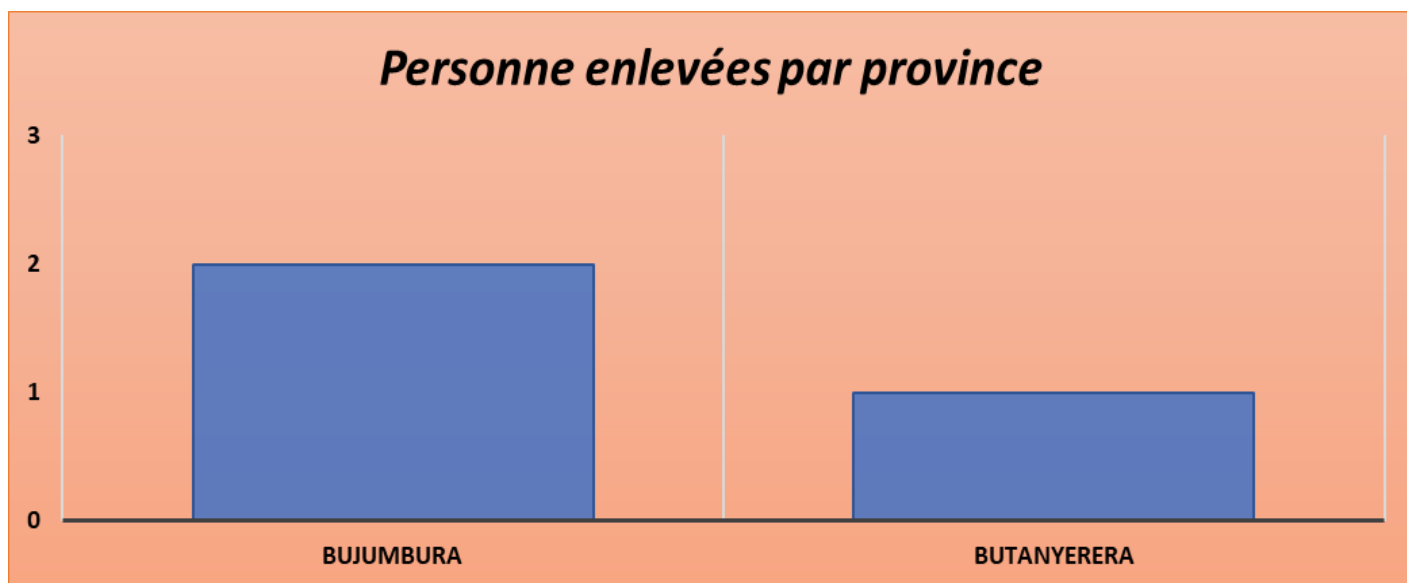
For the population, this is clearly a premeditated murder. Some even fear that this murder is linked to score-settling or wider violence in the border region of Cibitoke, which is regularly plagued by insecurity.

The municipal administrator, Éloge Najeneza, confirmed the discovery of the body and assured that the police had already opened an investigation.

II.1.2. PERSONS ABDUCTED AND/OR REPORTED MISSING

The Constitution of Burundi guarantees all individuals a fair trial, as well as a hearing and judgment within a reasonable time, as stipulated in Article 38.

The Iteka League has recorded three cases of abduction, all involving men: two cases in Bujumbura province and one case in Butanyerera involving a Rwandan soldier abducted across the border between the two countries. Two of the victims were abducted by SNR agents and one by unidentified individuals.



Illustrative examples :

Ex1: *On September 26, 2025, a young man named Thierry Niyomwungere, aged 24 and residing in Gikoto, in the Musaga district of Bujumbura, in the province of Bujumbura, was abducted from his home.*

According to our sources on the ground, at around 5:00 a.m., three individuals dressed in civilian clothing arrived at his home, knocked on the door, and asked him to come out. Thierry opened the door without delay. As soon as he stepped outside, they immediately grabbed him by force, dragged him away, and took him to a vehicle they had hidden nearby.

The vehicle in question was a white double cab with tinted windows and no license plate, which immediately left the scene for an unknown destination. Thierry's family fears for his safety.

Ex2: *Information received on September 23, 2025, indicates that a former Burundian soldier named Audace Icoyitungiye was reportedly kidnapped on September 21, 2025.*

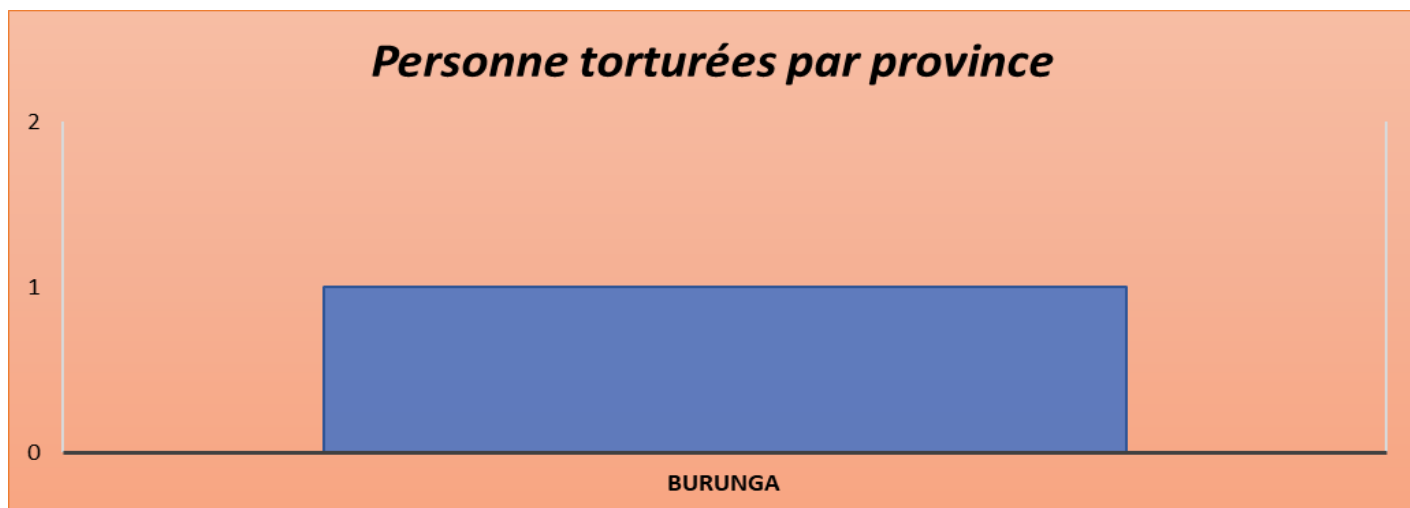
According to our sources, Audace is originally from Nyamiyaga hill in the commune of Gisozi, formerly in the province of Mwaro, now part of the new province of Gitega. He worked at the hospital called “Kwa Binagana.” He is married and currently resides in Mutakura, in the commune of Ntahangwa, province of Bujumbura. At around 4 a.m., Audace Icoyitungiye was returning from a prayer meeting in the Ngagara camp. He was accompanied by his young child. When they reached the Nyabagera bridge, near the place called “Kwa Komine,” on the road leading to Mutakura, he was frequently answering his phone, with someone asking him where he was. At that moment, a police van with no license plate arrived. It was carrying three police officers in the back and two in the front. The police officers grabbed him and forced him into the van. The van, which had been traveling towards Mutakura, then turned back.

His family searched for him in the Cibitoke area prisons and at the intelligence service in Bujumbura, near the Regina Mundi Cathedral, but in vain.

II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY

Article 21 of the Burundian Constitution stipulates that “No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.” In addition, Law No. 1/04 of June 27, 2016, on the protection of victims defines the rights of victims and provides for measures to protect their physical and mental integrity. This clearly demonstrates the country's commitment to protecting the physical integrity of its citizens.

II.2.1. TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR



In total, one case of torture was recorded by the Iteka League throughout the country during the period covered by this report. This case was attributed to police officers in Burunga province. The victim is a young man from a family that supports the UPRONA party.

Illustrative cases :

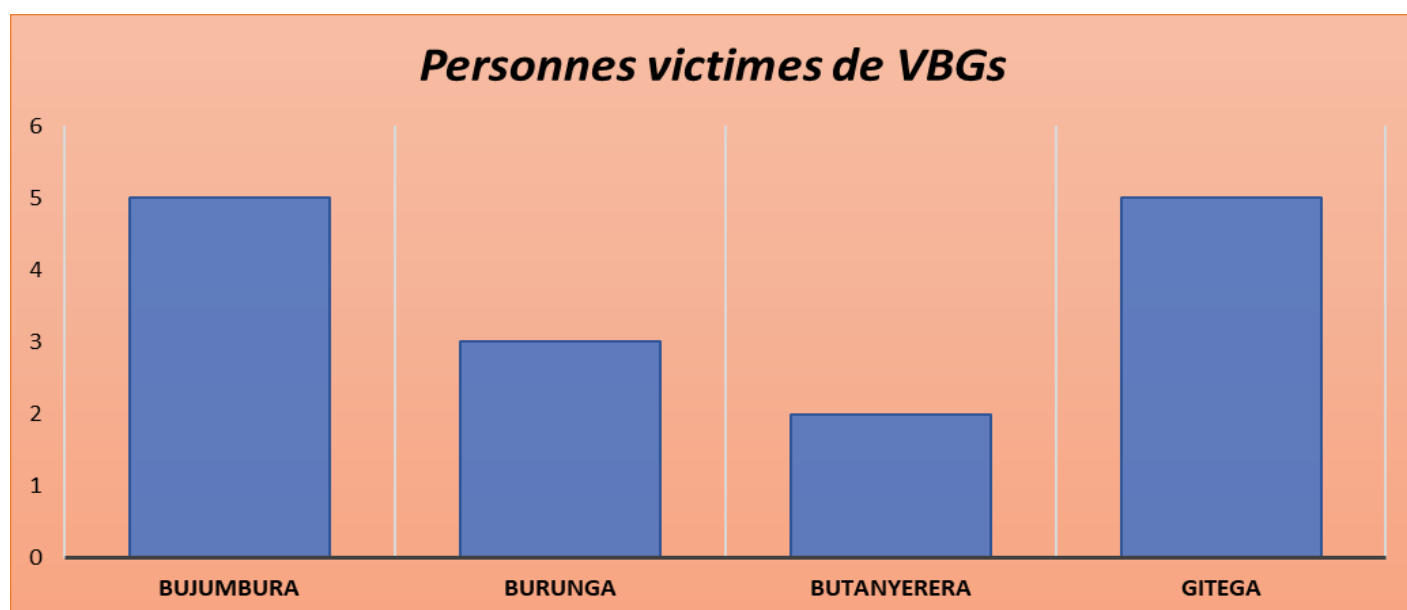
Ex1: *On September 4, 2025, on the hill and in the Gakungu area, Musongati commune, Burunga province, Olivier Twigumanire, aged 17, was beaten by police officers J. Baptiste Niyongabire and Jonas, son of Maheshwa, Imbonerakure from the same Gakungu hill, with sticks and whips.*

According to local sources, Olivier Twigumanire, whose mother is the regional head of the UPRONA party, was tortured and accused of stealing gasoline from Ruwaya, a merchant who sells this product on Gakungu hill and the surrounding hills. However, the act was committed by a known thief in the area named Franck, who fled as soon as he heard that young Olivier had been captured.

According to the same sources, after being tortured, the victim, Olivier Twigumanire, was forced by the police officers in the area, along with the local chief, civil registrar Barahekenywa J. Claude, and the Gakungu zone chief, Login, who was recently appointed as the head of the Gakungu zone, Musongati commune, Burunga province, forced him to pay a sum of four hundred and sixty thousand Burundian francs (460,000 BIF) for this gasoline merchant. As a result, in order for Olivier to be released from the case, he sold the plot of land given to him by his father. His older brothers, Sylvain Nkunzimana and Donatien Manirakiza, who tried to intervene by asking for help here and there, were arrested by police officers from the Gakungu hill station and put in the Gakungu station jail located in the capital of the Gakungu area, Musongati commune, Burunga province.

II.2.2. GBV/RAPE

During the reporting period, the Iteka League recorded 15 cases of victims of GBV, including five cases of underage girls who were raped. Among the victims were four men and 11 women, including the five girls who were raped. The provinces of Bujumbura and Gitega were the most affected, with five cases each. Burunga and Butanyerera had three and two cases, respectively.



Of the 15 cases of GBV/rape recorded nationwide, two were committed by members of the Imbonerakure, 12 were committed by individuals (including shopkeepers, domestic workers, and neighbors of the victims), and one was committed by an unidentified person who escaped after the crime.

Illustrative examples :

Ex1: On September 10, 2025, at around 6 p.m., on Magamba Hill, in the Buhiga area of Karusi commune, Gitega province, Nyanziiriye, a 40-year-old member of the CNDD-FDD, struck a neighbor, Nshimirimana, aged 43, while she was with her husband, Ndayisenga, in a bar on the hill. People who witnessed the scene noticed that the husband did not react, which surprised the woman.

Frustrated, the next day, September 11, 2025, she decided to report him to the chiefs of her hill, who then summoned the attacker. They listened to him the next day, and he justified his actions by saying that he was acting on a mission entrusted to him by the woman's husband. He explained to the chiefs that Ndayisenga, the victim's husband, had consulted a witch doctor to find out how to make his wife obey him. When the chiefs questioned her husband, he denied everything and was ordered to pay 20,000 Fbu, while the man who had struck her was ordered to pay 30,000 francs to the victim.

Example 2 : *Information received by the Iteka League on September 24, 2025, indicates that a minor girl named I. D. D. was raped on September 15, 2025, by Léopard Ntirampeba, a 24-year-old man.*

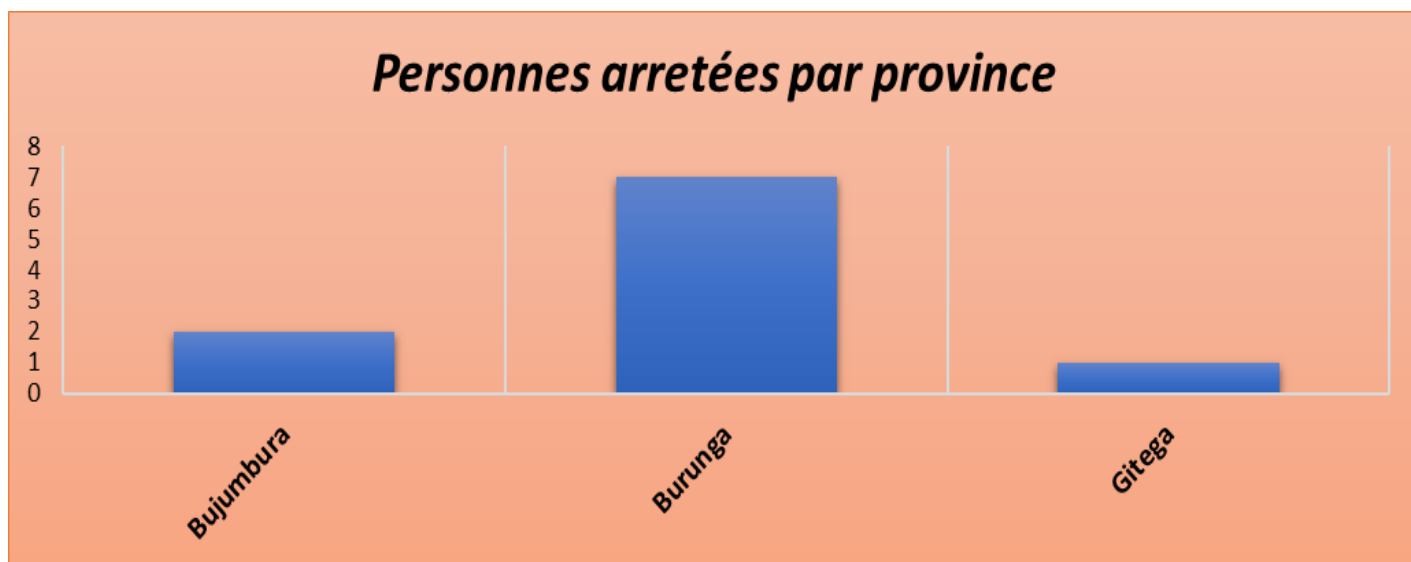
According to local sources, Léopard Ntirampeba lured the girl by offering her a ripe banana before taking her to a bush on Nkuba hill in the Gitaza area of Muhuta commune, Bujumbura province. It was there that he committed the heinous act, without fear or remorse. The victim, a child with mental health issues, reportedly told her mother about the incident, who then examined her clothes and discovered traces of blood on her underwear. Alarmed by this discovery, the mother informed the local authorities and community leaders. Thanks to the mobilization of young Imbonerakure, affiliated with the ruling party, the suspect was arrested on September 16, 2025. He was first detained in the Gitaza area jail, then transferred to the communal police station jail in Rumonge.

After his hearing, the case was taken under advisement before the court handed down its verdict on September 24, 2025.

The court found Léopard Ntirampeba guilty of rape and sentenced him to life imprisonment. He was also ordered to pay 10 million Burundian francs to the victim as compensation for the harm suffered.

II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY

II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS



A total of four cases of arrests involving ten victims were recorded throughout the country during the period covered by this report. The province of Burunga recorded seven victims, including four men and three women. In Bujumbura, two men were arrested, and the province of Gitega recorded one victim of arrest. Of these four cases, one was committed by the SNR and the other three were attributed to police officers.

Illustrative examples:

***Ex1:** On September 3, 2025, in Nyakabiga, Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, at around 5 p.m., Norbert Rucabihari, a journalist for the online media outlet Buja 24, was arrested while in a bar. He was apprehended by individuals who were looking for him, armed with his photo, and then taken by taxi to the headquarters of the National Enquiry Service (SNR) in Rohero, near the Regina Mundi Cathedral.*

According to sources who followed the case, he was questioned about information published by the Net Press newspaper concerning the war in eastern DRC. He was cleared after proving that he no longer worked for that media outlet and presenting his press card. Many wonder whether Net Press journalists are being targeted by the SNR. This incident highlights a procedural flaw, as press offenses are first dealt with by the National Communication Council before being transferred to the courts. This is evidence of a regression in freedom of expression and opinion in Burundi.

***Example 2:** Since September 2, 2025, on Nzibariba hill in the Buhiga region of Karusi commune, Gitega province, Népomuscène, a 34-year-old member of the CNDD-FDD, has been arrested and imprisoned by the Buhiga regional police. According to local witnesses, the reason for his imprisonment is that he called the husband of the deceased Edith, who was found dead on September 1, 2025, on the same hill. According to his relatives, while the deceased was shouting in a drunken state, Népomuscène, her close neighbor, called her husband to inform him of what his wife was doing as she was preparing to leave with their two young children. Under pressure from the brothers and other members of the deceased's family, the police had to arrest this man for questioning.*

III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Economic, social, and cultural rights, known as second-generation rights, are set out in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. Burundi ratified this covenant on March 14, 1990, and incorporated it into its 2018 Constitution, notably in Article 19. A distinctive feature of these rights is that they are often realized progressively, unlike civil and political rights. Signatory states, including Burundi, undertake to guarantee the exercise of these rights in accordance with their available resources.

III.1. DISRUPTION TO ECONOMIC LIFE

In Burunga province : corn spoilage in storage sheds, a problem with no solution

Farmers, who had invested so much effort, were left with tons of unsold corn, which was inevitably going to spoil. Their frustration with the government's inaction and lack of solutions was palpable. However, Nestor Ntahontuye, the Prime Minister of Burundi, visited the province of Burunga on September 24, 2025, where he hosted a meeting with provincial administrators and senior officials. During this meeting, he emphasized the importance of agriculture and livestock farming for the country's development. He also promised an exemption on all imports in the areas of agriculture and livestock farming.

In the Giharo area, farmers, encouraged to invest in maize cultivation, demonstrated that the national agency ANAGESSA had not kept its purchase promises. Désiré Hakizimana, a local official, mentioned that only one of the seven planned warehouses was full, with the rest of the maize rotting due to a lack of buyers.

One farmer complained: “I harvested 10 tons, but it's all rotting. How can we start again if the government doesn't keep its commitments?” In addition, the ban on exports to Tanzania, which offered a better price, added to the farmers' anger. They wondered why they were being denied the right to sell abroad. Many believed that the government should at least allow exports with taxes, avoiding a “double embargo” of non-existent buyers and bans.

Their frustrations were compounded by the slowness of banks in granting credit and interest rates that were considered exorbitant, making it impossible to invest in better techniques. Several called for the creation of insurance to protect against losses due to climate or market hazards. Faced with all these urgent problems, Nestor Ntahontuye remained vague, offering no concrete solutions and claiming that the export ban was due to unspecified “irregularities.” This sparked reactions from the audience, summed up by one participant: “If the state does not change, crises will continue to occur.”

III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Parents' concerns about the results of the National Competition have grown considerably. At a landmark meeting on August 28, 2025, the Burundian government revealed the pass rate for 9th grade students, which was only 70 out of 200, or 35%. In public boarding schools, the requirements are even stricter, with a minimum score of 98 out of 200 (49%) required. This announcement has raised serious concerns about the quality of education, especially given numerous reports of poor learning conditions for students and their schools.

It seems crucial that the government establish an adequate learning environment. In Burunga province, the situation of Twa children is particularly dire, forcing them to leave school due to the shortcomings of the Merankabandi program. In this region, approximately 65% of the population lives in poverty, with the Batwa particularly affected. Manassé Bigirimana highlights the lack of support and the repercussions of poverty, which manifest themselves in problems such as prostitution and school dropouts. The rising water level of Lake Tanganyika further complicates the situation by damaging infrastructure.

The Merankabandi program, which covers 250,000 households, is proving insufficient for the most disadvantaged communities. Michel Nyabenda himself acknowledged the limitations of available resources and expressed his desire to increase the monthly aid, currently set at 36,000 Burundian francs. Families are struggling to meet their basic needs, prompting calls for greater social support at a workshop in Burunga on September 10, 2025.

New problems have also emerged regarding the recruitment of teachers in Burunga. Anomalies were identified during recent selection exams, with some candidates denouncing cases of favoritism, thereby compromising the transparency of the process. In addition, cases of using false documents to obtain points have been reported, as well as inappropriate behavior, such as the use of phones during exams, threatening the integrity of the system. Provincial authorities have warned of severe penalties for such fraud, while aggrieved candidates are calling for investigations to ensure fairness.

September 15, 2025 marked the start of the school year, but dramatic incidents took place at Mwaro I Municipal High School. The principal, in a controversial decision, expelled eight students who had failed, justifying this by citing their previous reluctance to attend his remedial classes. This raised questions about the fairness of the process, as one of the students who was ultimately admitted was perceived to be close to the ruling party.

In the province of Bujumbura, a scandal erupted in Mugere over recruitment fraud, where sums of money were allegedly requested in exchange for better grades. Fraudulent certificates were issued, prompting a wave of complaints from the population, who are demanding investigations to restore justice in the educational process.

The alarming conditions in Karurama, in the commune of Cibitoke, continue to cause concern. In primary schools I and II, overcrowded classrooms and a lack of teaching materials are causing serious concern. Students often find themselves sitting on the floor, making learning difficult. The principal has expressed an urgent need for new buildings and educational resources. This problem of overcrowding is an urgent issue at the national level, jeopardizing the future of children and calling into question the quality of education. But so far, promises of reorganization to remedy these difficulties remain unfulfilled.

III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH

In Burundi, September proved to be a tragic month, marked by alarming violations of the right to health, particularly in the municipalities of Mwaro and Nyabihanga. In these neighborhoods, health centers are desperately short of medicines, leaving many patients in uncertainty and despair. Doctors, forced to limit their assistance to simple consultations, advise patients to buy their treatments at pharmacies, while some indifferent staff members prefer to chat outside. Meanwhile, a cholera epidemic is worsening in the municipalities of Cibitoke and Bukinanyana, where more than 220 cases have been reported since the beginning of the month, exacerbated by a lack of access to drinking water and inadequate sanitation infrastructure.

The health centers, overwhelmed by the situation, are receiving support from Doctors Without Borders (MSF), but this remains insufficient in the face of the explosion of cases. The chief medical officer in Cibitoke confirmed a total of 226 cases between September 4 and 18, including 84 patients admitted to the Rugombo cholera center. While 130 recovered patients have returned home, reports reveal a real crisis in the supply of drinking water. Many water fountains have not been working for weeks, forcing families to turn to polluted rivers, often contaminated with pesticides.

Living conditions are alarming, marked by a lack of adequate sanitation infrastructure, leaving many families without proper latrines and exacerbating the spread of infection. Hills such as Mparambo, Rubuye, and Kagazi are experiencing a particularly difficult situation. Medical teams, supported by MSF, are working to contain this growing crisis, while authorities and humanitarian organizations are being called upon to redouble their efforts. According to the latest information from the Ministry of Health, as of September 18, no fewer than 1,014 cases of cholera had been reported, with 906 patients declared cured, while 102 cases remain active.

At the same time, the province of Gitega is experiencing an alarming shortage of medicines in public health facilities. Long waiting times and limited access to vital treatments are forcing many patients to return home without care, while private pharmacies offer a wide range of medicines at prices that are unaffordable for the most disadvantaged. This tragic situation, combining a shortage in the public sector and the high cost of private healthcare poses a serious threat to the health of many people in Burundi and contributes to the deterioration of the health of the most vulnerable, which can lead to inevitable tragedies.

IV. CONCLUSION ET RECOMMENDATIONS

During the period covered by this report, the deterioration of the human rights situation continues to be observed in different parts of the country.

This report notes cases of violations of the right to life; physical integrity and liberty; and economic, social, and cultural rights.

The report also lists issues related to security events as well as the political, judicial, humanitarian, and environmental context prevailing in the country.

It also addresses civil and political rights and economic and socio-cultural rights regarding their disruption and expresses concern. The Iteka League condemns the impunity of the crimes observed and recommends the following:

To the government of Burundi :

1. To ensure respect for human rights, including the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom.
2. To take measures to end the impunity of crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable for their actions.
3. To guarantee access to basic services, including water, healthcare, education, and justice, for all citizens.
4. To put an end to the abuses by overzealous administrators who commit acts of violence against those under their authority.

To the EU and other technical and financial partners of Burundi :

1. To support the efforts of the Iteka League and other human rights organizations in monitoring human rights violations in Burundi.
2. To use their influence to compel Burundian authorities to respect human rights and put an end to impunity.