

# BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS 'ITEKA'

*Approved by Ministerial Ordinance No. 530/0273 of November 10, 1994, amending Ordinance No. 550/029 of February 6, 1991*

## ***REPORT OF THE BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA" ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURUNDI DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2026***



*Anyone should be respected*

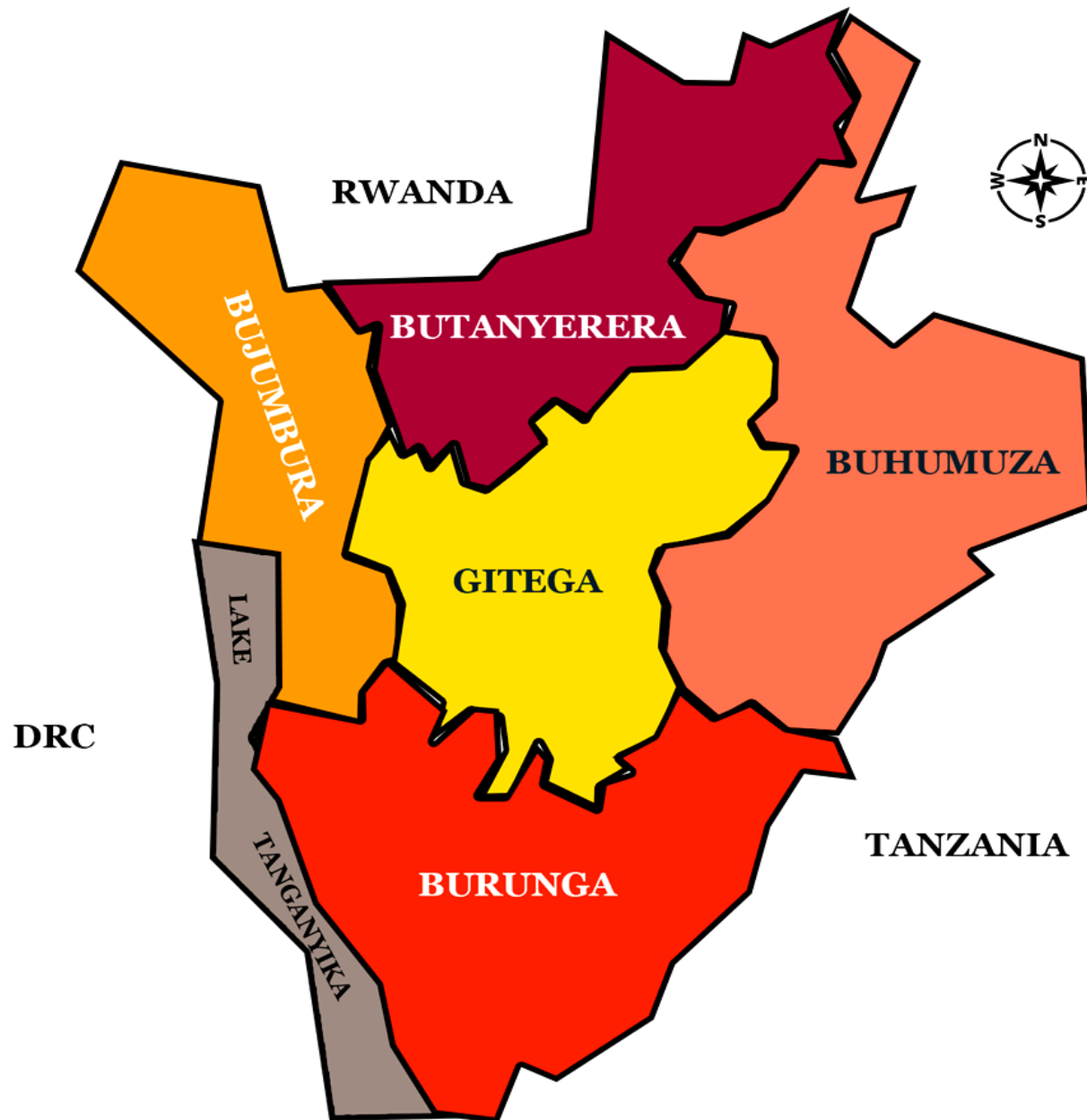
In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, treasurer of the Iteka League, who has been missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to January 18, 2026, at least 852 victims of enforced disappearance have been documented by the Iteka League, at least 86 victims have reappeared, and 768 victims are still missing. The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) has already communicated at least 252 victims to the government of Burundi.

### **The Iteka League:**

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

<sup>1</sup><https://docs.un.org/fr/A/HRC/57/54>

## ***THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF BURUNDI***



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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

*UNGA: United Nations General Assembly*

*ECOFO: Elementary School*

*CNDD-FDD: National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces of Defense*

*CNL: National Congress for Liberty*

*CNIDH: Independent National Human Rights Commission*

*CEEAC: Economic Community of Central African States*

*DESC: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*

*FRODEBU: Front for Democracy in Burundi*

*FDLR: Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda*

*OPJ: Judicial Police Officer*

*OBPE: Burundian Observatory for Environmental Protection*

*UN: United Nations*

*PNB: Burundi National Police*

*DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo*

*UPRONA: Union for National Progress*

*VSBGs: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence*

*SNR: National Enquiry Service*

*TGI: High Court*

## I. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

This monthly report for January 2026 is a summary of the weekly Iteka n'Ijambo bulletins from issues 508 to 511. This report analyzes the human rights situation. It reviews civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights. It also examines specific rights, particularly children's rights. The report concludes with a summary and recommendations.

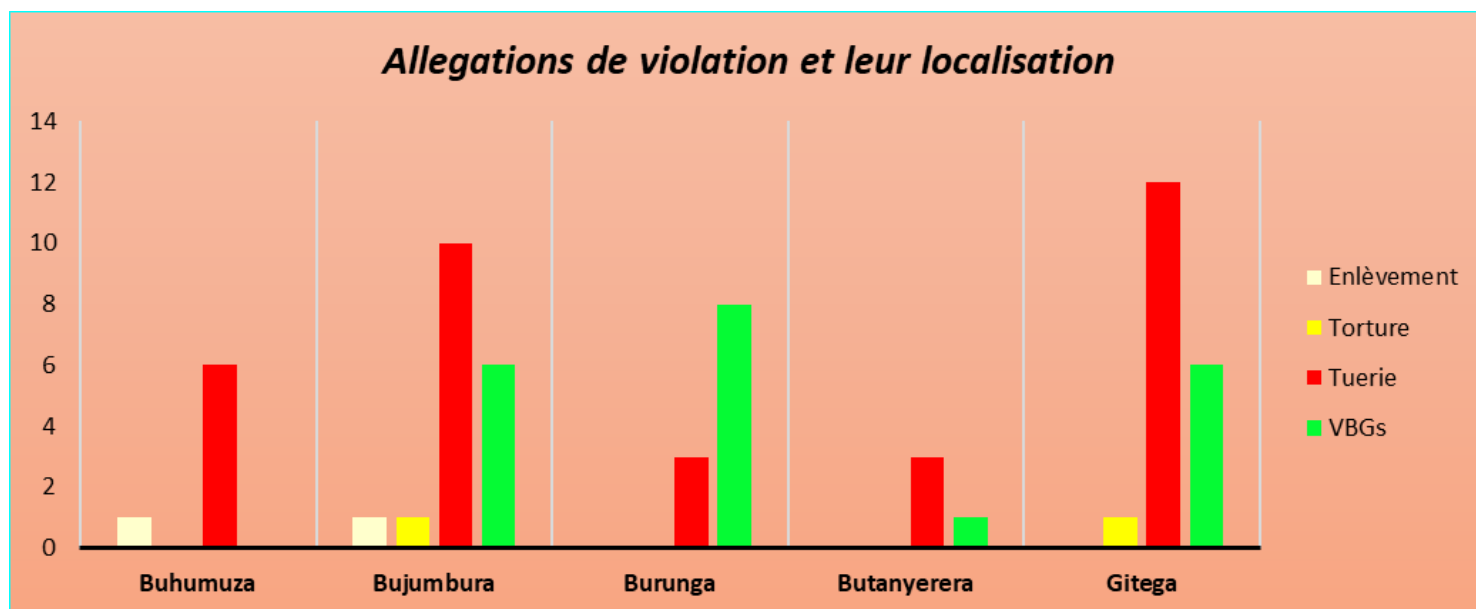
The civil and political rights situation for the period covered by this report is illustrated as follows: 34 people were killed, including 20 bodies, 2 people were tortured, 2 people were abducted, and 21 people were victims of gender-based violence, including 20 victims of sexual violence, among whom were 16 underage girls.

The victims include 7 women, 5 children, and 20 girls.

Imbonerakure, police officers, administrative agents, soldiers, and other individuals close to members of the ruling CNDD-FDD party are identified as the alleged perpetrators of most of these human rights violations and murders.

### I.1. MAPPING ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.

**Figure 1: Chart illustrating the main cases of alleged violations of civil and political rights observed in Burundi during the month of January 2026.**

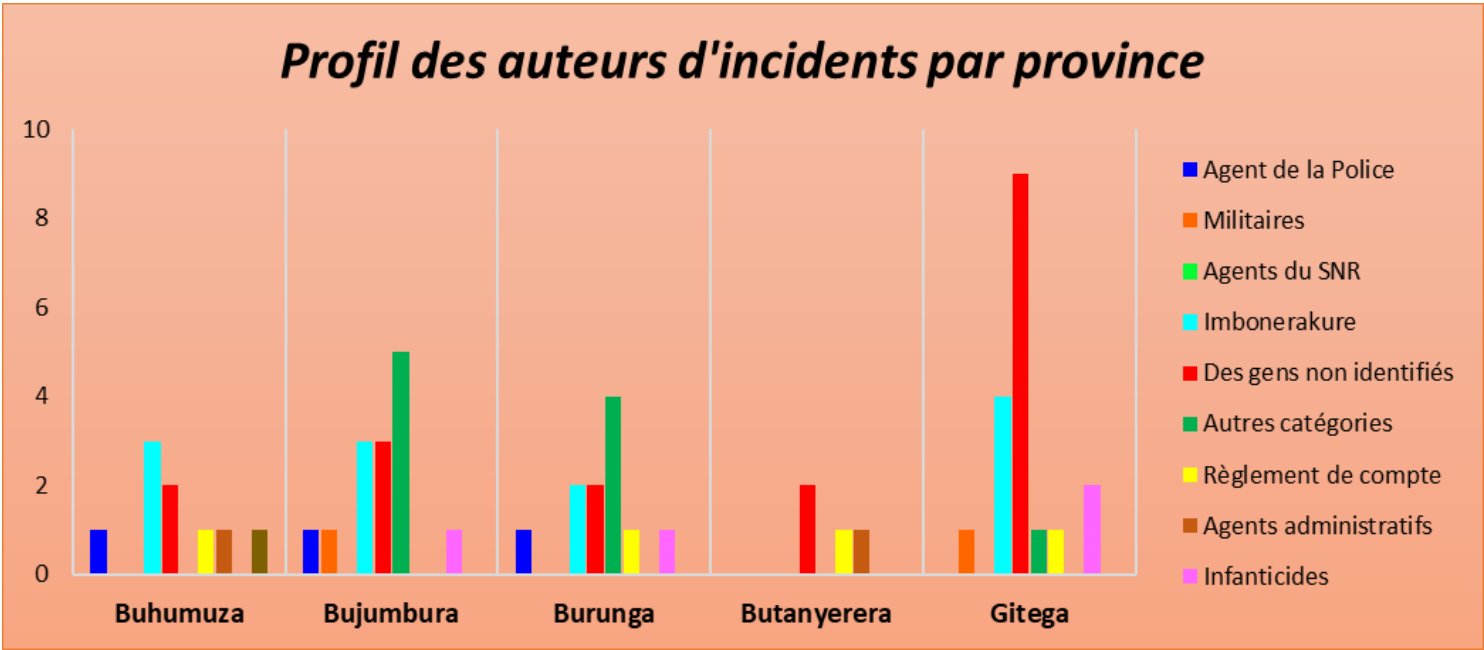


The chart above illustrates the 5 categories of violations across the 5 different provinces of the country, with Gitega experiencing the most human rights violation allegations with 17 incidents resulting in 19 victims, followed by Bujumbura with 13 incidents resulting in 18 victims, then Burunga with 11 incidents resulting in 11 victims, next Buhumuza with 7 incidents resulting in 7 victims, and finally Butanyerera with 4 incidents resulting in 4 victims.

Thus, during this month of January 2026 covered by this report, the Iteka League recorded 59 victims of alleged civil and political rights violations across the national territory. These alleged human rights violations are mainly distributed as follows: 34 people killed, 2 people abducted, 21 people victims of GBV, and 2 people tortured.

I. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT (the following)

Figure 2: Chart illustrating the main alleged perpetrators of civil and political rights violations observed in Burundi during the month of January 2026



According to the chart, of all the recorded cases of violations during this period in January 2026, the cases committed by unidentified individuals are the highest with 18 cases, followed by the Imbonerakure with 12 cases, then a category of "others," notably including private individuals such as merchants, domestic violence including GBV with 10 cases, 3 cases committed by the police, 2 cases by the military, 2 cases by administrative officials, and 1 case of mob justice. It should be noted that among the allegations there are 4 cases of infanticide and 4 cases of settling scores.



## II. ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

### II.1. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

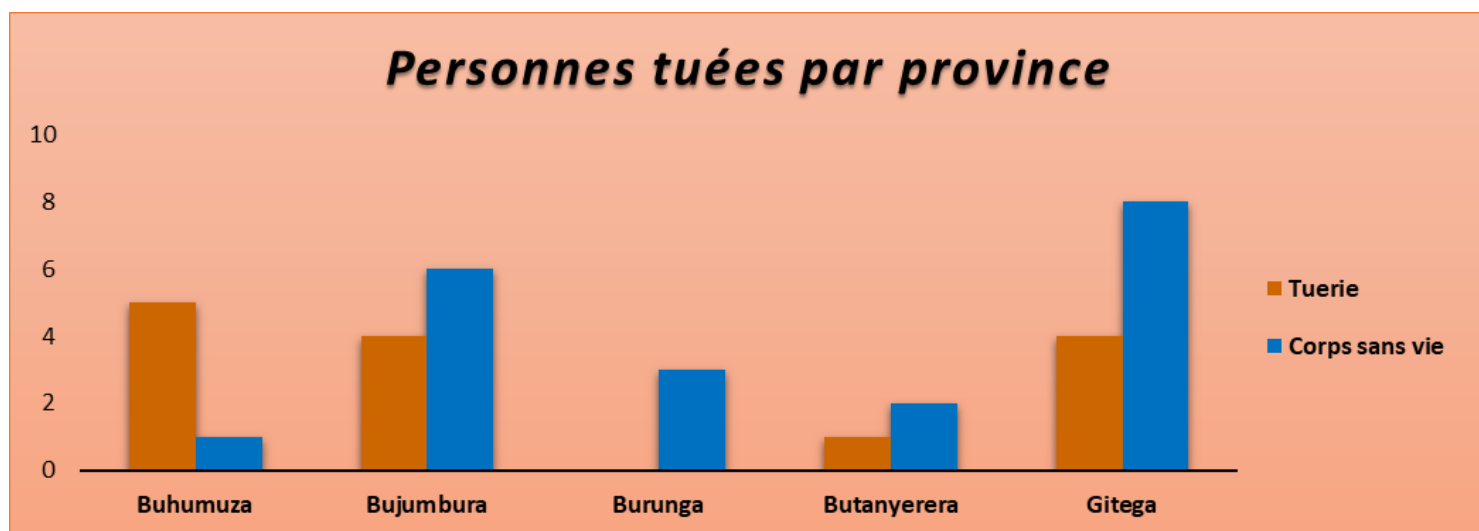
Burundi is among the countries adhering to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1965) and its Optional Protocol (1976) without any reservations, on May 9, 1990. In the context of its implementation, Burundi has taken measures in its domestic legislation, notably in its Constitution 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.1.1 RIGHT TO LIFE

##### II.1.1. 1. VOLUNTARY HOMICIDE

During the period covered by this report, a total of 34 cases of intentional homicide were recorded by the Iteka League across the entire territory, among the victims 27 are men and 7 are women.

The most affected provinces are Gitega with 12 victims, Bujumbura with 10 victims, and Buhumuza with 6 victims. Butanyerera and Burunga follow with 3 victims each, respectively. It should be noted that among the victims are 5 children.



#### Illustrative examples:

*Ex1: On January 6, 2026, a young Imbonerakure member named Hamissi, known by the nickname Mangué, died as a result of injuries inflicted by police officers from the Ruyigi provincial police station. Hamissi had originally been arrested on charges of fraud and forgery. On December 23, 2025, Hamissi went to the home of Mathieu, one of the cement wholesalers in the capital of Ruyigi province, and presented him with a letter stating that Mr. Nkunzimana Fiacre and Nkunzimana Valery, respectively secretary of the CNDD-FDD party in the commune of Ruyigi and the development officer in the governor's office in Buhumuza province, wanted cement. The document also bore the signatures of the two officials, and Mathieu delivered 50 bags of cement to him.*

*A few days later, the merchant demanded payment for his cement from the two officials mentioned above, but they replied that they knew nothing about it.*

**II.1.1. 1. VOLUNTARY HOMICIDE (the following of page7)**

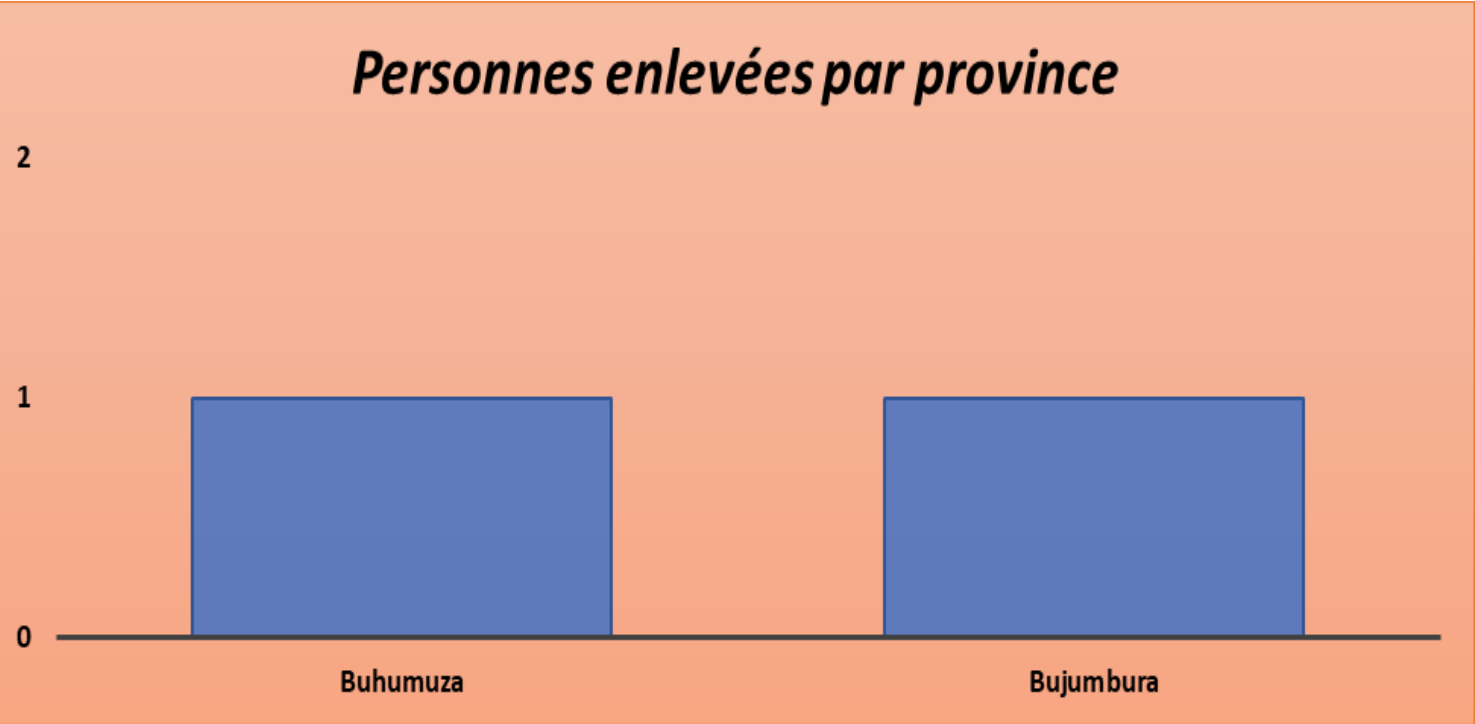
*Mr. Fiacre NKUNZIMANA ordered the Imbonerakure youth to find Mangué and arrest him. Mangué was arrested and taken to the provincial police station in Ruyigi, but he continued to demand to be released.*  
*“I demand to be released. It was Fiacre who gave me the order,” he said.*  
*As for Fiacre, he asked the police officers guarding the prison to punish Mangué, whereupon Hamissi was beaten by the police officers in the presence of Nkunuzimana Fiacre and the provincial police commissioner of Ruyigi, Nizigiyimana Jean Gentil, until he lost consciousness.*

Ex2: A woman named Manirakiza Odrinne, from Masama hill, Masama zone, in the commune of Shombo, province of Gitega, was violently assaulted and then shot dead by Lieutenant Innocent Bigirimana on the morning of Tuesday, January 27, 2026.

According to information gathered from the victim's neighbours, in the locality, the alleged perpetrator of the crime on leave got into a fight with the young woman over a land dispute and the alleged perpetrator took out his pistol and shot the victim. This information is confirmed by the chief of Masama hill, Joachim BARARWAMANYE, and reveals that the deceased had a family link with this military officer. Two people are suspected of being involved in this criminal act, including the soldier belonging to the victim's family. They were all arrested for investigative reasons. The victim leaves behind two sons.

**II.1.1.2. ABDUCTED AND/OR MISSING PERSONS**

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 recorded 2 people abducted, both men, in the provinces of Bujumbura and Buhumuza, with 1 victim in each.





## **II.1.1.2. MISSING AND/OR ABDUCTED PERSONS (the following of page 8)**

### **The two documented cases:**

*Ex1: Since January 1, 2026, on the hill and in the Murama area, Musinga commune, Buhumuza province, Rukundorwimana Egide, son of Nikonarusanze Fabien and Ngendamubansi Marie, husband of Kabagabire Emelyne, originally from the Mugongo hill, Kamara area of the Butihinda commune, has been missing. According to local witnesses, on that date, the victim called his wife to tell her that he was being threatened and asked for 20,000F via the Lumicash number 69278819 belonging to Hatungimana Vincent, Imbonerakure from Ryabihira hill, Murama area, Musinga commune, Buhumuza province, in order to secure his release.*

*The family of the missing person appealed to the Murama zone chief, who followed up on the case and called the Imbonerakure, who replied that he was with him and that there was no problem. Since then, she has not returned and Egide Rukundorwimana's family has no trace of him. They are asking the police to arrest this Imbonerakure, who is currently walking around freely, and bring him to justice for this disappearance.*

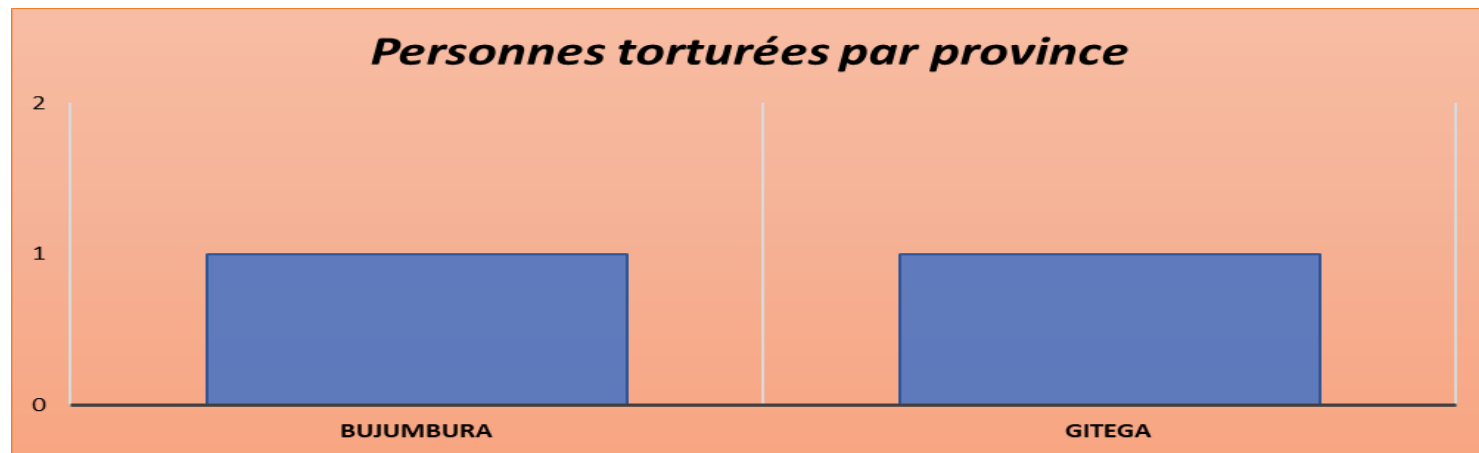
*Ex2: A citizen known as GAHUNGU Thadée has been missing since 01/16/2026. This citizen is a former soldier of the old army (EX-FAB). He lived in the Musaga area, Mugere commune, and worked for Garda World Security, a company responsible for the security of people and property, located near the Public Garden in Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province. On that day, he finished work around 5 PM and took the way home, but he never arrived at his residence. His family as well as his coworkers are very concerned for his safety.*

## **II.1.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY**

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

### **II.1.2.1. TORTURE, PUNISHMENTS, AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT.**

A total of 2 persons were tortured throughout the country during the period covered by this report. All the victims are recorded in Bujumbura and Gitega provinces.



**II.1.2. RIGHT TO PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY (the following of page 9)**

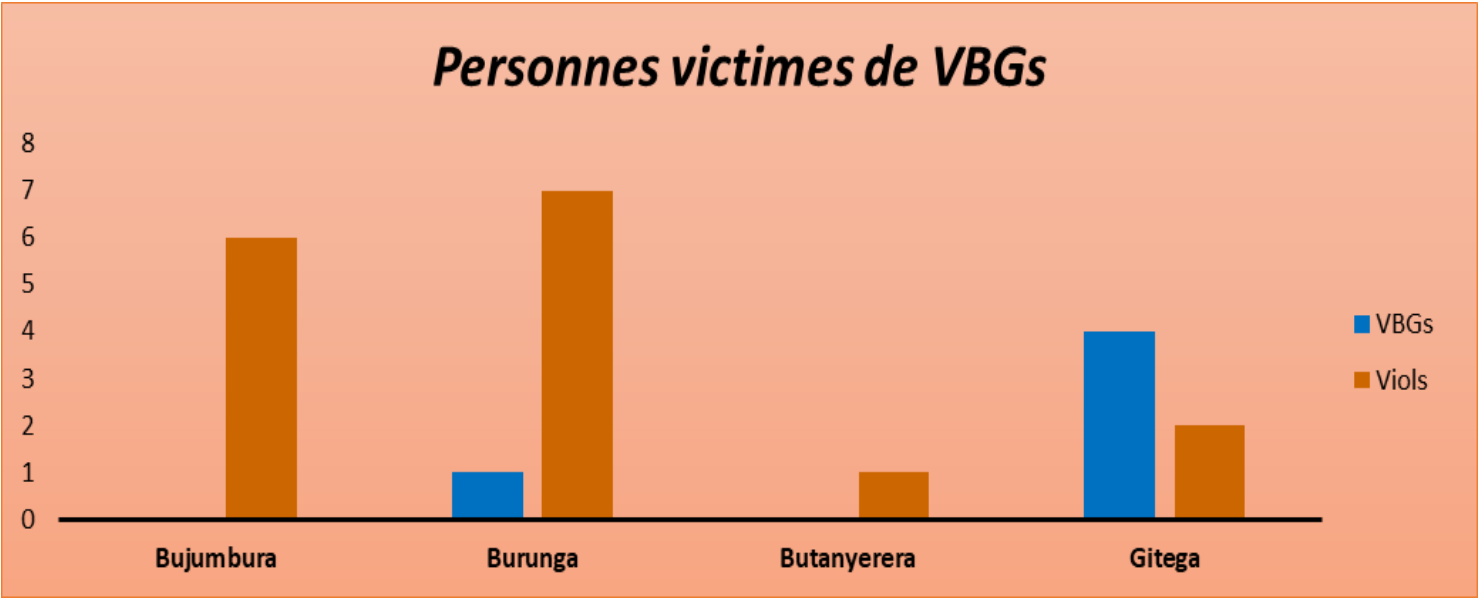
**The two documented cases:**

Ex1: On January 07, 2026, in the Jabe neighborhood avenue de l'imprimerie, Bwiza zone, Mukaza commune in Bujumbura province, Gaston Ntukamazina, was beaten by a group of bandits who attacked him as he was returning home. These bandits, identified as members of the Imbonerakure in this area, injured and damaged Gaston Ntukamazina's right eye. According to witnesses in the locality, a certain Bob, who is the leader of a team of thieves in this neighborhood, and a man named Kevin were identified among those who assaulted Gaston. This group of bandits who threaten the inhabitants of the Jabe neighborhood is supported by the chief of the said neighborhood, in the person of Jean Claude BIZIMANA who is stifling the prosecution files. These inhabitants of Jabe demand the dismissal of Jean Claude BIZIMANA, head of the neighborhood described as having failed in his mission and using his power to mistreat his constituents.

Ex2: On January 10, 2026, around 2 a.m., on Rwingoma Hill, Buhiga area, KARUSI commune, Gitega province, MINANI MOUSSA, a member of CNDD-FDD, originally from the SHATANYA neighborhood of the city of Gitega, over 40 years old, was apprehended while trying to steal from the household of a widow named Monique by Imbonerakure on patrol led by their chief named Eric. According to local witnesses, Moussa was beaten all over his body and had a rope tied around his neck, then was taken to the Ndurumu River. The victim managed to escape death and was found by soldiers on a night post securing the Ndurumu checkpoint. When asked for his identity, he responded that he was at home with other documents. When the chief of the Imbonerakure at the zonal level called his colleague in Gitega, he replied that this man is known as a skilled thief and then he was taken to the Buhiga area police where he was imprisoned.

**II.1.2.2. GBV/RAPES**

During the period covered by this report, the Iteka League recorded 21 GBV victims, including 16 girls who were all minors under Burundian law, being under 18 years old. Among the victims, there was 1 man and 20 women. Burunga Province was the most affected with 8 victims. Bujumbura and Gitega each recorded 6 victims, and finally Butanyerera with 1 victim.



### **II.1.2.2. GBV/RAPES (the following of page 10)**

#### **Illustrative examples:**

Ex1: Information received by the Iteka League on January 28, 2026, indicates that a young girl, a domestic worker in the house, was raped by her employer's son on January 16, 2026, in the Kajaga neighborhood, Ntahangwa commune, Bujumbura province.

According to information gathered on the spot, the victim's name is J. N, originally from the province of Kayanza. She worked for Muhizi Christian, who has four children, including Muhizi Trésor, 19, who is presumed to have committed the crime.

He attacked the victim when she was alone at home, raped her, and tried to silence her. The victim managed to alert the neighbors, who informed the authorities, and the alleged perpetrator was arrested and is currently in custody in the Kabezi provincial cell.

*Ex2: Information received by the Iteka League on January 12, 2026 indicates that Nivyumwamagize Dieudonné, 27, from Mutambara hill in the Gatete area of Rumonge commune in Burunga province in the south of the country, was arrested by the police on January 10, 2026.*

*Police sources and neighbors of his family say that he was taken directly to the police station in the capital of Rumonge commune on the day of his arrest. He is suspected of raping a 9-year-old girl named D N from Mutambara II elementary school in the same area of Gatete a few hours before his arrest. According to a source close to the alleged perpetrator's family, the man in question went to borrow a knife from a household near his home, where he found the girl. The victim's parents gave him the knife, and the man asked the girl to come and get it. The girl accompanied the man, believing she was going to return the knife, but when they arrived at his home, he undressed her and raped her. The man's wife arrived home while the girl was still lying naked on the floor. The same sources say that it was the man's wife who alerted the girl's parents, who came to rescue their child and took her to the Humura center on the hill for medical care. The alleged perpetrator has been arrested and is being held in police custody. The investigation is ongoing.*

## **II.2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC 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 particular feature of these rights is that they are often realized progressively, unlike civil and political rights. The signatory states, including Burundi, commit to ensuring the exercise of these rights according to their available resources.



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### ***II.2.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE.***

Economic law in Burundi in January was disrupted by the following events: price increases following the closure of the Gatumba border due to the capture of UVIRA by a rebel group. Traders, both Burundian and Congolese, saw their activities blocked, leading to price increases. For example, the price of a loincloth rose from 90,000 to over 200,000 Burundian francs. Market players are demanding a solution from the government to support their families. A fertilization campaign for tea plantations was launched on December 23, 2025, but problems with fertilizer distribution arose. Fertilizers delivered to Rwegura were not distributed because they were deemed ineffective. Tea farmers are concerned about the quality of the fertilizers and are threatening to abandon their crops in favor of more profitable food crops.

In the commune of Cibitoke, the temporary closure of an irrigation dam has created a crisis for rice farmers in the middle of a critical growing season, risking production losses and a social crisis. Public administration employees in Burunga have not been paid for six months, causing financial distress. Transferred agents fear for their future, while measures are being taken to address these issues.

Coffee farmers in Matongo are warning of a two-year shortage of NPK fertilizer and denouncing corruption in the distribution of plant protection products. Other farmers are threatening to switch to food crops. In Kirundo, forced contributions to a CNDD-FDD party office are being imposed, fueling discontent due to reprisals against those who refuse to pay.

In Kirundo and Busoni communes, households are required to provide food for the Imbonerakure, despite the difficulties associated with famine. A fire in a commercial area in Bujumbura severely affected 35 merchants, destroying stocks. The losses are significant, and the victims are calling for help, while the community is demanding investigations into these frequent and sometimes suspicious fires.

### ***II.2.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION***

In January, a disruption to the right to education in Burundi highlighted violations of the principles of non-discrimination and equitable access to education. On January 5, 2026, the start of the second school term of 2025-2026 was chaotic in several schools in Gitega. A new administrative directive required students to wear closed-toe shoes, leading to mass exclusion from classes. In some classes, the number of students present fell below one-third, making teaching virtually impossible, according to teachers. Voices were raised to express disagreement with this measure, which was deemed out of touch with economic realities, especially in rural areas. Students and teachers called for an immediate review of this decision, stressing that it is essential to take into account the financial means of families in order to prevent school exclusions. The Governor of Gitega's blanket decision has caused considerable social frustration and increased the risk of school dropouts, thereby undermining the fundamental principle of access to education for all. At the start of the January school term, the Muramvya education authorities carefully checked compliance with this measure, sending home all students who did not meet this requirement. On January 9, 2026, many students had not re-enrolled, as evidenced by cases at ECOFO Biganda and Mubarazi, where the absence of schoolchildren was due to the inability to purchase shoes.

At the same time, the Kayanza Municipal Education Directorate (DCE) found itself in a deep crisis, with the start of the term marred by a dramatic shortage of desks. Efforts were underway to identify state plantations capable of producing these desks, while students shared seats, hindering their ability to learn. This situation was all the more worrying given that 60% of students had achieved poor results in the

### ***II.2.2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION (the following of page 12)***

previous term. In Burunga, the management of school grades was also under strain, with 9th grade teachers strongly opposing the new guidelines imposed by the Provincial Director of Education (DPE), Elias Ndikumana, which they considered illegal.

These rules, intended to promote fairness, sparked discontent among teachers, who believe that Ndikumana, having spent most of his career in administrative roles, does not understand the challenges on the ground.

Concerns even extended to the nighttime participation of students in political activities in Makamba, where they were forced to engage in political events without their families' consent, causing concern and outrage within the community. In short, the education sector in Burunga was in deep crisis, exacerbated by the mass departure of teaching staff seeking better living conditions abroad, which only added to the challenges faced by the Ministry of Education in an already difficult context. The most affected municipalities suffered from an alarming shortage of teachers.

### ***II.2.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH***

The right to health is disrupted in Burundi in January 2026 due to several factors. The province of Burunga is experiencing a sharp increase in mosquitoes, and a report on January 17 reveals that many residents have not received the impregnated mosquito nets that are essential for preventing malaria. This shortage exposes the population to increased risk, especially during the rainy season. At the same time, shortages of antimalarial drugs complicate care, forcing patients to turn to private pharmacies despite their limited financial resources. Health professionals warn of the dangers for children and pregnant women. Rumors of mosquito nets being diverted to Tanzania are fueling anger among underserved populations, who are calling on the government to distribute mosquito nets quickly and fairly and to ensure a regular supply of medicines. Health authorities acknowledge that some areas are not covered and promise to improve distribution, while malaria cases continue to rise nationwide.

With regard to police officers, on January 20, the Iteka League received information indicating that members of the National Police have not had access to care in specialized hospitals for over a year. Police officers, now deprived of healthcare vouchers, must provide a deposit to be admitted to these facilities. This change, communicated orally, has caused discontent and requests for clarification from officers. Meanwhile, the General Staff continues to provide care for the army.

A mysterious illness affecting more than 500 students in Gatara and Kayanza is also causing concern. Flu-like symptoms such as fever, headaches, and coughing persist. School officials are taking preventive measures and calling for rapid intervention by health services to identify the source of the illness. Awareness-raising meetings are planned to prevent the spread of the disease, reminding people of the rapid spread of the coronavirus and causing widespread concern.

Finally, the commune of Muyinga is facing a shortage of drinking water, particularly in the Kibogoye neighborhood, where the supply has been interrupted for more than a month due to corruption. Residents are calling for an end to these unfair practices. In addition, young girls in the municipality of Mwaro are refusing to take iron tablets provided by the Ministry of Health, despite a study revealing alarming deficiency rates. These tablets were distributed on January 27, but many girls are pretending to take them. The Director of the Technical High School held a

### ***II.2.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH (the following of page 13)***

meeting to urge parents to encourage their daughters to follow this three-month treatment.

## ***II. 3. CATEGORY RIGHTS***

### ***II.3.1. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS***

Children's rights are protected in Burundi through the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) ratified in 1990. The country has also adopted laws and policies to protect children.

However, significant challenges remain in practice. During the period of this January report, children's rights were severely affected. In addition to the sexual violence and other abuses mentioned above against minors, the Iteka League recorded six cases of infanticide and two cases of voluntary abortion.



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### III. CONCLUSION AND 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 highlights cases of violations of the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights.

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

#### **To the Government of Burundi:**

1. To guarantee respect for human rights, in particular the right to life, physical integrity, and liberty.
2. To take measures to end impunity for 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, health, education, and justice, for all citizens.
4. To investigate and severely punish violence against minors, which has become commonplace in Burundi at the local administrative level.

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

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



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