

# BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS “ITEKA”

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

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF ITEKA LEAGUE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURUNDI 2025**



*Uwo uri wese ubahirizwa*

*In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwigera, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to December 31, 2025, at least 851 victims of enforced disappearance have been documented by the Iteka League, at least 86 victims have reappeared, and 767 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 victims<sup>1</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup><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."

## LA NOUVELLE CARTE ADMINISTRATIVE DU BURUNDI



## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>0. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>I. CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>I.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>I.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>I.5. HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>I.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>I.7. ECONOMIC CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>I.8. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.1.1 VOLUNTARY HOMICIDES.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>II.1.2. KIDNAPPINGS AND/OR MISSING PERSONS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>II.2.1. ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENTS OR TREATMENTS.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/ RAPE.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>II.3. RIGHT TO LIBERTY.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>III. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL RIGHTS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>IV. CATEGORY-SPECIFIC RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>IV.1. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>26</b>

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CDP</b>	<i>: Council of Patriots</i>
<b>CECI</b>	<i>: Independent Municipal Electoral Commission</i>
<b>CENI</b>	<i>: Independent National Electoral Commission</i>
<b>CEPI</b>	<i>: Independent Provincial Electoral Commission</i>
<b>CNDD-FDD</b>	<i>: National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Defense Forces</i>
<b>CNL</b>	<i>: National Congress for Liberty</i>
<b>DESC</b>	<i>: Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights</i>
<b>DRC</b>	<i>: Democratic Republic of the Congo</i>
<b>ECOFO</b>	<i>: Primary School</i>
<b>FDLR</b>	<i>: Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda</i>
<b>FRODEBU</b>	<i>: Front for Democracy in Burundi</i>
<b>GBV</b>	<i>: Gender-Based Violence</i>
<b>M23</b>	<i>: March 23 Movement</i>
<b>OPJ</b>	<i>: Judicial Police Officer</i>
<b>PNB</b>	<i>: National Police of Burundi</i>
<b>SNR</b>	<i>: National Enquiry Service</i>
<b>TGI</b>	<i>: High Court of Justice</i>
<b>UNGA</b>	<i>: United Nations General Assembly</i>
<b>UPRONA</b>	<i>: Union for National Progress</i>
<b>VB</b>	<i>: Polling station</i>

## 0. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

This 2025 annual report on the human rights situation in Burundi examines the political, governance, judicial, environmental, security, human rights, and humanitarian context. It also addresses civil and political rights, social, economic and cultural rights, as well as category-specific rights, particularly the rights of women and children. The report concludes with a final section of conclusions and recommendations.

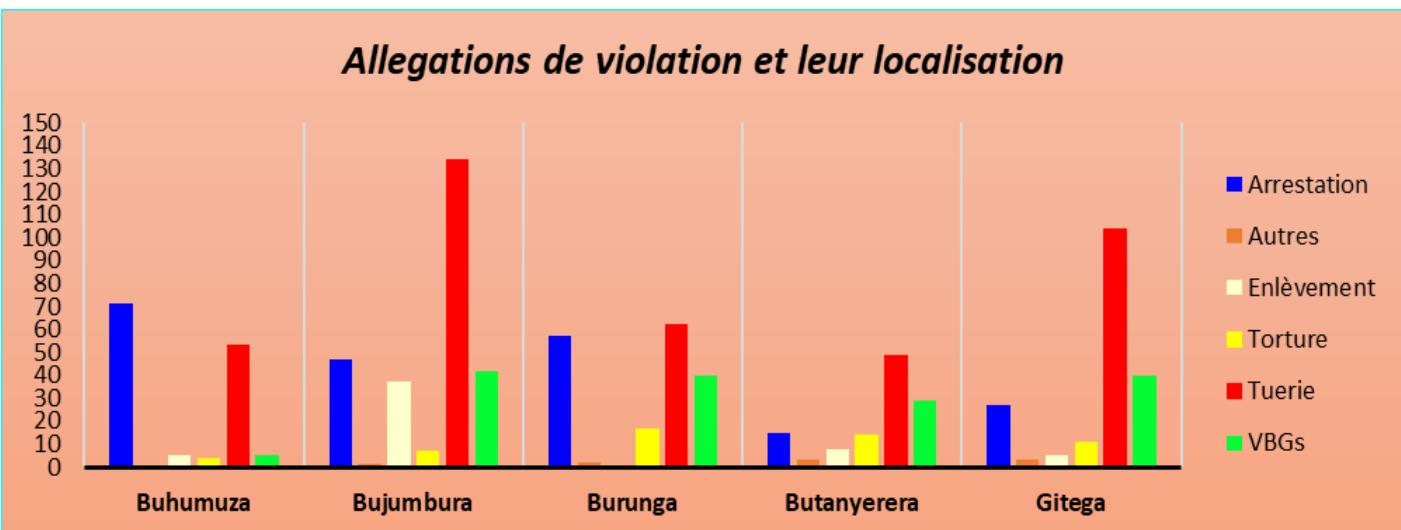
Thus, over the course of this year, the state of human rights has seriously and alarmingly deteriorated. The Iteka League recorded 662 incidents nationwide, which resulted in 892 victims.

Among the victims, at least 402 people were killed, 233 bodies were found, 156 people suffered gender-based violence, including 104 rape victims, 53 tortured people, 55 abducted or disappeared people, and 217 people arbitrarily arrested and detained. Other statistics include other categories of victims of drowning, assault, domestic violence, harassment, and inhuman and degrading treatment.

Although the political affiliation of the majority of the victims is unknown, it should be noted that members of political parties were not spared: 44 members of the CNDD-FDD were affected, 35 CNL activists, 1 member of the MSD and 10 members of the UPRONA party.

Accusations are also directed at members of the ruling party, particularly members of the Imbonerakure militia, administrative agents, elements of the SNR, as well as police officers, who are considered the main perpetrators of human rights violations and reported killings.

**Figure 1 : Chart illustrating the main cases of human rights violations observed in Burundi during the period from January to December 2025**

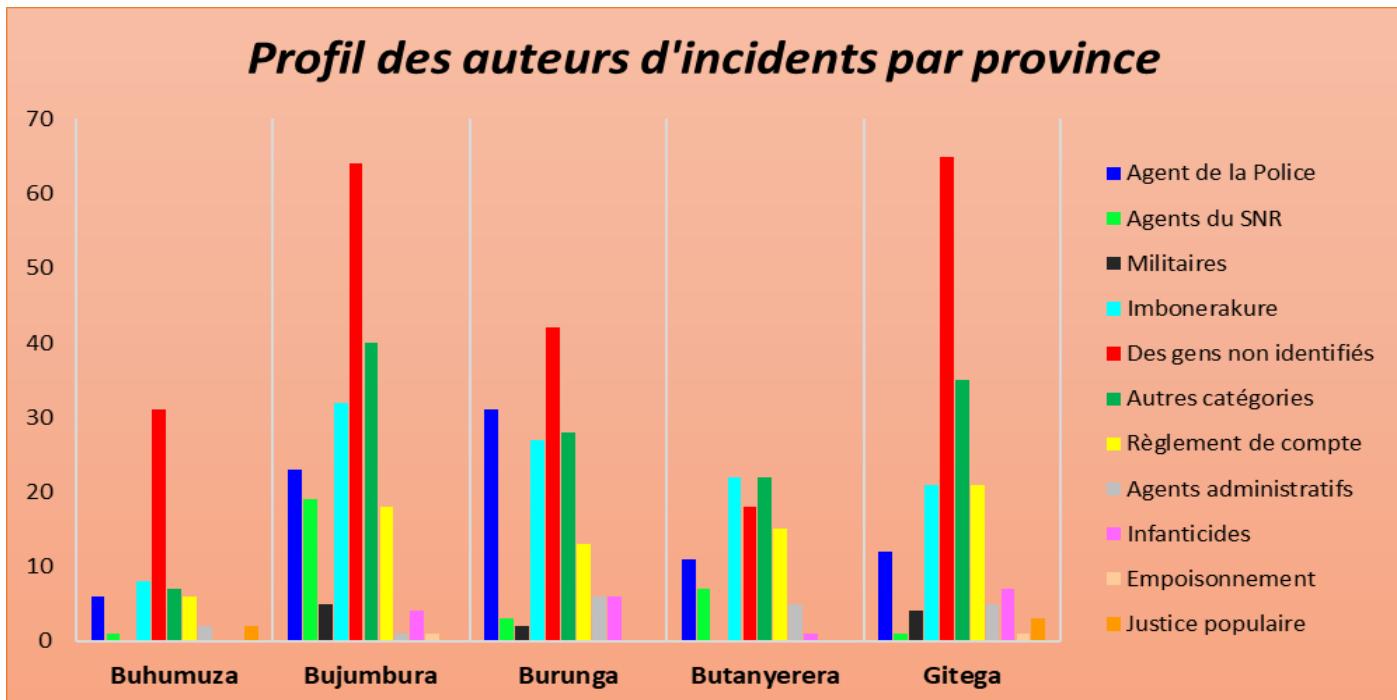


Out of a total of 892 victims of documented allegations of violations during the year 2025, 402 were killed, 156 were victims of GBV including 104 victims of sexual violence, 53 were tortured, 55 were abducted, and 217 were arrested, with 9 cases classified under another category (which includes assault, injury, and suicide).

Bujumbura province tops the list with 268 victims of violations, including 134 killed, 7 cases of torture, 42 victims of gender-based violence, 37 abducted, and 47 people arrested and detained illegally. Gitega province follows, with 190 cases, including 104 killed, 40 victims of GBV, 11 cases of torture, 5 abductions, 27 people arbitrarily arrested, and 3 cases of assault and injury. Burunga province occupies the third position with 178 victims of violations, consisting of 62 people killed, 40 victims of GBV, 17 cases of torture victims, 57 people arrested, and 2 cases of inhuman and/or degrading treatment.

Fourth is Buhumuza province, which recorded 138 victims, including 53 people killed, 5 GBV cases, 4 torture victims, 5 people kidnapped, and 71 people arrested. Finally, Butanyerera province comes last, with 118 victims, including 49 people killed, 29 GBV victims, 5 people kidnapped, and 153 people arrested.

**Figure 2: Chart illustrating the main authors of human rights violation allegations observed in Burundi during the period from January to December 2025**



Out of a total of 892 documented victims during the reporting period, the alleged perpetrators involved are police officers in 83 cases, SNR agents in 31 cases, military personnel in 11 cases, young Imbonerakure members in 110 cases, unidentified people likely associated with the latter according to the circumstances of the acts in 73 cases, 132 cases were classified in other categories (ordinary citizens, including traders), 19 cases were committed by administrative officials, 18 were infanticides, 2 poisonings, and 5 cases of mob justice.

## I. CONTEXT

### I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

In 2025, Burundi experienced a tumultuous political environment, with significant events throughout the year. As the elections approached, social tensions intensified. On March 24, Révérien Ndikuriyo, Secretary General of the CNDD-FDD, returned from the hospital and his medical leave, provoking enthusiastic gatherings while sparking controversy with his political speeches. On March 28, Rosine Gatoni, spokesperson for the Government, accused Rwanda of supporting rebel groups, worsening the diplomatic complexity. The rise in political tensions saw the CNDD-FDD display its determination to win the elections, while the opposition suffered from violence. A meeting of the Burundi Bwa Bose coalition was violently disrupted, illustrating the regime's pervasive power. The government also demanded financial contributions from its supporters, raising ethical concerns. Fear of a threat to security was heightened by Rwanda's alleged support for armed groups in the DRC. The mobilization of Imbonerakure and military forces to recruit young people to support the Congolese army worried Burundian families. Meanwhile, restrictions imposed on Congolese refugees raised concerns about their treatment. As the elections approached, fears of fraud orchestrated by the Electoral Commission intensified, while the political situation was marked by escalating tensions and the repression of the opposition.

## ***1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT (the following)***

The CNDD-FDD, in power for nearly two decades, presented a facade of unity and stability, while exacerbating political tensions. His methods of mobilizing and militarizing the Imbonerakure demonstrated a determination to win at any cost, often through violence. The intimidation of opposition members pointed to a drift toward a one-party system. Parties like the CNL tried to inform citizens about their rights despite a repressive climate. President Ndayishimiye, challenged by the opposition and factions within his own camp, faced a growing power struggle. Tensions intensified as external actors, including exiled civil society leaders, advocated for national reconciliation. Competition among various actors, driven by economic interests, led to temporary coalitions where disagreements revealed sociopolitical fractures. Uncertainty surrounding the 2025 and 2027 elections was exacerbated by ethnic and community divides.

Between April and June, the political climate deteriorated with electoral fraud, and irregularities were noted during the preparations. Intimidation against opposition supporters discouraged any challenges, consolidating CNDD-FDD's monopoly. Despite an apparent calm, acts of intimidation persisted, and distrust in the electoral process grew. Physical and verbal abuses created a climate of terror, while the opposition continued to organize. The events from July to September were marked by troubling revelations about the integrity of the elections, as well as tensions within the administration. Discrimination against opposition members was reported. The political climate became tense with the distribution of protest leaflets and threats of intimidation during the elections for the hill councils, fueling growing resentment towards the CNDD-FDD. In June 2025, Burundi experienced a tense political atmosphere marked by elections surrounded by fraud. Before the June 5 vote, meetings were held to orchestrate fraudulent practices such as early ballot stuffing and voter intimidation, mainly against CNDD-FDD opponents. On election day, irregularities were observed: polling stations opening too early, voters voting multiple times, and limited presence of observers. Opposition activists were threatened to supervise the voting.

The vote counting was also affected by manipulations, with the results showing an overwhelming dominance of the CNDD-FDD, which was declared the winner with 96.51% of the votes. The opposition, represented by UPRONA and the CNL, denounced the election as a sham, failing to reach the threshold necessary to obtain seats in the National Assembly. Despite the proclamation of an assembly completely dominated by the CNDD-FDD, the CNL and UPRONA contest the legitimacy of the results, prompting opposition to a regime considered authoritarian.

From June 16 to 22, the situation calmed, but the opposition continued to denounce the elections as fraudulent and reported ongoing acts of intimidation, particularly against activists and religious observers.

Accusations of agricultural land seizures and threats against opposition figures highlight the need for political intervention to protect the rights of Burundians.

The last quarter has been marked by tension, with incidents suggesting the clandestine recruitment of the Imbonerakure and an omnipresent climate of mistrust. Growing criticism of the opposition and apparent censorship have intensified. In December, a diplomatic summit took place, but criticism regarding the neglect of social crises emerged. The treatment of the population in response to official events has become increasingly urgent. At the end of December, the president denounced Rwanda while creating a sense of growing fear, reflecting the complexity of a constantly evolving political situation.

## **I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT**

In 2025, Burundi experienced a year marked by alarming security events, painting a picture of growing concerns within the country. The recent quarter was particularly eventful, punctuated by paramilitary activities, political intimidation, and tragedies caused by accidents and extreme weather conditions. Among the notable events were paramilitary exercises organized by the Imbonerakure on March 29 in Nyabitsinda, in preparation for a show of force scheduled for April 12. A meeting held on March 26 encouraged members to send their children to school to strengthen the ranks of the party's youth.

At the same time, nighttime patrols by the Imbonerakure in Butaganzwa have created an atmosphere of fear, targeting those who had chosen to boycott community work. On March 25, gold panners tragically lost their lives during military exercises by the Imbonerakure, raising concerns about civilian safety. In addition to these events, the Burunga commune in Makamba province saw a dangerous bridge cause several accidents, and in Kayanza province, 20 individuals were bitten by stray dogs, increasing public health concerns. Extreme weather conditions also caused human and material losses in the provinces of Rumonge and Cankuzo.

In February 2025, intercommunal tensions intensified in Cibitoke, with activities by the Imbonerakure fueling concerns about potential chaos. The mass recruitment of youth for the National Defense Force and the growing militarization of the Imbonerakure sparked serious fears. The humanitarian situation deteriorated, leading thousands of refugees to flee in search of safety from the fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo, increasing health risks and requiring urgent aid. During the months of April, May, and June, the worsening security situation became more apparent, with an incident report illustrating rising tensions. A meeting of young Imbonerakure organized by Augustin Kajisho on April 5 further heightened this atmosphere of mistrust. While the authorities responded with nighttime travel restrictions and the strengthening of checkpoints in some areas.

Relations with Rwanda have become strained, while thefts in the Butaganzwa commune have exacerbated difficulties for farmers. The situation worsened with the deployment of Burundian soldiers in the DRC and allegations of the mass distribution of weapons to the Imbonerakure in preparation for the elections. In June, a member of the Imbonerakure attempted to commit suicide, highlighting psychological issues within the group. The rise in burglaries and acts of violence against Congolese refugees by armed groups, often linked to the Imbonerakure, is heightening intercommunal tensions, underscoring the urgent need for an appropriate judicial response and international attention to address this surge in security challenges.

The last quarter of 2025 revealed worrying signs, especially in October, when nighttime burglaries in Karusi alarmed the population. During the first week of October, five houses were attacked, and three shops at the Buhiga market were also looted, leaving merchants in a precarious situation. Authorities remained silent in the face of Imbonerakure claiming to ensure security, which reinforced a sense of impunity. In November, tragic incidents multiplied, illustrating the deterioration of the security environment. In Mugere, Magnus Nkinahamira was forced to flee after being accused of witchcraft following a tragic death.

## ***I.2. SECURITY CONTEXT (the following)***

Shocking incidents, such as the discovery of a grenade and the attempted murder of a police officer, have heightened growing mistrust among citizens. Violence has escalated, illustrated by grenade attacks targeting members of the Imbonerakure. Finally, December brought its share of tensions, with gunfire heard near Lake Cohoha and an attack at a school that seriously injured a teacher, raising major concerns about the safety of educational institutions. Clashes between the M23 movement and the armed forces have intensified fears, causing parents to flee with their children, often facing the refusal of Burundian soldiers to let them go. Thus, the month of December passed in an atmosphere of anxiety, violence, and despair, marking a deeper crisis in Burundi ready to erupt at any moment.

## ***I.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT***

The judicial context in Burundi in 2025 has been marked by significant events revealing deep problems in governance and respect for human rights. During this fourth quarter, various incidents drew attention to the Burundian judicial system, illustrating an increasingly concerning situation. Among the highlights is the categorical refusal of the Imbonerakure, a militia associated with the CNDD-FDD party, to appear before the police in Rumonge despite serious accusations of vigilante justice against them. Similarly, the case of Désiré Ndikuriyo, a 36-year-old man found mutilated during a robbery, has raised concerns, as the suspect linked to the Imbonerakure has still not been arrested, prompting strong criticism regarding the impunity allegedly enjoyed by some within the authorities.

In another case, Jean Paul Hakizimana was sentenced to 20 years in prison for killing his 15-year-old son. While the community seems to view this sentence as fair, concerns remain about a possible early release due to his political connections. Additionally, cases of human trafficking and sexual violence have also drawn attention, with notable convictions such as Jérémie Kinyovyi, found guilty of attempting to smuggle 7 children into Tanzania and sentenced to 7 years in prison, and Déo Nkurunziza, who received 20 years for the rape of a 12-year-old girl.

Prisons, particularly those in Cibitoke, present an alarming situation, with notorious overcrowding. Recent developments in Burundi's judicial landscape raise major concerns regarding human rights and the effectiveness of the legal system, making a government response imperative to restore public confidence. Between April and June, tensions between the state and its critics have intensified, with trials often directed against political opponents, suggesting that the judicial framework is becoming a weapon against those who dare to oppose.

The case of Anicet Niyonzima, a police officer sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder and mutilation of his partner, sparked widespread public outrage, highlighting the urgent need for reforms in the protection of human rights. The illegal detention of two opposition activists, Gatore Thierry and Ndayishimiye Thierry, reinforces the perception of a climate of fear, where defenders of political rights are forced into hiding. Judicial decisions continue to follow one another and raise ethical questions, notably with convictions like that of Gilbert Hatungimana for tearing up a voter card.

### ***I.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT (the following)***

Continuing with the year, the third quarter brings its share of alarming events, and the judiciary seems to stand out for its lack of rigor. In July, the Rutana High Court recommended sentences for aggravated theft, but also for acts of cruelty such as the case of an octogenarian accused of poisoning her child, thus revealing a vital social reaction. Incidents such as attacks against members of the ruling party highlight the vulnerability of the judicial system in the face of security concerns. The situation in Rumonge prisons is also alarming, with detention conditions that are scandalous. This climate of arbitrariness and inequality in judicial proceedings exacerbates social and political tensions.

Ultimately, the judicial turmoil that intensified in November and December further highlights the fragility of a system perceived as corrupt. The conviction of judges for inappropriate releases fuels discontent and serves as a reminder that judicial independence is far from guaranteed. Sentences marked by expedient decisions provoke anger and frustration among the population. As 2026 approaches, recent events point not only to a judicial<sup>2</sup> crisis but also to an urgent call to restore a system where respect for human rights and integrity are priorities.

### ***I.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT***

In 2025, Burundi found itself plunged into a critical humanitarian situation, largely influenced by the devastating consequences of the war in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). At the heart of this crisis, thousands of Congolese refugees were desperately seeking an escape from the fighting that was ravaging their country. The repercussions of this violence only heightened the distress of the populations. That quarter, more than 1,800 refugees had been evacuated to Rutana Province, managed by UNHCR, which was striving to facilitate their reintegration, especially for women and children, allowing them to return to school, even if this had to be done at the expense of the established academic calendar.

However, the climate of violence at the borders was intensifying, producing a constant flow of new refugees and casting a heavy shadow of uncertainty over hopes for peace. In Rugombo, a cholera outbreak was hitting hard, claiming five young lives in just two weeks, worsened by the lack of access to drinking water and poor living conditions. As nearly fifty cases of cholera were confirmed, refugees voiced urgent complaints about obtaining safe drinking water. Some refused to be relocated to Musenyi, where the sanitary situation was deemed unacceptable; faced with this opposition, the authorities threatened to send them back to the DRC. .

On March 25, the government decided to close the Rugombo transit site, leaving many refugees without humanitarian assistance. In February 2025, more than 8,000 newly arrived refugees were demanding help with food and water. The conflicts between the M23 and the Congolese armed forces, with the support of Burundian soldiers, only worsened this humanitarian crisis. The growing presence of refugees also concerned the local population, who were asking for their relocation while facing health issues such as dysentery and malaria. According to UNHCR, more than 61,000 Congolese refugees had reached Burundi since the beginning of the year, indicating a troubling deterioration in humanitarian conditions, particularly in the Cibitoke province. Between July and September, it was a scene of heightened social tensions, especially under the administration of Evariste Ndayishimiye, with police operations specifically targeting refugees.

---

<sup>2</sup><https://lige-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Bulletin-ITEKA-N-IJAMBO-505.pdf>

#### **I.4. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT (*The following*)**

In September, Bujumbura saw targeted controls, particularly in Cibitoke. From September 8, the police, in alliance with the Imbonerakure, intercepted those who had crossed the border after February 15, fearing instability in the DRC. During these operations, the number of arrests reached peaks, with 152 on the first day in Gasenyi-Buganda, followed by 426 the next day. Law enforcement controlled movements, blocking roads and homes. Authorities offered refugees the option to join official camps or return to Uvira in the DRC, but many feared for their safety in these camps, which were considered unmanageable.

On September 19, another operation took place in Munyika, resulting in the arrest of 152 refugees and thus violating their fundamental rights. The refugees reported inhumane conditions, complaining about the lack of aid for more than a week and urging the Burundian authorities to honor their commitments. They refused to be transferred to the Rutana camp, preferring to risk returning to the DRC rather than endure deplorable living conditions.

Starting in December, new conflicts broke out in the eastern DRC, triggering a new wave of refugees once again thrown into palpable anxiety due to the violent clashes between the M23 and the Congolese army. Upon arrival, they settled in makeshift shelters, ending up in Cibitoke, Magara, or at the port of Rumonge, while facing restrictions on their local integration. The residents of the village of Muhuta feared sanctions if they hosted refugees. At the same time, a meeting was held in Kirundo to discuss security at the border with Rwanda, while information circulated about the presence of Congolese fighters in Bukinanyana. In this context, armed groups began to emerge in Mwaro, causing even more unrest among the population.

The respect for human rights in Burundi continued to deteriorate, with Burundians being expelled to camps in Tanzania. Despite the arrival of humanitarian supplies, conditions for the refugees were becoming tragic; cholera outbreaks and shortages of medical care were wreaking havoc. Migrants struggled to survive in these precarious circumstances, often attempting to flee the transit camps, while the police continued to make arrests. The management of the refugee influx further complicated access to essential services that the Burundian government and its partners were desperately trying to provide.

As of December 9, 2025, the Busuma site, overflowing with refugees, had hosted around seventy thousand Congolese. Communes such as Ruyigi, Rutana, and Cibitoke were home to more than 100,000 refugees, and the Busuma camp alone was overcrowded, severely lacking essential resources such as food, drinking water, and medical care. The alarming hygiene conditions posed the threat of the spread of devastating diseases. UNHCR, alongside organizations like ONPRA, CARITAS, and the Red Cross, was on the ground to provide emergency aid. A new site in Bweru was identified in the hope of easing tensions, with measures underway to improve the situation for refugees.

Despite this, acts of violence continued to punctuate transfers to accommodation sites, where some refugees were forced to get into vehicles in an atmosphere of fear. Urgent requests for relocation often went unanswered, suggesting that the refugees' anxiety was only growing. An urgent appeal was made to strengthen support for refugees and ensure a safe return, as the situation remained critical and the humanitarian emergency became increasingly apparent.

## **I.5. CONTEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

In 2025, Burundi was in a difficult human rights situation, marked by a series of violations and institutional events that drew attention. On January 29, Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, the chair of the Independent National Human Rights Commission (CNIDH), spoke before the lower chamber of Parliament to present the 2024 annual report. His remarks highlighted the state of human rights in the country as well as the progress made by the CNIDH. The report revealed that 739 complaints had been recorded, of which 527 were admissible and 212 inadmissible. However, concerns remained regarding certain violations, particularly illegal detentions and restrictions on gatherings. Gélase Daniel Ndabirabe, the president of the National Assembly, defended Burundi by stating that it respects human rights more than many other nations. For their part, the Iteka League expressed its concerns and called on the Burundian State to honor its commitments regarding human rights.

The third quarter of the year was marked by a significant upheaval in the field of human rights, following the renewal of the members of the CNIDH. This development fueled the fears of defense organizations, which saw it as a maneuver by the regime to strengthen its control over an institution that is supposed to be independent, to the detriment of the integrity of the CNIDH and the rights of Burundians. In May, the process took a decisive turn with the arrival of new commissioners, following the exile of the former CNIDH president. On May 8, an official decree ratified the appointments after a plenary session of the National Assembly on May 5. At the head of this new team, Monsignor Martin Blaise Nyaboho, a Hutu Anglican bishop, was appointed president, accompanied by Gérard Bigemintwaza as vice-president and Béatrice Nkurunziza as secretary. Although 114 applications were submitted for seven positions, allowing for a team considered ethnically balanced, criticisms arose regarding the lack of diversity of opinion on human rights.

This renewal took place in a climate of mistrust, exacerbated by allegations of mismanagement surrounding the former commission and a legislative amendment affecting Law No. 1/04 governing the CNIDH. Gélase Ndabirabe thus decided to proceed with the replacement of the members. The appointment of Monseigneur Nyaboho also sparked controversy, with concerns about his ability to defend the independence of the CNIDH, an issue that the president of the Assembly considered a priority. The CNIDH, founded in 2011, had played a crucial role in defending citizens' rights.

In March, commissioners criticized the management of the CNIDH, calling for the resignation of its president and a financial audit. In response, the National Assembly launched a call for applications for new commissioners while emphasizing the need to investigate structural problems within the commission. The ITEKA League expressed its concerns over the threats facing the CNIDH, describing the intentions to amend Law No. 1/04 as risky for the commission's autonomy.

In this tense context, Sixte Vigny Nimuraba made the decision to leave the country. Although accusations of mismanagement were made against him in the media, the ITEKA League also reported cases of intimidation he allegedly experienced, such as security suspensions and illegal searches. The circumstances of his departure raised questions, with President Evariste Ndayishimiye stating that it was only a trip, while reliable sources contested this version, noting that no official departure had been recorded.

## I.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

In 2025, Burundi faced a series of governance challenges, manifested through a dynamic of pressing economic, social, and political events. In this tumultuous context, the food crisis drew particular attention. Prices of essential goods, such as rice and beans, soared, with the price of rice doubling from 3,500 to 8,000 Fbu. The fuel shortage further exacerbated the crisis, making the transportation of goods increasingly difficult. In response to this critical situation, the authorities acted by creating a commission to regulate prices. Among other measures, the governor of Cibitoke condemned the abuses of certain traders and advocated for the importation of essential products.

Public safety has also raised concerns, notably two incidents involving export fraud. Martin Niteretse, the Minister of the Interior, mentioned threats from Rwanda during a meeting in Cankuzo, while concerns about corruption and embezzlement surrounding the sale of fertilizer from Giharo to Tanzania were raised, preventing many citizens from accessing these vital resources. Additionally, the CNDD-FDD took the initiative to organize paramilitary training for young people in Rumonge to promote its ideology in preparation for the 2025 elections. At the same time, Makamba was struggling with a severe fuel shortage, causing strikes among Probox taxi drivers frustrated by fare increases.

At the same time, the commercial port of Rumonge increased its tariffs, affecting the purchasing power of the population. The province of Kirundo was severely hit by drought, leading to famine, thereby amplifying the citizens' despair in the face of insufficient government aid. The situation worsened further with the arrival of Burundian refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, adding an additional layer to the already colossal governance challenges.

Between April and June 2025, the former province of Bururi witnessed significant events, such as the arrest of Alexis Nshimirimana, the local CNDD-FDD official, for misappropriation of corn at a time when the food crisis threatened the survival of many households. This arrest is part of a broader effort to fight corruption and reflects a determination of justice enforcers to eradicate abuses within institutions. In Kayanza, a trial was held against Victor Bigirimana, who was convicted of mineral theft, highlighting the authorities' efforts to combat fraud.

However, tensions have also arisen within the Community of Protestant Churches in Burundi, with disagreements over new legislation affecting their autonomy. This climate of tension led to the election of Évangéline Manirakiza in Vyanda, marking an attempt to restore local governance that had been criticized for its dysfunctions.

In June 2025, Governor Carême Bizoza made a courageous decision by canceling an eviction seen as abusive, strengthening citizens' rights and earning the approval of civil society. It was a pivotal moment, highlighting a struggle for legitimacy and respect for fundamental rights. Yet, the situation in Mugina was deteriorating, with accusations of fuel embezzlement arising in an already tense context. With the arrival of July, Burundi witnessed growing disorder: in Rumonyi, power outages exasperated citizens. The frustration of residents over demands that ignored their need for electricity was palpable, leading to serious consequences such as students abandoning their studies. Tensions between the police and the tax authorities have intensified, revealing a climate of mistrust and suspicion in the Burunga province. The economic crisis has continued, with severe banking restrictions and power cuts significantly affecting daily life. The consequences of this crisis have caused serious stagnation and a buildup of discontent, leaving citizens impatient and frustrated with a government that seemed disconnected from their reality.

## ***1.6. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT (the following)***

The following months, from October to December, continued on this troubled path, with conflicts over fertilizer distribution, accusations of favoritism in teacher recruitment, and growing tensions between various communities. The rise of corruption involving high authorities, the lack of transparency including the exploitation of minerals, and governance crises plunged the country into alarming chaos, deeply affecting the lives of Burundian citizens. Month after month brought a picture of despair, accumulated frustrations, and social conflicts; the need for effective governance that respects fundamental rights had never been more urgent. Amidst this turmoil, Burundians tirelessly sought a glimmer of hope, nurturing the desire for a better future for their country and families. .

## ***1.7. ECONOMIC CONTEXT***

The economic context of Burundi during the year 2025 is characterized by several significant events. In July, the country's economic climate is marked by incidents highlighting deep-rooted issues. On July 10, a newborn was abandoned in the Gahahe neighborhood of Bujumbura, shedding light on troubling realities. The story of Odette Niyonkuru, a resident of the Ntahangwa commune, illustrates the socio-economic concerns driving some young mothers to abandon their children due to a lack of means to feed them. This incident, far from being trivial, reveals a deterioration of living conditions and growing despair.

Between July 14 and 20, the government tried to address an alarming budget deficit of more than 436 billion Burundian francs through ordinances aimed at restructuring the finance law for 2025-2026. The Minister of Finance, Nestor Ntahontuye, thus initiated measures to increase the state budget to 5,227.06 billion BIF, representing a 10.5% increase compared to the previous year. However, the excessive reliance on domestic financing has been criticized; the Court of Auditors warns of its potential negative impact on the private sector, which is deprived of essential resources for its development.

Furthermore, certain decrees introduce administrative and regulatory standards, particularly regarding reports on public property and the taxation of construction in urban areas, reflecting an intention to improve economic management. In addition, a decree aiming to establish a special contribution for the educational and health sectors raises questions about its practical implementation, oscillating between voluntariness and legal obligation, leaving room for fears of levies by various civil society organizations.

The recent unrest in Butihinda, caused by illegal gold mining, highlights the decline of public order. The arrests of allegedly bandit groups during citizen interventions illustrate a troubling dynamic where security forces are involved in offenses. At the same time, the decision by the governor of Buhumuza to ban the sale of fuel on the black market, announced on July 23, worsens the situation for residents reliant on this practice to cope with the fuel crisis, adding another layer of complexity to daily life.

The increase in taxes on the sale of pets in the Gitega province is heightening a climate of economic despair, as citizens, already strained by inflation, quickly find themselves powerless in the face of drastic price hikes. The fuel shortage since July 28 has caused a slowdown in economic activities, trapping travelers and threatening the local economic fabric. In August, new concerns emerged with police operations highlighting attempts at fraud, as well as an extended power outage in Mwaro that is disrupting business activities. Farmers are worried about delays in fertilizer distribution, jeopardizing future harvests despite government promises.

## ***I.7. ECONOMIC CONTEXT (the following)***

While the laying of the first stone of a railway funded by the African Development Bank represents a glimmer of hope for regional trade, payments owed to coffee farmers remain pending, exacerbating their economic vulnerability.

Finally, the water supply difficulties at Anders Gahore Hospital illustrate worrying implications for public health, while the fight against oil smuggling in Bugendana reflects a willingness to regulate a sprawling market. In short, Burundi is faced with a range of structural challenges, from fraud to shortages, thus affecting the daily lives of its citizens.

## ***I.8. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT***

In 2025, Burundi was plunged into a severe environmental crisis, with a series of tragic events occurring one after another, leaving the population helpless. On October 29, Makamba was struck by violent storms that caused flooding, resulting in two deaths and the destruction of 117 homes. Among the buildings affected, two classrooms of ÉCOFO Gashonge school collapsed, plunging the victims into deep distress. In the Rutana commune, damage was also reported, but its extent remains to be assessed. While local authorities were celebrating the appointment of a new communal leader, the affected residents were pleading for help to rebuild their lives. On October 28, a tragedy struck Kayanza when, due to torrential rains, an eight-year-old girl lost her life in the collapse of her house. That day, schools in the Muruta and Nyabihogo areas suffered considerable damage, with five classrooms destroyed. The heads of these schools called for urgent assistance to restore the school infrastructure. In addition, three other children were injured during the storms, requiring medical care. In October, the Kirundo province was affected by a severe drought, compromising farmers' crops. Gitega also suffered from this situation, increasing the risks of famine and theft. Without aid, the situation threatened to deteriorate rapidly.

In November, the province of Bujumbura was struck by a devastating tornado that affected more than 350 families, destroying over 350 homes, three schools, and many fields. This tragedy left many families in distress, forcing children to drop out of school. Fears about the fairness of aid distribution emerged, with disaster victims worrying that assistance might not reach the people who truly needed it. On November 3, hail and strong winds ravaged Kayogoro, causing severe damage to schools and resulting in the death of a 13-year-old student, along with 24 other injuries. Relief efforts enabled some victims to leave the hospital in satisfactory condition. On the same day, the Kayogoro Alliance School was also struck by a storm, adding to the community's despair.

Between December 29 and 30, torrential rains in Muramvya caused the destruction of homes and crops. Although no loss of life has been reported, the victims have called for urgent assistance. Other tragedies affected Bubanza and Muramba, resulting in human casualties and significant material damage, highlighting the urgent need for swift action by authorities to help those affected.

## II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Burundi is among the countries adhering to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1965) and its Optional Protocol (1976) without any reservations, on May 9, 1990. In the context of its implementation, Burundi has taken measures in its domestic legislation, notably in its Constitution of June 7, 2018 (Main Law), in 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 established, including the Penal 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 HOMICIDES

The law guarantees it, human dignity must be respected and protected by the State, and in the event of violations, sanctions should be applied to the alleged perpetrators, according to Article 21 of the country's constitutional law.

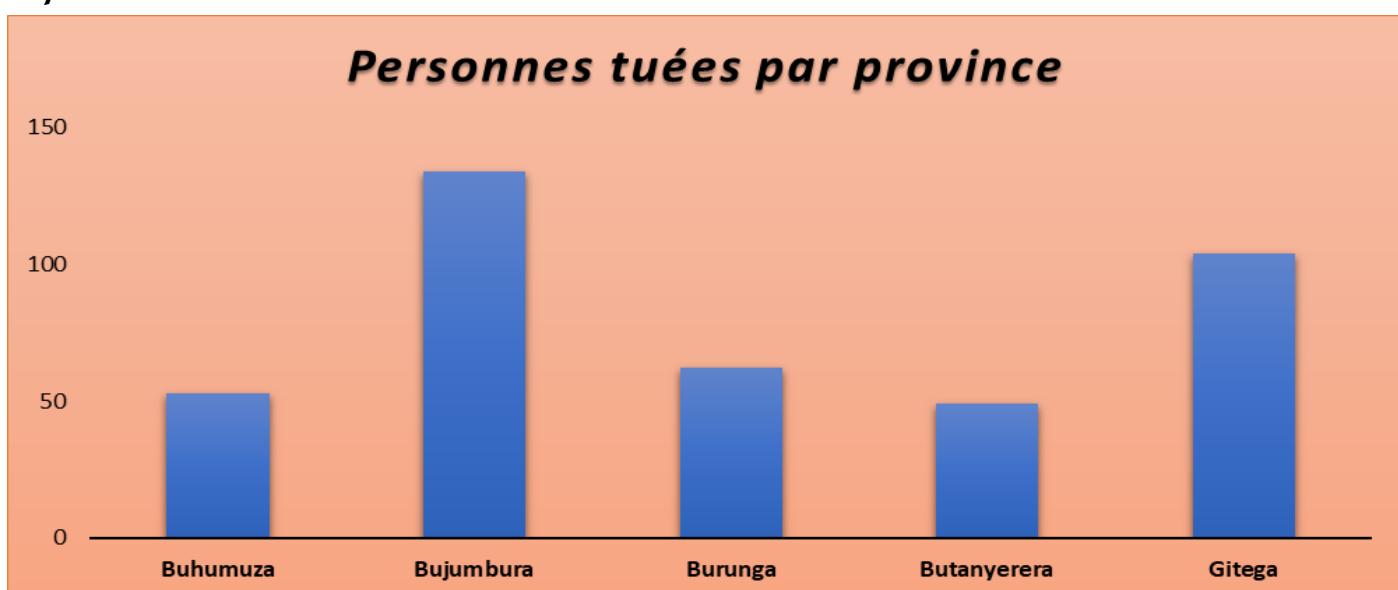
Over the course of 2025, the Iteka League documented at least 402 people killed, including 307 men, or 76%, and 95 women, or 34%. Among the 402 victims, 233 people, or 58%, were killed by unidentified individuals and their bodies were found in various locations across the country.

Indeed, 10 cases were committed by police officers, 189 cases by unidentified people, 20 cases by Imbonerakure, 5 cases by military personnel, 67 cases due to settling of scores, 2 cases by administrative officials, 13 cases of infanticide, and 29 cases fall into other categories involving poisoning, landslides at mining sites, etc.

The most affected provinces are Bujumbura and Gitega with 134 cases or 34% and 104 cases or 26% respectively, followed by Burunga with 62 victims or 15%, Buhumuza with 53 victims or 13%, and finally the Butanyerera province with 49 victims or 12%.

These alarming figures reveal a lack of political will to protect human rights in Burundi.

**Figure 3: Graph of people killed by unidentified people, killed by state agents, killed as a result of settling scores, killed as a result of mob justice, killed as a result of infanticide and other child murders**



## II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES (the following)

### Illustration case :

**Ex1:** On September 2, 2025, around 5 p.m., on the Nyabisaka sub-hill, Ntobwe hill, commune and province of Gitega, Rémégie MUREKAMBANZE, originally from Rweza hill, Mungwa zone, motorcycle driver, activist of the CNL party in support of Agathon Rwasa, was shot and killed with 22 bullets by Butoyi Elie, a police officer who had just arrested him. According to local witnesses, the victim was in the company of his friend Irakoze Salatiel in a bar owned by Nzayumaze Pascal, a merchant who also owned a shop. This merchant asked Rémégie and his friend for a sum of 87,000 FBU, and they objected, asking instead for a bill for what they had consumed.

The shopkeeper then contacted police officer Butoyi Elie, telling him that a member of the CNL was creating disorder and the policeman, accompanied by a colleague, came and ordered the two young men to get on two motorcycles to take them to the police position in the Mungwa area for explanations. Rémégie Murekambanze was arrested by the police without prior explanation and was taken on a motorcycle and then asked the police officer who was transporting him on the motorcycle to stop for a while so that he could buy charging units in order to communicate to his family that he had been intercepted. According to the same witnesses, the policeman did not accept this proposal and after a brief discussion, this policeman pushed Rémégie Murekambanze, riddled him with 22 bullets and then died on the spot. The body of the victim 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 policeman had already fled.

The OPJ Manirakiza Dismas wrote in his report that the policeman had fired because the victim wanted to snatch his weapon from him, but this version is disputed by all the witnesses present, who affirm on the contrary that it was a premeditated murder

**Ex2:** On October 13, 2025, on Buringa hill, Buganda area in the Bukinanyana commune of Bujumbura province, a grenade was thrown targeting the Havyarimana family. Ismaël Havyarimana, 72 years old, succumbed to the attack, while his wife Éméliane, 60, and two grandchildren were seriously injured, one of whom did not survive and died in the hospital. This incident occurred in a context of tensions related to land disputes. The quiet evening was interrupted by a thunderous explosion, plunging the community into panic.

According to Evariste Ntahiraja, the area chief, the attack could be linked to an old land dispute, as the deceased had already survived three assassination attempts. Rumors of witchcraft also fuel existing rivalries.

Witnesses report seeing armed men around Havyarimana's house, reinforcing the idea of a planned attack. The authorities in Bukinanyana have opened an investigation to clarify the circumstances. The community is on alert, fearing reprisals, while emergency meetings are being held to ease tensions. The Havyarimana family accuses Ismaël's brothers of being involved in this tragedy.

Ismaël leaves behind a widow, eight children, and several grandchildren, and was respected in the community. His tragic death highlights the recurring land disputes in Burundi, often fueled by rumors and the inefficiency of the local justice system. A village figure lamented, "These land disputes always end in tragedies." The grenade attacks,

### **II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES (the following)**

*frequent in neighborhood conflicts, continue to sow fear in Gasenyi, with the hope that justice will be done and that the truth will emerge.*

**Ex3 :** *On November 5, 2025, around 2 p.m., in a small savannah located on the banks of the Nyamagana River, Cibitoke area and commune, Bujumbura province, two bodies including a man aged at least 50 and a boy aged about 12 years old were found. According to witnesses in the locality, this information was given by residents close to the place of extraction of the minerals who were alerted by several flies that swarmed all around the place. Eyewitnesses say that the bodies of the deceased, who have not been identified, had several wounds, which suggests that they were stabbed and then left in this place.*

*These bodies were taken to the morgue of the Cibitoke hospital pending the outcome of the police investigations, as confirmed by Eloge Najeneza, communal administrator of Cibitoke.*

**Ex4 :** *A lifeless body of 20-year-old Evelyne Mukamariza was found on October 7, 2025 in her house on Mutambara hill, in Rumonge commune, Burunga province. The victim was reportedly decapitated. The population of Mutambara hill, located in the Gatete area, Rumonge commune, was plunged into fear. According to the first elements collected on the spot, the victim was decapitated. His body was found locked in his house in a village called Mujimwema, a town mainly populated by families repatriated from Tanzania.*

*No arrests have yet been made, but the victim's husband is currently being sought, according to local police and administrative sources. The couple had recently settled in Mutambara, from the Mudende zone, in the former commune of Buyengero, which recently became the administrative zone of the commune of Rumonge following the new territorial division.*

*Neighbors of the victim indicate that the couple lived in a tense relationship, with recurring conflicts observed in recent weeks. The victim worked in a local shop, located not far from her home. "They were not on good terms, and this even worried the neighbors," testifies a village resident who wished to remain anonymous. This new murder once again highlights the vulnerability of women to domestic violence and the need for authorities to strengthen the protection of populations in rural areas.*

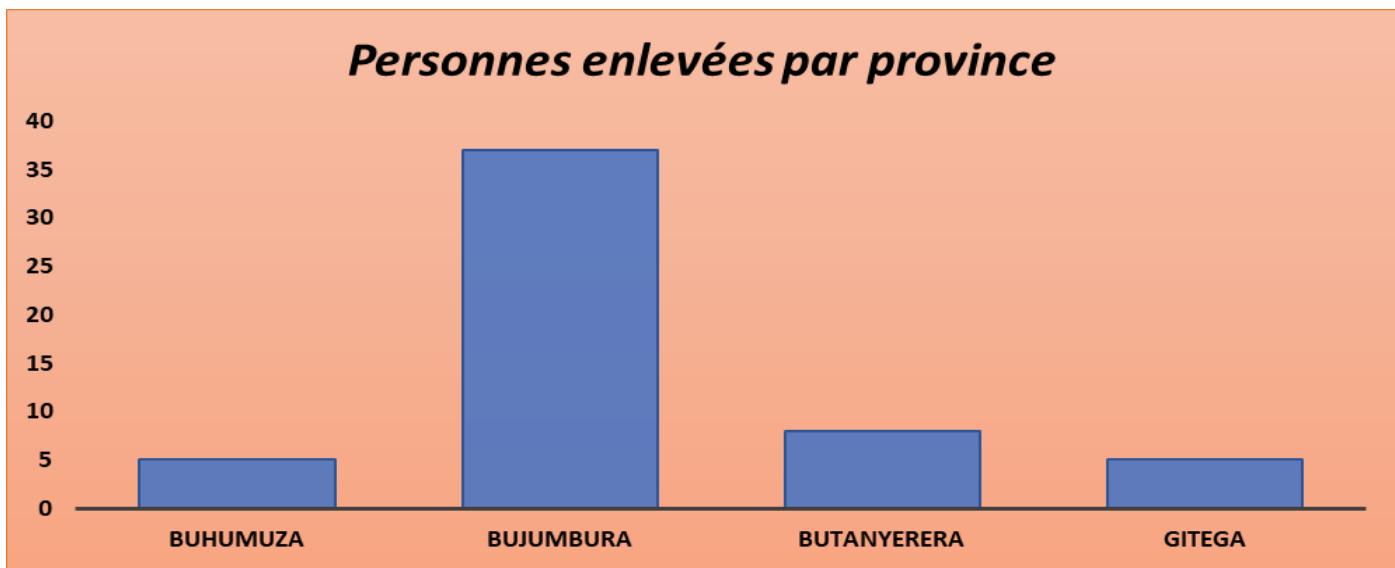
### **II.1.2. ABDUCTIONS AND/OR MISSING PERSONS**

The constitutional law of Burundi guarantees in its Article 38 that every individual has the right to a fair trial and that their case be heard and judged within a reasonable time. Nevertheless, in practice, alarming irregularities can be observed in this regard.

During the year 2025, the Iteka League recorded at least 55 people who were kidnapped or went missing, particularly in Bujumbura province with 37 victims, or 67%, Butanyerera with 8 victims, or 14.5%, and Buhumuza and Gitega with 5 victims each, or 9%. The alleged perpetrators include police officers in 18 cases, SNR agents with 13 victims, Imbonerakure with 3 victims, military personnel with 2 victims, and unidentified individuals with 14 victims, with circumstances suggesting the involvement of the latter, including the Imbonerakure. Among the victims were 64 women and 49 men.

## II.1.2. ABDUCTIONS AND/OR MISSING PERSONS (the following)

Figure 4: People kidnapped and/or missing in Burundi from January to December 2025



### Illustration case :

**Ex1 :** On July 24, 2025, the Iteka league received information regarding the disappearance of Claver BAKUNDUKIZE, a 42-year-old police officer assigned to the General Inspectorate of the National Police, located in Ngagara. He went missing on July 9, 2025. Originally from Ndago hill in the Buraza commune, within Gitega province, he lived at Buyenzi camp, also known as 1st GMIR. A former member of the Ex-FAB, he had joined the police following the reforms that were carried out.

At the beginning of July, Claver had taken a week off to return to his native hill. He was scheduled to return to Bujumbura on July 9 to resume his duties. That day, Claver left Gitega, but he never reached his destination. His attempts to make contact by phone went unanswered. On July 10, the family, increasingly alarmed by the situation, tried to reach him repeatedly, but without success. Anxiety grew within Claver BAKUNDUKIZE's family, who feared that he might have been the victim of a criminal act on the road connecting Gitega to Bujumbura.

**Ex2:** Information received by the Iteka League on November 5, 2025, indicates that on October 30, 2025, two former members of the CNL party, Nishimwe Egide, head of Nyarusebeyi hill, and his neighbor Ndikumana, both of whom had joined the CNDD-FDD party, were kidnapped. The victims are from the same Buhoro area.

Initially, the victims were arrested by unknown SNR agents in Mugina, accompanied by imbonerakure, including their local leader at the communal level, Théogène Bivahagumye. They were on their way to see someone at Mayuki hill when they were arrested around 2 p.m. and then taken to the administrative center of the Mugina commune, where they were held in the Mabayi Brigade cells.

The next day, the families of the victims went to see them, but to their surprise, their loved ones were not there. According to local witnesses, a police officer guarding the cell informed them that the victims had been transferred at 9 p.m. on the same day of their arrest, which caused great concern among the victims' relatives.

The Buhoro area seems to be the main target of the SNR and the Imbonerakure of the CNDD-FDD due to strong opposition and because it is the home of two former opposition parliamentarians, Phénias NIYIGABA of FRODEBU and Simon BIZIMUNGU of the CNL.

## ***II.1.2. ABDUCTIONS AND/OR MISSING PERSONS (the following)***

It houses several opposition members who have switched to the CNDD-FDD for their safety, but this change does not guarantee their security as they are still subjected to harassment and threats. The two recent victims are accused of collaborating with RED TABARA because they did not part ways with members of the CNL.

This kidnapping is even more worrying as it is not the first. In 2024, between February and June, 5 victims were abducted and never returned to their families.

**Ex3:** On October 3, 2025, in the Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, Pascal Nshimirimana, 43 years old, a former military ex-FAB (chief corporal), originally from Ndava hill, Mahwa zone, Matana commune, Burunga province, was kidnapped from his workplace (doorman at Roi David Polyclinic) located in front of the BBCI bank by agents of the Burundian intelligence service. According to sources close to him, people in a Toyota Probox with tinted windows jumped on him, and Pascal Nshimirimana tried to resist, asking the reason for his arrest. According to the same testimonies, other police officers in uniform, who were in a pickup truck parked not far from the gate of the polyclinic, quickly got out to help the first group catch Pascal Nshimirimana. The victim was taken aboard the first vehicle (a Probox car) which, at high speed, headed towards the road passing very close to the offices of the former City Hall of Bujumbura. Since that day, the person named Pascal Nshimirimana has remained missing.

**EX4 :** On December 16, 2025, in the Cankuzo commune, Buhumuza province, Majariwa, a man approximately 63 years old, driver of his PROBOX vehicle, was abducted by people in police uniform. Majariwa is a resident of the Ndava neighborhood, in the urban center of Cankuzo, Buhumuza province. He was kidnapped by three people in police uniform driving a white double-cabin vehicle without license plates, right in the parking lot of the travel agencies.

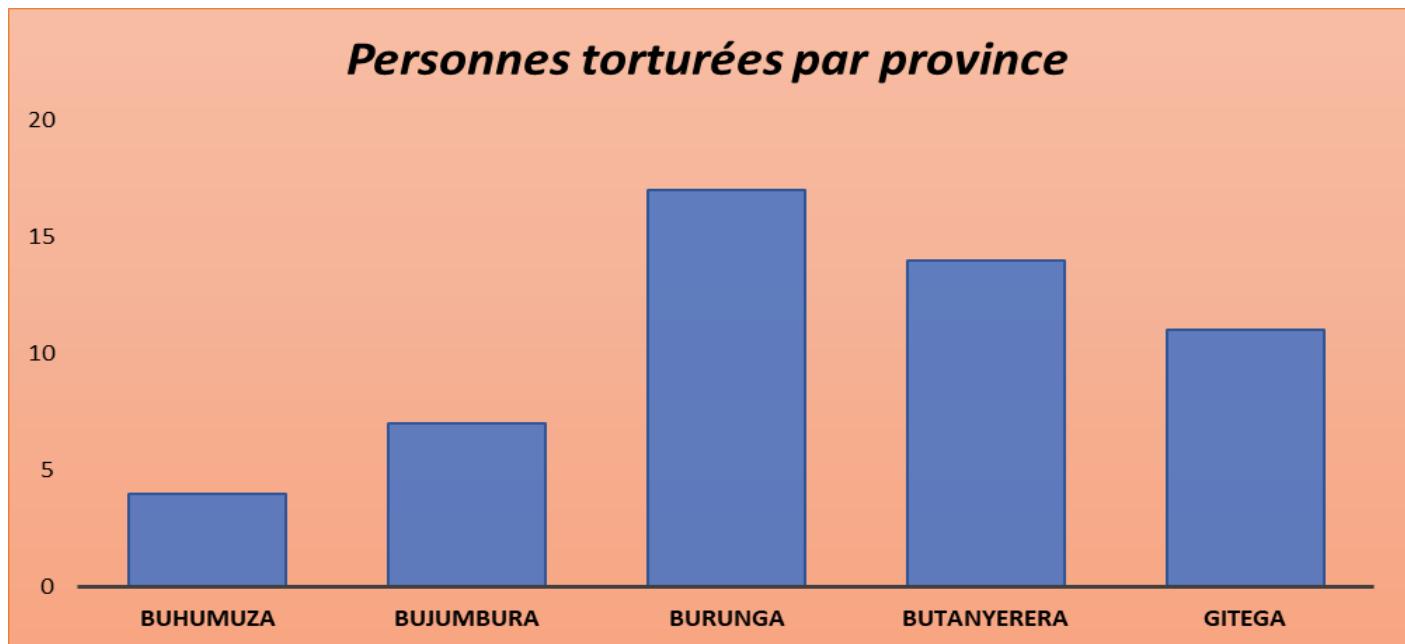
According to sources on the ground, they forced him into this vehicle, and these individuals are suspected to be agents of the national intelligence service. The victim's vehicle was given to a person in civilian clothes who is not known in the area, and the location of this vehicle is unknown. No one knows where this man might be, whether he is being held, or if he is still alive.

## ***II.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL INTEGRITY***

The right to physical integrity is protected in Burundi by several constitutional and legislative provisions, as well as by international commitments. The Constitution of Burundi guarantees the right to life, liberty, and personal security. It prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. The Burundian Penal Code punishes violations of physical integrity, including voluntary violence, assault and battery, as well as sexual assault.

## ***II.2.1. ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING PUNISHMENTS OR TREATMENT***

***Figure 5 : People tortured during the period from January to December 2025 in Burundi***



As the graph below shows, during the year 2025, the Iteka League documented 47 cases involving 53 victims of torture, including 50 men, or 94%, and 3 women, or 6%. The most affected provinces are Burunga with 17 victims, or 32%, Butanyerera with 14 victims, or 26%, Gitega with 11 victims, or 21%, Bujumbura with 7 victims, or 13%, and Buhumuza with 4 victims, or 8%.

It should be noted that among the victims are 7 members of the Presidential Party, 10 activists of the CNL, 6 members of the UPRONA party, and others are ordinary citizens. As for the perpetrators, 9 cases are attributable to police officers, 32 cases to the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of the ruling party, 2 cases to SNR agents, 2 cases to administrative agents, 1 case to the military, and 1 case to unidentified individuals. Among the victims, there are 50 men, or 94%, and 3 women, or 6%.

### ***Illustrative Cases:***

***Ex1: Information received by the Iteka League on August 20, 2025, indicates that since August 8, 2025, a woman living in Mitakataka Hill, Bubanza commune, Bujumbura province, has been hospitalized after being beaten by a police officer on duty at the Mitakataka Higher Institute of Police (ISP).***

*According to witnesses, the police officer accused the victim of practicing witchcraft before hitting her with a stick. The residents present during the incident stated that this behavior is all the more serious because the law enforcement officer, who is supposed to protect the population, turned into an aggressor.*

*Local sources report that the police officer was intoxicated at the time of the incident. The anger of the residents was such that they also violently beat him, before he was narrowly extracted by colleagues who arrived as backup.*

*The former Mitakataka zone chief, Jacques Nikwitegetse, confirms these events and specifies that, despite repeated calls from residents for this policeman to be sanctioned for his behavior, deemed 'unworthy and criminal,' he continues to move about freely.*

## **II.2.1. ALLEGATIONS OF TORTURE, CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (the following)**

*His colleagues protected him from any legal action, which fuels a deep sense of injustice and frustration within the community.*

*The residents of Mitakataka demand that exemplary measures be taken to ensure that such abuses do not happen again and that law enforcement fully assumes its duty to protect citizens.*

*Ex2: On May 5, 2025, at 10:00 PM, Mudende Jean Paul was beaten by five police officers who were accompanying the chief logistician until he was evacuated to the Musenyi Community Hospital in Tangara commune, Ngozi province. According to eyewitnesses, Mudende became a victim after asking his wife why she was returning late from the bar while accompanied by them. Following this incident, the police commissioner in Tangara decided to lock the wife in the police cell until May 6, 2025.*

*The policeman "De corp" who triggered this insecurity fled the growing anger of the inhabitants of Tangara for the police station in Ngozi.*

*Ex3: Information received by the Iteka League on March 13, 2025 indicates that on March 7, 2025, Bonaventure Ndikuriyo, a member of the CNL party, was a victim of torture by a group of Imbonerakure youth on Kiyange hill, in Kayogoro commune, Makamba province. The perpetrators, led by Jean Claude Nahimana, Emmanuel Sindayigaya and Claude Nijimbere, used sticks and rebar rods to beat the victim.*

*The Imbonerakure, 26 in number, all natives of this hill, also forced Bonaventure Ndikuriyo to swallow his own faeces following the blows received.*

*The incident occurred in the presence of and under the orders of hill chief Félix Manirakiza, without any intervention on his part to prevent it. The victim filed a complaint at the police station, but Officer Dibora did not summon the perpetrators to conduct an investigation. This incident is part of a series of acts of violence carried out by the Imbonerakure, the youth league of the CNDD-FDD party, which have been reported by the Burundian population and human rights organizations, particularly the Iteka League, in their weekly reports. These acts of violence are often committed with total impunity, raising concerns about the human rights situation in Burundi. .*

## **II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE / RAPE**

*The Law on Gender-Based Violence adopted in Burundi in 2016 marked a major step forward. It provided better protection, notably by offering a definition of rape that takes consent into account and by prohibiting harmful traditional practices.*

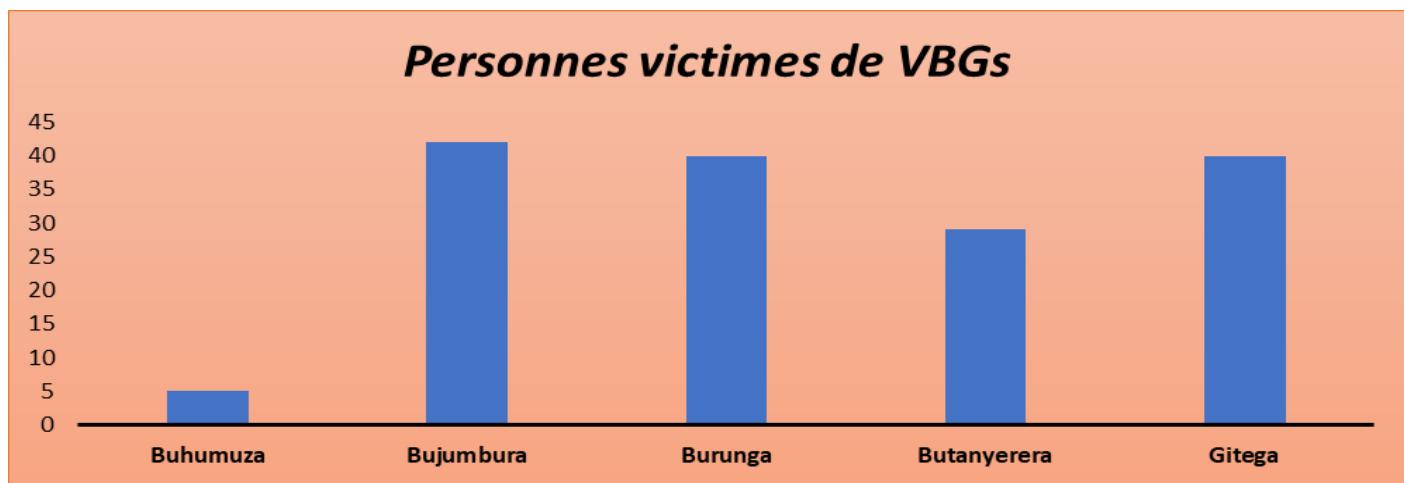
During the period covered by this report, cases of GBV have been observed at an alarming rate. The Iteka League recorded at least 156 people who were victims of gender-based violence, including 44 adults, or 28%, and 112 children, or 72%. Among these victims, 105 suffered sexual violence, representing 67%.

As shown in the graph below, Bujumbura province leads with 42 victims, representing 27%, while Gitega and Burunga share second place with 40 victims each, or 26%, followed by Butanyerera province with 29 victims, placing fourth at 19%, and Buhumuza with 5 victims, or 3%. It should be noted that among the victims, 104 are minors who suffered sexual violence.

As for the alleged perpetrators, the police are involved in 3 cases, the youth group Imbonerakures in 26 cases, administrative officials in 2 cases, private individuals under the category "others" in 103 cases. Other cases are committed through infanticide with 4 cases or revenge killings with 4 cases, and 2 cases are attributed to unidentified individuals.

## II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL VIOLENCE (the following)

Figure 6 : Chart of people affected by gender-based violence



### Illustrative case :

**Ex1 :** On November 11, 2025, on Rugenge hill, Mpanda commune, in the current province of Bujumbura, a 12-year-old girl named A.N was raped. His parents are H. R and M. C. The alleged perpetrator is Ngerageze Pie, a 34-year-old married man, who is their neighbour.

The victim had come to visit the home of the alleged perpetrator. That day, no one else was home except for the attacker. The latter would have taken advantage of this absence to commit rape.

The perpetrator was caught red-handed by the neighbours. He was immediately arrested and imprisoned. As for the victim, he received all the necessary care

**Ex2 :** On the evening of October 5, 2025, on the hill of Mutambara, area and commune of Rumonge, province of Burunga, H. M., 10 years old and from the same hill, was raped by Léonidas Minani, 40 years old, member of the CNDD-FDD party

According to sources on the ground, the alleged perpetrator reportedly took the little girl into his house before committing the act, under intense intimidation. After the incident, he is said to have gone outside to inspect the surroundings, leaving the girl inside the house. It was then that neighbors, suspecting something unusual, hid to observe the situation. They then saw the girl leave the house. The neighbors proceeded to arrest the alleged perpetrator and took him to the nearest police station. He was then transferred to the holding cell of the Rumonge police station.

As for the little girl, she was taken to the Humura center for holistic care. The formal arrest was supposed to take place on Wednesday afternoon, but it was postponed to October 15, 2025, since the accused stated that he had a witness.

**Ex3 :** On October 27, 2025, on Nyarunazi hill, Rutegama area, Kiganda commune, Gitega province, a young boy was raped around 7 p.m. T. E, 15 years old, a student at Ecofo Nyarunazi, was called by Nizirazana Gabriel, 46 years old, a farmer. He offered the child to share the local banana wine "urwarwa," which the child agreed to. The man began mixing this wine with a strong local liquor called "kick," and the child became very intoxicated. The man then took him into a bush and raped him anally.

Since he was also drunk, he left with the child, but the child had left his jacket there. It was when he went back to get it the next day that he told the parents everything. The alleged perpetrator was arrested by the police and is in the police cell in Muramvya for questioning.

## II.3. RIGHT TO FREEDOM

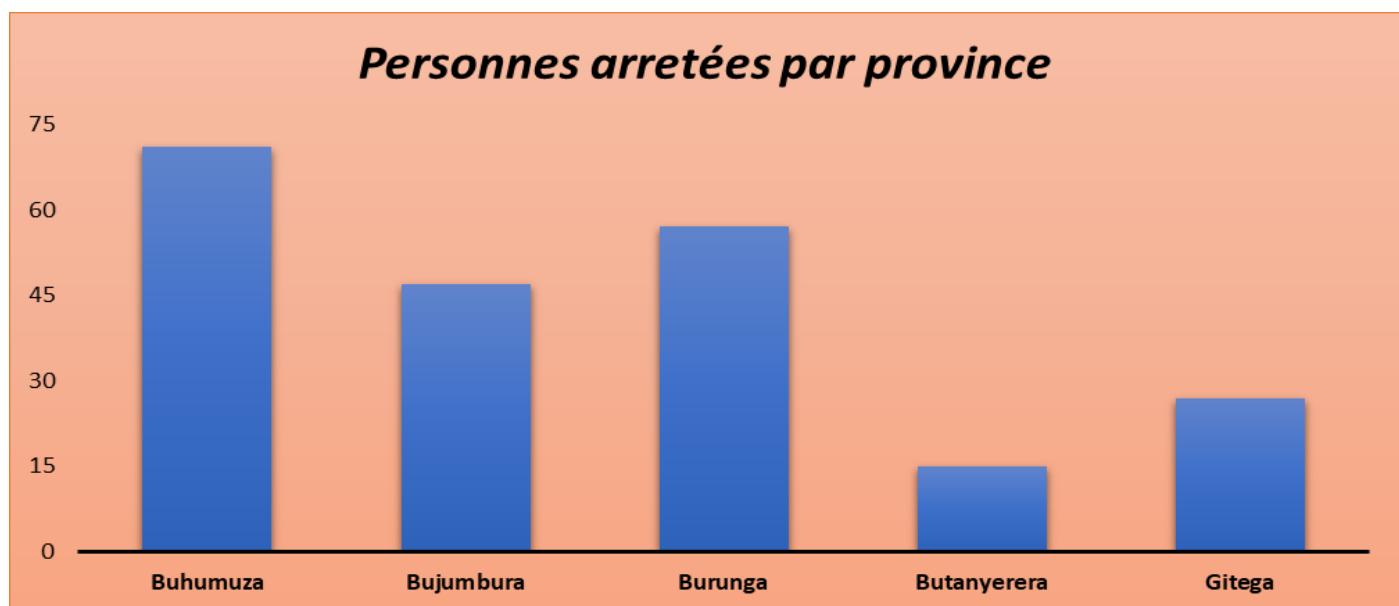
### II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS

International and National texts in Burundi recognize the principle of innocence until proven guilty, and that detention should be an exception.

During the period covered by this report, the Iteka League recorded 80 cases of arrests involving at least 217 people arbitrarily detained, including 55 women (25%) and 162 men (75%). The alleged perpetrators are police officers in 47 cases, Imbonerakure in 11 cases, SNR agents in 10 cases, military personnel in 3 cases, and administrative officials in 8 cases.

The most affected province is Buhumuza with 71 victims (33%), followed by Burunga with 57 victims (26%), then Bujumbura with 47 victims (22%), and Gitega and Butanyerera with 12 victims (5%) and 15 victims (7%) respectively.

**Figure 7: Chart of people arbitrarily arrested from January to December 2025**



#### Illustration case:

**Ex1 :** Since December 2, 2025, Cyprien Sindayihebura has been in the detention cell of the National Intelligence Service in Ngozi, in the commune of Ngozi, Butanyerera province. This man worked at the Burundian-Tanzanian border in Kobero as a plant health inspector. According to his family members, he refused to allow the entry into Burundi of plant protection products from abroad, products from a trader who does not comply with the standards of the Burundian Bureau of Standards (BBN). This trader, whose name remains unknown, is determined to get these products through at any cost, even if it means corrupting the National Intelligence Service. Cyprien Sindayihebura refuses to do so. According to information from Kobero, these medicines are still in Kobero. Before being arrested, according to his family members, he was called on the phone by Marc Manirakiza, known as Posheni, an economic operator from Ngozi who is also allegedly involved in documentation in northern Burundi. It was he who called journalist Sandra Muhoza on the phone, who has been imprisoned since April 18, 2024.

The family members of Cyprien Sindayihebura fear for his safety and are asking the competent authorities to do everything possible to release their relative who has been unjustly imprisoned.

**Ex2 :** On the night of November 9 to 10, 2025, around midnight, on Kanyenkoko hill, Rumonge commune, Burunga province, two people, including Kabura Bonaventure, a retired former soldier, and a civilian, were arrested.

### **II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS (the following)**

*According to sources on the ground, the arrest was carried out by the hill administration, the hill chief, and the Imbonerakure chief, in collaboration with the communal commissioner and his police officers. The two men were detained in the Rumonge police station cell.*

*The former soldier was subject to contradictory accusations made by several officials: the sector chief accused him of possessing the State Chief's seal, the zone chief added that he belonged to the M23 armed movement, and a police officer from the communal police station claimed to recognize him for having exchanged fire in Musaga in 2015.*

**Ex3:** On November 8, 2025, a deputy prosecutor from Kirundo named Nshimirimana Jean Paul was arrested and held in the central prison of Ngozi by the Attorney General of Ngozi, accused of releasing two people who had been illegally detained for a month in the Kirundo prosecutor's holding cell, brought in by the head of the SNR of Kirundo but without any charges. After submitting the case file to the prosecutor, who authorized him to release them, Jean Paul was later accused of freeing mineral thieves. The population laments his imprisonment while he was protecting the innocent.

## **III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS**

*Economic, social, and cultural rights, referred to 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 particularity of these rights is that they are often realized progressively, unlike civil and political rights. Signatory states, including Burundi, commit to ensuring the exercise of these rights according to their available resources.*

### **III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE**

In 2025, Burundi's economy was disrupted by a liquidity crisis in Muyinga, affecting financial institutions and citizens. Public services were limited to 200,000 Burundian francs, highlighting the challenges of accessing banking services. In Butanyerera, fertilizer distribution problems hampered agriculture, and complaints about unequal orders were frequent. Incidents of discrimination during sugar distribution caused discontent among the population. Prices for basic necessities were rising in municipalities such as Gisuru due to a high exchange rate, despite indications of a decline elsewhere. An inspection in Buhiga revealed inflation, leading to the seizure of beverages by the authorities, but without restitution.

In May, elections nearly paralyzed activities in Muramvya and Gitega, with a CNDD-FDD rally forcing businesses and schools to close. Female vendors in Cibitoke were punished for supporting an independent candidate. In addition, tensions surrounding voter registration cards intensified. The need for structural reforms became clearer, with the aim of achieving greater economic stability.

The third quarter revealed significant economic rights violations, exacerbated by the closure of the borders with Rwanda, causing shortages of essential goods. Kidnappings linked to attempts to cross the border were reported. The beverage market was unbalanced, causing price increases, and livestock farmers in Bururi faced diseases without vaccination.

Efforts to control prices failed, leading to frequent conflicts between authorities and traders. In August, delays in payments to coffee farmers in Kayanza began to emerge. In Mugina, land expropriation caused concern, and power cuts hampered businesses. Promises of support for agriculture remained unfulfilled. The ban on exports to Tanzania frustrated farmers, exacerbating their financial situation.

### ***III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE (the following)***

Growing criticism of the Prime Minister was heard due to the lack of solutions.

In October, the economic situation worsened with a shortage of essential goods in Buhumuza, while in Butanyerera, the unequal distribution of seeds heightened tensions. Complaints about favoritism in distribution practices were rife in Burunga. Political repression in Cibitoke threatened food security, and corruption within the health systems was exposed.

In November, President Ndayishimiye was accused of illegally controlling resources, causing the impoverishment of cooperatives. The closure of mining cooperatives left many miners without resources. In Burunga, farmers struggled with unsold crops, and tensions over expropriations illustrated a crisis of confidence. Delays in fertilizer deliveries in Bururi caused concern, and acts of revenge in Matongo led to the destruction of fields.

In December, the economic situation continued to deteriorate, with fraud in the management of inputs in Muramvya and power cuts in Ruyigi after a storm. Severe crackdowns to enforce the ban on alcohol sales led to arrests. Soaring fuel prices in Bubanza and Mpanda increased the suffering of transporters, complicating the lives of consumers already affected by insecurity and a tense economic climate.

### ***III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION***

In 2025, the right to education in Burundi found itself in a catastrophic situation, especially in June. In Cibitoke, a group of volunteer teachers decided not to hand out their students' grades due to persistent delays in payment. This discontent also affected young graduates who, without financial support, felt neglected. School principals, desperately seeking help, saw pressure mounting, threatening to compromise the school year. Teachers made the release of report cards conditional on the receipt of their unpaid bonuses. Joseph Nyandwi, the provincial director of education, recognized the unease caused by the outstanding payments and warned that refusing to release grades could lead to serious risks. An expert suggested speeding up payments to volunteers in an attempt to calm the situation.

In the Mukungu region, a conflict broke out over the theft of exams, exacerbating tensions and accusations directed at the director. Gitega, on the other hand, was the victim of political interference in the education system, despite laws formally prohibiting such interference. Promotional events organized by the CNDD-FDD party continue, turning food distributions into political rallies. One teacher revealed that he had received threats, creating a climate of mistrust among students. In May, the Iteka League reported a weakening of the right to education, noting that even at ECO FO Kobero, classes had been suspended for electoral reasons. Students, supported by the CNDD-FDD, left school to join the demonstrations. In Makamba, students are barely returning to class without being subjected to political pressure to support the party.

In Rumonge, the situation worsened with expulsions for stealing exam papers, fueling tensions surrounding a principal suspected of complicity. In Mwaro, the lack of adequate science and technology education was a cause of concern for families. In Bugenyuzi, teachers were under pressure to conform to government ideals. On April 3, 2025, strikes broke out at Matana High School, while students in Kayanza suspended classes for a political event. In other regions, poor school infrastructure hampered learning, intensifying the concerns of principals, who were prey to political influence over their institutions. Administrative problems undermined the fairness and integrity of the education system.

### ***III.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION (the following)***

In July, the end of the school year was threatened by a political meeting that prevented exams from being held, while some students preferred to attend the meeting rather than take their exams. At ÉCO FO Rukina, a teacher refused to release results due to debts, exacerbating tensions. In Ruhengeri, nearly 400 students were crammed into six classrooms, exacerbating the education crisis. In August, the Ministry of Education closed schools in Bujumbura, deeming them unsuitable, which made access to education even more difficult. In Muramvya, the dropout rate reached a peak of 7,996 students, further highlighting the problems of poverty and early pregnancy. Uniform guidelines made things difficult for low-income families. Academic results were worrying, with a pass rate of only 35%. Living conditions in public boarding schools were particularly worrying, especially for Twa children living in precarious situations.

The difficulty in recruiting teachers raised questions of favoritism, while allegations of corruption hit the Lycée Communal Mwaro I. In the fourth quarter of 2025, the right to education still faced numerous incidents. On October 5, at the Lycée Communal Mwaro I, the principal demanded money in exchange for computers, sparking protests among parents. The province of Gitega suffered from shortages, such as a lack of chalk. In October, students in Bururi were mobilized for political activities, causing outrage among parents. At ÉCOFO Cuzwe, a religious conflict emerged, raising tensions. The Communal Education Directorate in Ruyigi expressed concern about the lack of teachers.

In November, eighteen students from Mukungu High School were expelled for exam fraud, and a large number of teachers left Butanyerera. Tragic events, such as a fire in Musema, left more than 100 students without school supplies and their belongings. Tuition fees in Burunga pushed even more students to drop out, highlighting the urgent need for a truly accessible education system.

In December 2025, the right to education was more threatened than ever, especially at Écofo Nkundusi, where learning conditions were deplorable. Students had to pay 7,000 Fbu per term, while the state allocated a modest sum of 500 Fbu per day per student. The departure of 150 to 200 teachers highlighted the urgent need for mass recruitment, while there was a shortage of textbooks. The management of education was marred by corruption, and the shortage of teachers only exacerbated the educational crisis, causing growing concern among families. Calls for improvements in educational management were growing, while the issue of bonus payments for retired teachers remained unresolved.

### ***III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH***

In 2025, Burundi experienced a particularly difficult period in terms of health. A cholera epidemic struck various parts of the country, and in the Makombe region, a measles epidemic affected more than 1,090 Congolese refugee children, highlighting the already deplorable living conditions in an overcrowded camp. These vulnerable families were exposed to disease, prompting the authorities to launch a vaccination campaign to protect the children.

In May, the city of Muyinga faced a severe shortage of drinking water and electricity, a situation that deprived children admitted to the neonatal unit of essential care due to a lack of fuel oil. Concerned residents urged the authorities to act quickly. At the same time, health centers in Bugendana were running out of medicines, leaving many patients without treatment, a situation exacerbated by the departure of vital healthcare staff. The Matana hospital, suffering from a lack of ambulances, made it difficult to transport patients, who were forced to rent vehicles to reach the care they needed.

### ***III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH (the following)***

In July, diseases linked to poor hygiene were on the rise, and waiting times for care sometimes reached a month. In Cibitoke, the shortage of drinking water forced residents to consume unsafe water, which significantly increased the risk of cholera. On July 16, a shortage of rabies vaccines caused concern among residents of Burunga following several dog bites. In Buhiga, the lack of water forced residents to travel long distances to obtain supplies.

In August, the situation was further complicated by a shortage of medical assistance cards, which hindered access to care. The AGAPE Clinic in Rugombo, despite offering free care, faced criticism regarding the quality of its services. In September, drug shortages and a cholera epidemic in Cibitoke and Bukinanyana caused concern among authorities, with 220 cases reported. By September 18, cholera had already reached 1,014 confirmed cases, despite some recoveries.

Unfortunately, the health situation showed no improvement in the last quarter of the year. A new cholera outbreak had led to the deaths of 13 people. The lack of water, identified as the main factor in this crisis, continued to affect hospitals and schools. In Ruyigi, unreported cases of diarrhea raised fears of a new epidemic. In December, the epidemic spread to Nyanza and Rumonge, with 260 cases and two deaths. Promises of assistance, often unfulfilled, accentuated the urgent need for care. Congolese refugees in Rumonge were living in inhumane conditions, prompting desperate calls for international aid. At the same time, the government was planning to move them to the Bweru camp on December 23 to improve their situation.



### IV.1. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

*The International Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Burundi ratified on October 19, 1990, guarantees children the right to be protected from violence, mistreatment, and all forms of abuse and exploitation. Article 44 of the Burundian Constitution also stipulates that “every child has the right to special measures to ensure or improve the care necessary for his or her well-being, health, and physical safety, and to be protected from mistreatment, abuse, or exploitation.”*

In Burundi, children's rights have been profoundly affected by a multitude of circumstances. The protection of children's rights is an essential priority for ensuring fair and harmonious development within this society. Despite some notable progress, the situation remains worrying, hampered by various socio-economic, historical, and political factors that hinder the development of the youngest members of society. The recognition of these rights is enshrined in various legal texts, both nationally and internationally, with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by Burundi, at the top of the list. However, the implementation of these commitments faces many challenges. Economic insecurity affects a large part of the population.

On the one hand, violations of children's rights are alarming, particularly sexual violence against underage girls, a scourge that the government does not seem to be taking seriously or implementing specific measures to protect these children. On the other hand, child trafficking to Tanzania is a worrying issue, especially in the south of the country. During the year, tragic incidents occurred in the communes of Rutana and Makamba in Burunga province, where four children were intercepted while attempting to be illegally transferred to Tanzania. They were traveling in a Hiace vehicle bound for Burunga province and were reportedly abducted in Gitega province.

This alarming situation came to light during a security meeting led by the governor of Burunga, Parfait Mboninyibuka, who quickly mobilized emergency measures to put an end to this trafficking. He firmly stated that no form of contempt for Burundian children, who are often victims of inhumane treatment in the United Republic of Tanzania, would be tolerated. Orders were given to quickly apprehend those responsible. In response, defense and security forces mobilized to dismantle these criminal networks. Five people, including three drivers, were arrested, one of whom was already known to the population for past illegal activities. An investigation is underway, and these suspects could face charges of human trafficking, an offense that is severely punished under Burundian law.

In addition, the exploitation of minors in the construction sector, particularly in the Mwaro Commune, is also a cause for concern. Since the start of the holidays, a worrying trend has emerged, with young children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds seeking to earn money, often in harsh working conditions. On several construction sites in Mwaro, Gitega province, lines of children can be seen carrying bricks in plastic bags or baskets. Each brick they carry earns them 20 FBU, and some, aged 9 to 10, talk about the possibility of earning around 1,000 FBU per day. They also mention difficulties in finding food during the day, as their work is physically demanding.

## **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the period covered by this report, a persistent deterioration in human rights was observed in various parts of the country. This report highlights incidents relating to violations of the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom, including specific rights, economic, social, and cultural rights. It also addresses issues related to security and the general context of the country.

The Iteka League analyzes the major events that have influenced the political, judicial, governance, security, environmental, and humanitarian landscape over the course of the year. The Iteka League expresses its outrage at the impunity of the criminal acts observed and presents the following recommendations :

**To the Burundian authorities :**

- ⇒ Ensure democratic governance by respecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens;
- ⇒ Demonstrate democratic leadership by integrating democratic principles into decision-making and governance actions;
- ⇒ Guarantee respect for human rights, including the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom;
- ⇒ Take measures to end impunity for crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable for their actions;
- ⇒ Guarantee access to basic services, including water, health, education, and justice, for all citizens;
- ⇒ Investigate and severely punish violence against minors, which has become commonplace in Burundi at the local administrative level;
- ⇒ Take measures to eradicate impunity for crimes and ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations are held accountable for their actions;

**To the technical and financial partners of the Burundian government, including the UN, the EU, and diplomatic missions accredited to Burundi :**

- ⇒ Support the efforts of Ligue Iteka and other organizations dedicated to defending human rights in monitoring human rights violations in Burundi;
- ⇒ Use their influence to encourage the Burundian authorities to respect human rights and put an end to impunity.

**To human rights organizations :**

- ⇒ Continue to monitor the human rights situation in Burundi and defend the protection of fundamental rights;
- ⇒ Prioritize joint work in the interests of effectiveness and efficiency in their diverse interventions;
- ⇒ Provide support to victims of human rights violations and work to ensure their access to justice.