



BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS “ITEKA”

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

REPORT OF THE BURUNDIAN LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA" ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURUNDI FROM OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2025



*In memory of Madame Marie Claudette Kwizera, treasurer of the Iteka League, missing since December 10, 2015. From December 2015 to December 31, 2025, at least 851 victims of forced 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 (WGEDI) has already communicated to the government of Burundi about at least 252 victims.
[1https://docs.un.org/fr/A/HRC/57/54](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 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."

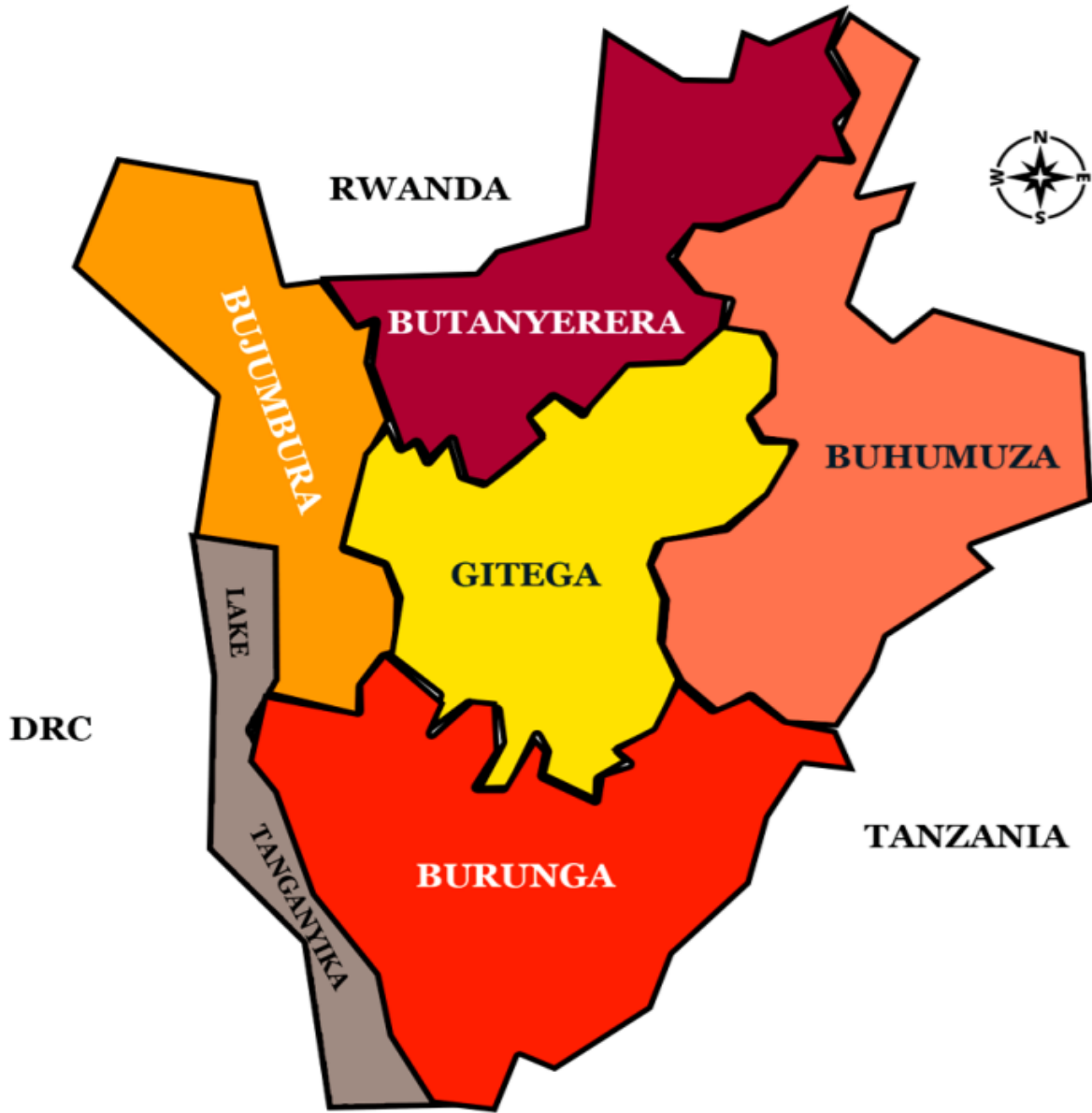


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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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

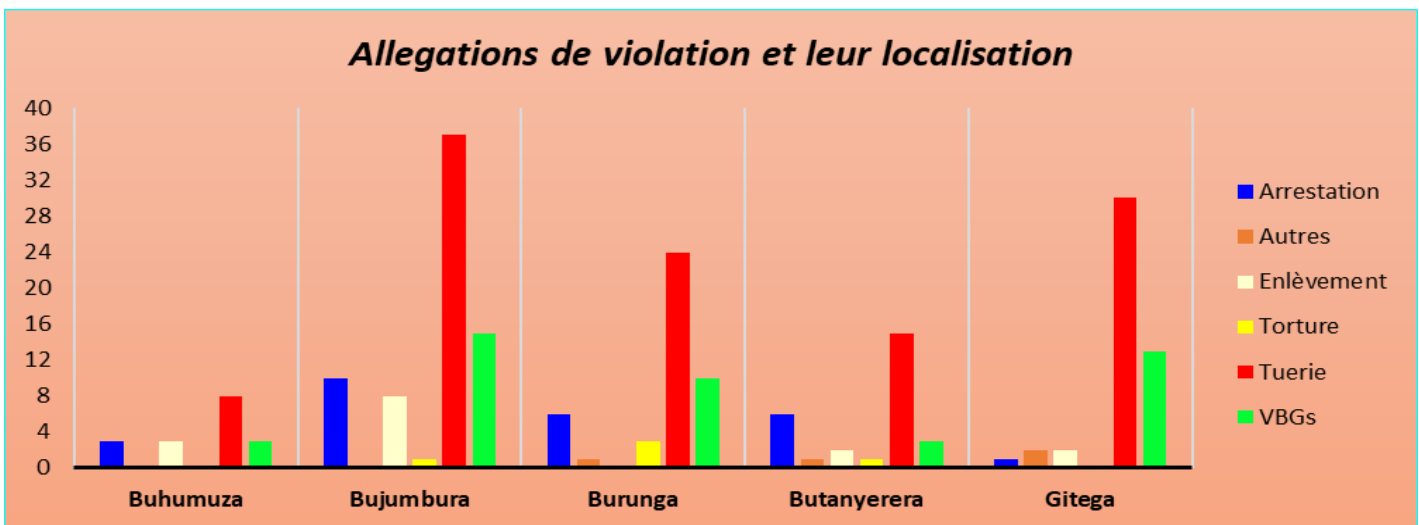
0. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

This report on the human rights situation in Burundi from October to December 2025 examines the political, governance, judicial, environmental, and security context, as well as the humanitarian situation. It also reviews civil and political rights, as well as social, economic, and cultural rights. The report concludes with a summary and recommendations.

Thus, the state of human rights has deteriorated alarmingly: at least 114 people were killed, of whom 88 bodies were found; among the deceased, 90 were men and 25 were women. Among the victims, 44 suffered gender-based violence, including 30 cases of sexual violence committed against minors, with 22 cases confirmed, affecting 38 women and 6 men. Other statistics include 5 people who were victims of torture, including 4 men and 1 woman, 15 abducted or disappeared, including 11 men and 4 women, as well as 26 arbitrarily arrested, including 2 women and 24 men. Although the political affiliation of the majority of the victims is unknown, it should be noted that members of political parties were not spared: 5 members of the CNDD-FDD were hit, including 3 kidnapped and 2 killed, as well as 4 members of the CNL party, with 3 kidnapped and 1 arrested.

Charges are also being brought against members of the Imbonerakure militia, administrative agents, elements of the SNR, as well as police officers, who are considered to be the main perpetrators of the reported human rights violations and killings.

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



Out of a total of 208 victims of documented violations during the fourth quarter of 2025, 114 were killed, 44 were victims of GBV, including 30 victims of sexual violence, 5 were tortured, 15 were abducted, and 26 were arrested, with 4 cases classified under another category (including assault, injury, and suicide).

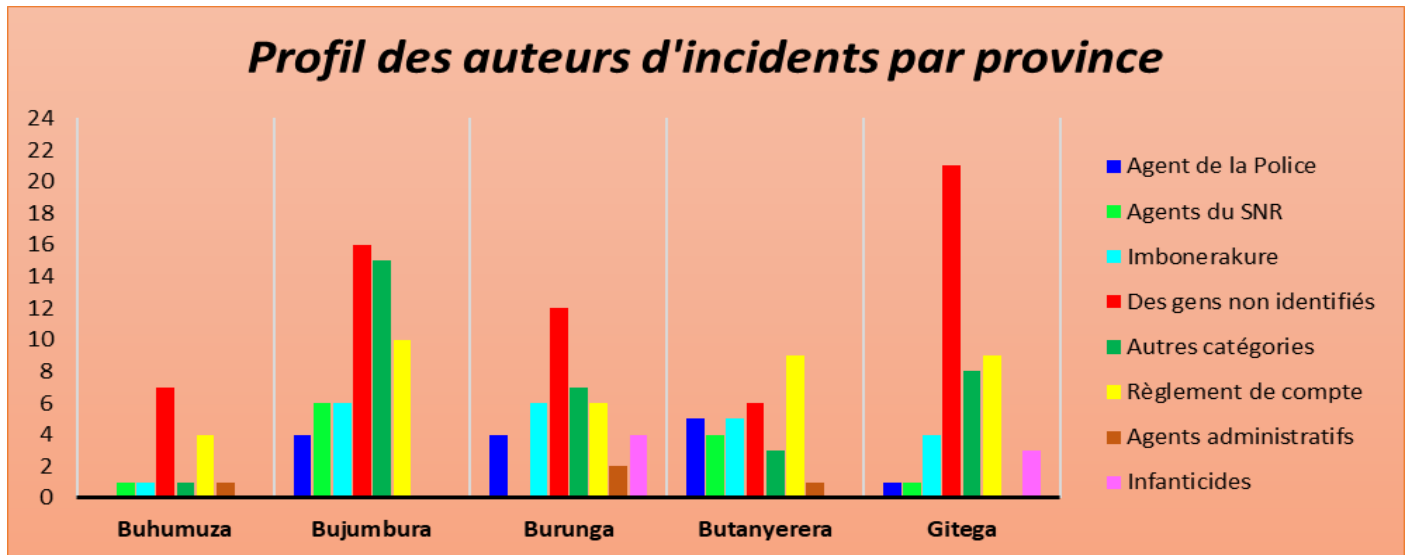
Bujumbura province ranks first with 71 victims of violations, including 37 killed, 1 case of torture, and 15 victims of sexual and gender-based violence, 8 abduction victims, and 10 people illegally arrested and detained. The province of Gitega follows with 48 cases, including 30 killed, 13 victims of GBV, 2 abduction cases, 1 arbitrarily arrested person, and 2 cases of assault and injury. Burunga province ranks third with 44 victims of violations, consisting of 24 people killed, 10 victims of GBV, 3 cases of victims of torture, 6 people arrested, and 1 case of inhuman and/or degrading treatment.

0. BRIEF PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT (the following)

Fourth is the province of Butanyerera, which recorded 28 victims, including 15 people killed, 3 cases of GBV, 1 torture victim, 2 people kidnapped, 6 people arrested, and another case placed in another category.

The province of Buhumuza comes last, with 17 victims, including 8 people killed, 3 GBV victims, 3 people kidnapped, and 3 people arrested.

Figure 2: Graph showing the main perpetrators of human rights violation allegations observed in Burundi during the period from October to December 2025



Out of a total of 208 documented victims, 168 incidents of violations were recorded during the reporting period. 62 cases were committed by unidentified individuals, 22 cases by Imbonerakure, 14 cases by police officers, 34 cases by other categories (ordinary citizens, including merchants, Popular Justice, infanticides, poisonings). SNR agents (11 cases), military (4 cases), settling of scores (38 cases), administrative (4 cases).

I. CONTEXT

I.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

In the last quarter of 2025, Burundi was experiencing a tense political period. In October, incidents, particularly in the North, revealed the clandestine recruitment of soldiers into the Imbonerakure. In Gitega, leaders were organizing the recruitment of young people, bypassing official procedures. Rumors circulated about the number of files being prepared, while in Kirundo, informal recruitment further complicated the situation. On October 13, the country commemorated the assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore, a solemn moment, but the climate of violence contrasted with official speeches advocating for peace. On October 17, the President traveled to Kirundo, displaying optimism overshadowed by tragic events. Criticism of the opposition was increasing, and the appointment of a new committee in Musinga, composed solely of members from the same party, raised concerns about pluralism. Commemorative ceremonies related to Ndadaye in Cibitoke lacked popular interest, highlighting a disconnect with citizens' concerns. At the end of October, a tragic event in Musongati, where Madame Capitoline was brutally attacked following a dispute with a member of the CNDD-FDD, symbolized growing political intolerance, while the population's security was compromised.

1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT (the following)

In November, a new escalation of tensions emerged, with defamatory attacks by the president against human rights defenders. Public discourse condemned the critics and threatened repercussions. On November 4, during a speech in Matongo, he labeled a critic as a "bandit," causing serious concern. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission struggled to establish constructive relationships in the face of persistent division, while pressing educational and economic issues weighed on the population, particularly teachers, who faced pressure to participate in administrative events. In Mugina, miners feared for their safety following rumors of land confiscation, and the Senate appointed a new Attorney General in a climate of social pressure.

In December, a summit in Washington marked a major moment for Burundian diplomacy, with peace talks between the DRC and Rwanda. The president sought to sidestep crucial issues, following criticism over the lack of solutions to the crises experienced by the population. In Nyabihanga, pressure on residents to participate in official events was increasing, affecting their daily lives. The resignation of the secretary-general of the ruling party CNDD-FDD, Révérien Ndikuriyo, as senator heightened tensions within the political landscape, while airport construction projects reopened historical wounds for those displaced by the 1993 war. On December 17, the Burundian ambassador to Belgium addressed the European Parliament, mentioning regional tensions in light of the alleged support from Rwanda to the Congolese rebellions. Finally, on December 19, the President criticized Rwanda, calling for diplomacy while creating an atmosphere of growing fear. These speeches foreshadowed the complexity of a political situation in turmoil.

1.2. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

During the fourth quarter of 2025, the governance landscape in Burundi is marked by tensions and noticeable irregularities. In October, in Karusi and Gitega, conflicts arise around the distribution of fertilizer, disrupting farmers who are relying on vital support. In Muramvya, the distribution of sugar, organized by the Imbonerakure, is marred by discriminatory practices, causing discontent within the community. Meanwhile, in Mugere, complications related to the recruitment of teachers emerge, fueled by allegations of favoritism that create unrest in people's minds. Public services experience delays due to new appointments, making access to administrative documents increasingly difficult.

At the Maragarazi border, land tensions are emerging, with accusations of dispossession heavily straining relations between Burundians and Tanzanians. The Rutana court has handed down sentences to people found guilty of destroying a dam, an act that has only intensified the disputes. Members of UPRONA, for their part, live in fear of increasing threats, and the prevailing atmosphere of impunity only adds to the public's concern.

²<https://x.com/Liguelteka/status/1986805360217432522>

³https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itLqg_sPSF4

1.2. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT (the following)

The month of November only heightens tensions, particularly regarding land rights, exacerbated by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which brings back painful memories. Repatriates, hoping to reclaim their land, face the concerns of residents worried about their future. In Gitega, the struggle for effective leadership within schools disrupts the proper functioning of institutions, worsening the situation for students. In Muyinga, revelations about the embezzlement of school supplies highlight widely spread corruption practices, while teachers, in a surge of anger, threaten to go on strike.

In December, governance experienced a turning point marked by the imposition of a monthly contribution required from employees of Light and Life High School to the CNDD-FDD, adding an additional financial burden to already strained families. The shortage of agricultural inputs only increases general discontent, and the police seized a shipment of fertilizer, further intensifying the crisis. Administrative officers, meanwhile, are grappling with unpaid salaries, plunging their families into alarming hardship. Many hill chiefs, faced with these disruptions, choose to step down from their positions, while desperate calls to authorities multiply in an attempt to resolve this salary crisis, further threatening local stability.

1.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT

In the last quarter of 2025, Burundi was grappling with judicial turmoil. On October 7, at the Ngozi Court, the case of journalist Muhoza Aline Sandra raised procedural questions, with her lawyers denouncing the incompetence of the Bujumbura Court of Appeal. The Prosecutor upheld his charges, and the court set her case for deliberation. Two days later, Eric Niyonzima was convicted of child trafficking after being intercepted at the Maragarazi River with three children, while Muhoza, despite irregularities, remained imprisoned. On October 14, new charges were brought against her, and a confrontation in Rutana revealed ethnic tensions. Prosecutor Tharcisse criticized the aggressiveness of the Imbonerakure while announcing a meeting scheduled for October 27. On October 23, the police intercepted more than twenty-five students from Green Hills School after a fire, raising concerns about favoritism toward certain parents. The students were transferred to other prisons. On October 29, the Rutana Court sentenced individuals for disturbances to economic security, and a police officer was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder. On October 27, youths from the CNDD-FDD were apprehended, while a Bible instructor was imprisoned for sexual assault against a student, fueling doubts about the judicial system.

November brought its share of events. On November 5, a hearing at the Central Prison of Gitega was disrupted by political officials, and the Minister of Justice proposed a commission of inquiry. The Iteka League criticized this interference, calling for fair treatment. On November 13, two police officers, tried for the murder of Eric Irakoze, received light sentences, sparking public outrage. On November 19, Muhoza saw his appeal rejected, and on November 28, a man was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder, although self-defense was mentioned. On November 26, the Rutana Court punished two people for the illegal sale of fuel, raising general discontent.

1.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT (the following)

In December, the judicial climate remained tense. Three judges, convicted for granting temporary releases to inmates accused of murder, called for their reinstatement without success. On December 2, a teacher was sentenced to three years in prison for attempted rape. This verdict sparked reactions and called for harsher penalties. An initiative to gather citizens' concerns was launched in Gitega, while Muhoza was given a heavy sentence for exchanges on WhatsApp. Finally, seven individuals from Bururi, still illegally imprisoned despite a successful appeal, caused concern among their families, who were seeking international assistance.

1.4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

In the fourth quarter of 2025, Burundi experienced a severe environmental crisis, marked by tragic and devastating events. On October 29, violent storms hit Makamba, flooding lands and causing human losses with two deaths and 117 houses destroyed. Two classrooms at ÉCOFO Gashonge school also collapsed, leaving the victims in great distress. The commune of Rutana also suffered damages, the extent of which remains unknown. While local authorities celebrated the appointment of a new communal leader, the affected populations were pleading for help to rebuild their lives.

On October 28, an eight-year-old girl lost her life when her house collapsed in Kayanza due to torrential rains. That day, schools in the Muruta and Nyabihogo areas suffered considerable damage, with five classrooms destroyed. The heads of these institutions requested urgent assistance to restore the school infrastructure. Three other children were injured due to storms and required medical care. In October, a severe drought affected Kirundo, compromising farmers' crops. The province of Gitega also suffered from this situation, increasing the risks of famine and theft. In the absence of aid, the situation could quickly worsen.

In November 2025, the province of Bujumbura was hit by a tornado that affected more than 350 families, destroying over 350 homes, three schools, and numerous fields. The tragedy left many households destitute, forcing children to stay out of school. Concerns about the fairness of aid distribution arose, with victims seeking to ensure that assistance reached those truly in need. On November 3, hail and strong winds hit Kayogoro, wreaking havoc on schools and causing the death of a 13-year-old student, in addition to injuring 24 others. Relief efforts allowed some victims to leave the hospital in good condition. On the same day, a storm also struck the Kayogoro Alliance School, heightening the community's despair.

Between December 29 and 30, torrential rains in Muramvya caused the destruction of houses and crops. Although there were no reported fatalities, the victims requested urgent assistance. Other tragedies struck Bubanza and Muramba, with human losses and major material damage, highlighting the need for prompt action by authorities to aid the disaster victims.

I.5. SECURITY CONTEXT

During the last quarter of 2025, Burundi witnessed a series of events highlighting an alarming security situation. In October, the atmosphere quickly turned sour. In Karusi, in the Gitega province, a wave of nighttime burglaries spread panic among residents. Between September 30 and October 3, five houses were targeted, and thieves stole valuables and food supplies. At the Buhiga market, three shops were also looted, causing heavy losses for merchants. The authorities, despite growing concerns from residents, did not respond, even in the face of a group of Imbonerakure who claimed to maintain security, which points to evident impunity.

In the province of Buhumuza, during a meeting, Governor Denise Ndaruhekere expressed zero tolerance towards those claiming land that had already been compensated by the state, calling on local leaders to raise awareness among citizens on this matter. In Muyinga, tensions escalated when staff at the Islamic Higher Institute were subjected to intimidation following academic sanctions against certain students, which developed into a conflict. The rector and the academic officer feared for their safety due to potential retaliations from the Imbonerakure, compounded by financial irregularities in their program.

On October 13, measures were implemented in Mutambara to identify residents considered "irregular," in an attempt to counter the growing insecurity related to unexplained violence. In the educational sector, Green Hills International College was shaken by insecurity following the questioning of 25 students about a fire that occurred at the institution. Additionally, searches were conducted by the police in an attempt to combat the illegal sale of fertilizers in Rutana and to find illegal weapons that were allegedly held by a retired individual in the Karusi commune, but these actions led to further tensions.

Settling into a turbulent climate, the Burundian population was plunged into fear, calling for interventions to restore order in the face of accounts of violence affecting innocent families. In November, significant events revealed the extent of the security deterioration. In Mugere, in the province of Bujumbura, Magnus Nkinahamira found himself in great danger after being accused of witchcraft following the tragic death of Faustin. These accusations forced Magnus to flee, reflecting an atmosphere of growing distrust.

On November 5, a grenade was found on Gitanga Hill, alarming the ITEKA League. A young man, Oscar Nibizi, a member of the Imbonerakure, was seriously injured after an attempted theft of clothes at the high school. Meanwhile, Toyi Thérèse was arrested for shooting a sleeping police officer, an act that shocked the community. Tensions escalated with a grenade attack targeting Jérôme Bashingwanubusa, an Imbonerakure activist, further fueling suspicions surrounding his activities.

Tragic events continued, including a fatal accident near the Kanyosha River. In another case, a domestic dispute led Cimpaye Jean to take his own life, while a 9-year-old girl, Arfana, ended her life following mockery. Each of these incidents sparked reflection on the emotional well-being of the most vulnerable, with no apparent action from the authorities in response to these situations.

⁵<https://ligue-iteka.bi/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Bulletin-ITEKA-N-IJAMBO-496.pdf>

1.5. SECURITY CONTEXT (the following)

In December, the climate became even more tense. A lifeless body was discovered in Kirundo, followed by gunshots heard near Lake Cohoha, illustrating the tensions at the borders. The situation worsened on December 1st when a teacher was assaulted at school, resulting in hospitalization and raising concerns about the safety of educators.

Acts of violence also erupted in Gitega, where students attacked a teacher, striking a severe blow to the school environment. At the same time, clashes between the M23 movement and the FARDC fueled fear among residents near the Rusizi River, and shells were fired onto Burundian soil in the Cibitoke commune. Worried parents tried to flee the violence but were pushed back by Burundian soldiers. This December in Burundi thus unfolded in an atmosphere tinged with violence and despair, symptoms of a deeper crisis ready to erupt at any moment.

1.6. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

During the last quarter, Burundi was engulfed in an alarming humanitarian situation. In December, a conflict flared up in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, resulting in a wave of refugees and worsening already severe problems. Their journey was marked by violent clashes between the M23 and the Congolese army and its allies, leaving people in palpable anxiety, especially after the capture of Uvira. Upon arrival, the refugees settled in makeshift shelters in Cibitoke, Magara, or at the Rumonge port, etc. Authorities restrict their integration into local communities, even as urgent calls for humanitarian aid resonate. In the village of Muhuta, residents feared sanctions if they hosted refugees.

Furthermore, a meeting in Kirundo was held to discuss border security with Rwanda, while Congolese fighters were reported in Bukinanyana. At the same time, armed groups were beginning to form in Mwaro, raising suspicion among the local populations. The human rights situation in Burundi was deteriorating, accompanied by the expulsion of Burundians into camps in Tanzania. Despite the arrival of humanitarian supplies, conditions remained dire, with cholera outbreaks and a lack of medical care. Migrants were struggling to survive in precarious conditions, often trying to flee the transit camps, while the police carried out arrests.

Managing the arrival of refugees complicated access to essential services that the Burundian government and its partners were trying to provide. The distribution of refugees across different sites also posed monitoring challenges. As of December 9, 2025, the Busuma site had already hosted around seventy thousand Congolese, and communes such as Ruyigi, Rutana, and Cibitoke were home to more than 100,000 refugees. The Busuma camp was overcrowded, with over 67,000 refugees lacking food, drinking water, medical care, and decent shelter. The alarming hygiene conditions raised fears of disease outbreaks. UNHCR and its other partners, such as ONPRA, CARITAS, the RED CROSS, TPO, and others, are on the ground to provide emergency assistance. To ease tensions, a new site in Bweru has been identified, with measures planned to improve the living conditions of the refugees.

1.6. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT (the following)

The Iteka League had expressed its satisfaction with the commitment of the Burundian government and partners such as UNHCR and other aforementioned partners for their support, despite numerous challenges. However, we also observed acts of violence during transfers to accommodation sites, where some refugees were forced to get into vehicles. The urgent requests of those allowed to move often went unanswered. Additionally, notable incidents of violence occurred. An urgent call is made to strengthen support for refugees and ensure a safe return.

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. Implementation texts have been established, notably 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. VOLUNTARY HOMICIDES

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

During the period under review, the Iteka League documented at least 114 people killed, including 90 men and 24 women. Among the 114 victims, 88 people were killed by unidentified individuals, and their bodies were found.

Indeed, 3 cases involve police officers, 46 cases are committed by unidentified individuals, 3 cases by imbonerakure, 37 cases by settling scores, 1 case by administrative staff, 3 cases of infanticide, and 5 cases are classified under other categories involving poisoning, landslides in mining sites, etc.

The provinces most affected are Bujumbura and Gitega with 37 and 30 cases respectively, followed by Burunga with 24 victims, Butanyerera with 15 victims, and finally Buhumuza province with 8 cases.

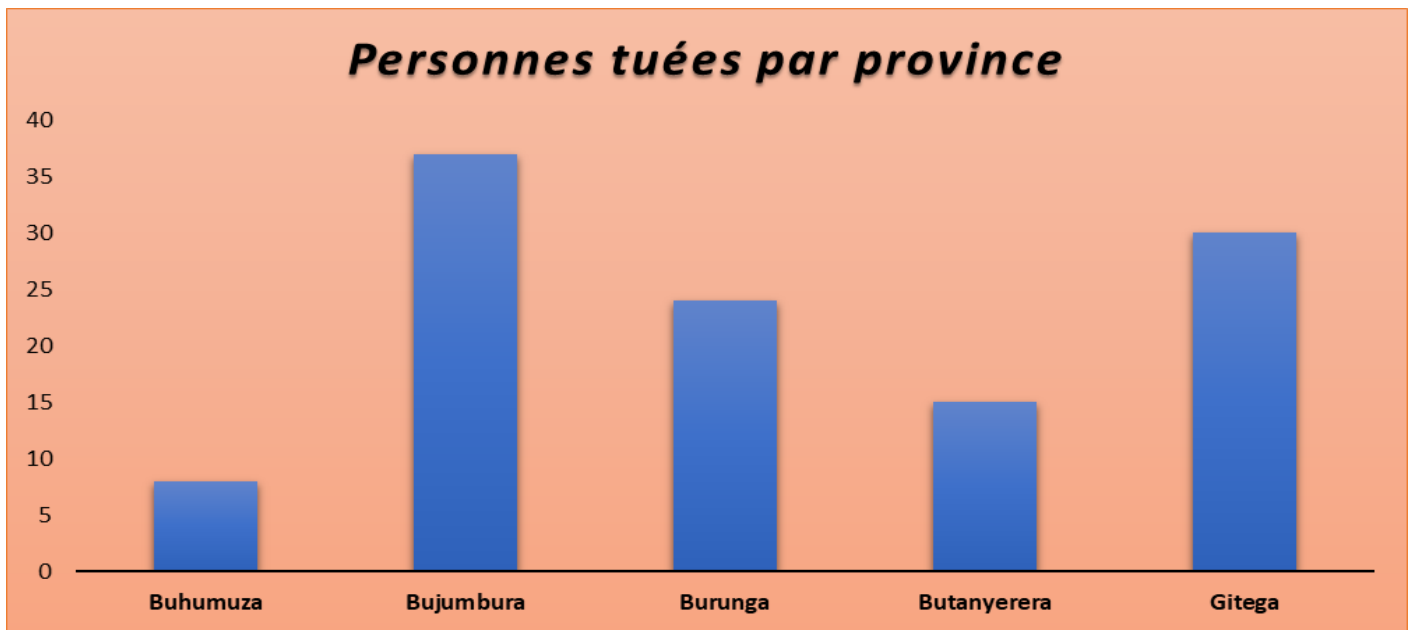
These alarming figures reveal a lack of political will to protect human rights in Burundi.



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II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES (the following)

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



Illustrative case:

Example 1: 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, aged 72, 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 conflicts. The peaceful evening was interrupted by a deafening explosion, plunging the community into panic.

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

Witnesses report having seen 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 conflicts in Burundi, often fueled by rumors and the inefficiency of local justice. A village figure lamented, 'These land disputes always end in tragedy.' Grenade attacks, common in neighborhood conflicts, continue to spread fear in Gasenyi, with the hope that justice will be served and the truth will emerge.

Ex2: On November 5, 2025, around 2 p.m., in a small savannah located on the edge of the Nyamagana River, in the Cibitoke area and commune, Bujumbura province, two bodies were found: a man of at least 50 years old and a boy of about 12 years old.

II.1.1. INTENTIONAL HOMICIDES (the following)

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.

Ex3: *A lifeless body of 20-year-old Evelyn Mukamariza was found on October 7, 2025 in her house on Mutambara hill, in the commune of Rumonge, 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 been made yet, but the victim's husband is currently being sought, according to local police and administrative sources. The couple had recently settled in Mutambara, coming from the Mudende area, in the former commune of Buyengero, which recently became an administrative zone of the Rumonge commune following the new territorial reorganization.

Neighbors of the victim say that the couple lived in a tense relationship, with recurring conflicts observed in recent weeks. The victim worked in a local shop not far from her home. "They were not on good terms, and it even worried the neighbors," says a villager speaking anonymously. 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, to every individual the right to a fair trial and that their case be heard and judged within a reasonable time. Nevertheless, on the ground, alarming irregularities in this regard are observed.

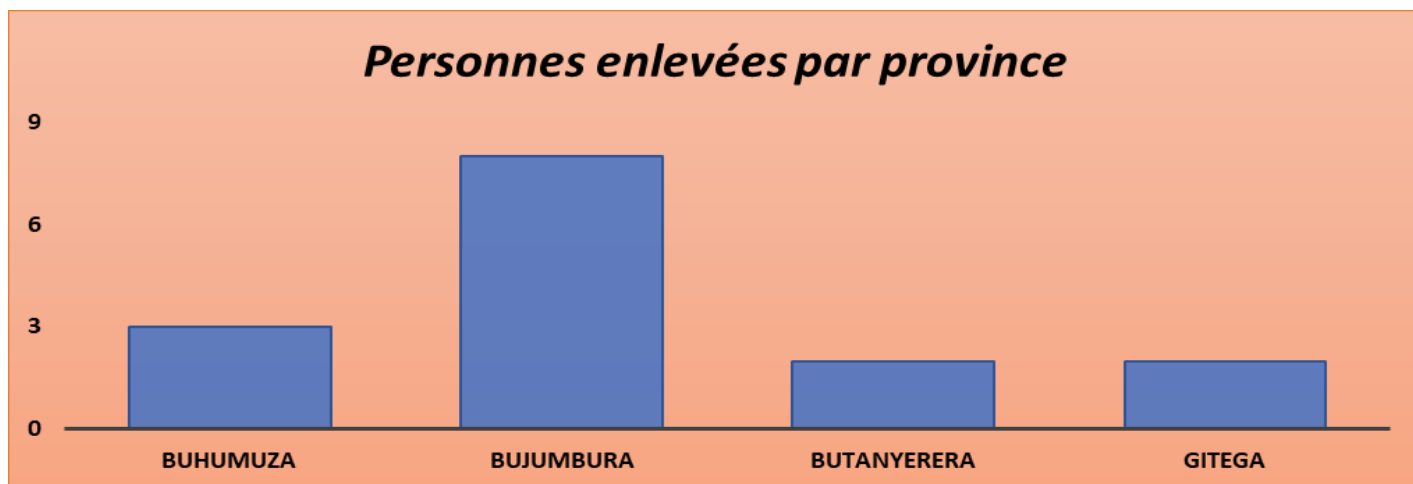
During this quarter, from October to December 2025, the Iteka League recorded at least 15 people who were abducted and/or went missing, mainly in Bujumbura province with 8 victims, Buhumuza with 3 victims, and Gitega and Butanyerera with 2 victims each. The alleged perpetrators are police officers in 2 cases, SNR agents in 8 cases, and unidentified individuals in 3 cases, circumstances suggesting that the latter may include Imbonerakure. Among the victims, there are 4 women and 11 men.



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

Figure 4: People abducted and/or reported missing in Burundi from October to December 2025



Illustrative case:

Ex1: Information received by the Iteka League on November 5, 2025, indicates that on October 30, 2025, two former CNL party activists, Nishimwe Egide, head of Nyarusebeyi hill, and his neighbor Ndikumana, both of whom had become members of the CNDD-FDD party, were abducted. The victims are from the same Buhoro area.

Initially, the victims were arrested by unknown SNR agents in Mugina, accompanied by Imbonerakure, led at the communal level by Théogène Bivahagumye. They were on their way to see someone at Mayuki hill when they were arrested around 2 p.m., then taken to the headquarters of the Mugina commune, where they were detained in the Mabayi Brigade dungeons.

The next day, the victims' families 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 a prime target for the SNR and the Imbonerakure of the CNDD-FDD because of strong opposition and being the home of two former opposition parliamentarians, Phénias NIYIGABA of FRODEBU and Simon BIIZIMUNGU of the CNL. It is home to several opposition members who have switched to the CNDD-FDD for their safety, but this switch 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 separate from members of the CNL.

This kidnapping is particularly concerning as it is not the first. In 2024, between February and June, 5 victims were kidnapped and never returned to their families.

Ex 2: On October 3, 2025, in the Mukaza commune, Bujumbura province, Pascal Nshimirimana, 43 years old, a former soldier of the ex-FAB (corporal), originally from Ndava hill, Mahwa zone, Matana commune, Burunga province, was kidnapped at his workplace (doorman at Polyclinique Roi David) located opposite the BCCI bank by agents of the Burundian intelligence service. According to sources among his relatives, people in a Toyota Probox with tinted windows jumped on him, and Pascal Nshimirimana tried to resist, asking for the reason for his arrest. According to the same testimonies, other police officers in uniform who were in a pickup-type vehicle and who

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

was parked not far from the gate of this polyclinic, quickly got out to help the first ones to catch the person named Pascal Nshimirimana. The victim was taken aboard the first vehicle (Probox car) which, at high speed, headed toward the road passing very close to the offices of the former Bujumbura City Hall. Since that day, the person named Pascal Nshimirimana remains missing.

EX3: On December 16, 2025, in Cankuzo commune, Buhumuza province, Majariwa, a man approximately 63 years old, driver of his vehicle of type PROBOX, was kidnapped by people in police uniforms. Majariwa is a resident of the Ndava neighborhood, in the urban center of Cankuzo, in Buhumuza province. He was abducted by three people in police uniforms who had a white double-cabin vehicle without a license plate, right at the parking lot of the travel agencies.

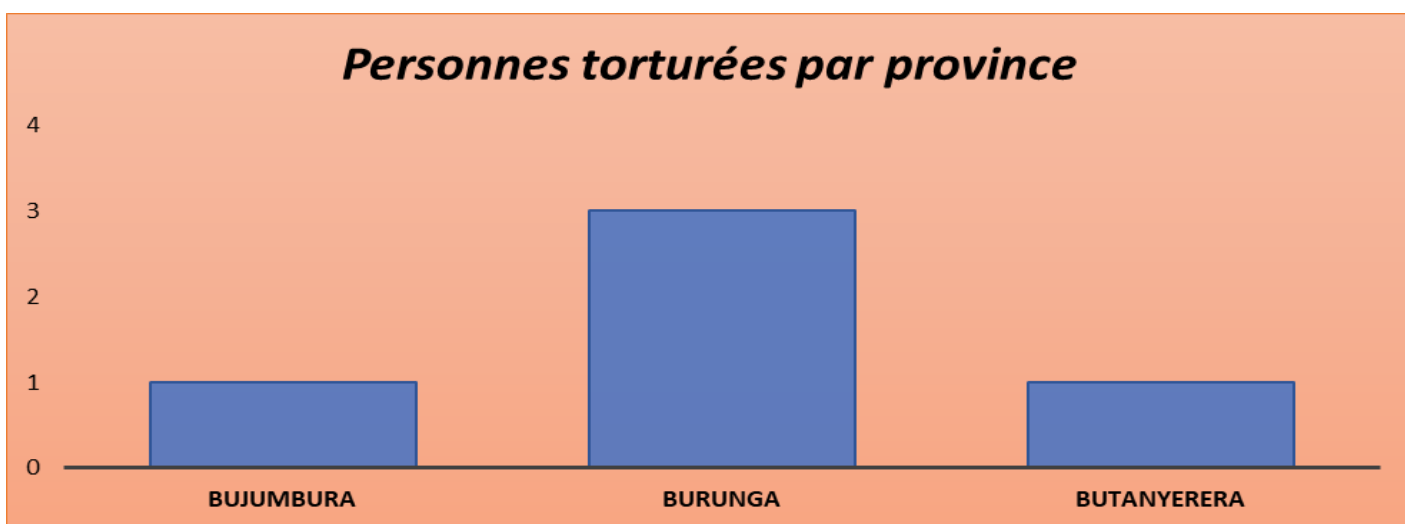
According to local sources, they forced him into this vehicle, and these individuals are suspected of being agents of the national intelligence service. The victim's vehicle was given to a person in civilian clothes who is not known in the area, and the location of this vehicle is unknown. No one knows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

Figure 5: Persons tortured during the period from October to December in Burundi



As the following chart shows, during this quarter, the Iteka League documented 5 cases of people being tortured. The most affected provinces are Burunga with 3 cases, and Butanyerera and Bujumbura with 1 case each. It should be noted that among the victims are ordinary citizens who were violated by members of the CNDD-FDD. As for the perpetrators, 4 cases are attributable to the Imbonerakure, the youth wing of the ruling party, and 1 case to police officers. Among the victims are 4 men and 1 woman.

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

Illustrative Cases:

Ex1: Information received by the Iteka League on December 18, 2025, indicates that on December 5, 2025, a female vendor at the Mabanda communal market in Nyanza commune, Burunga province, named Kabura, was violently assaulted at the market by the market guard, a member of the Imbonerakure youth league, before being thrown into a gutter.

The incident occurred when Kabura refused to give her sweet potatoes to intermediaries who offered a meager price. Faced with her refusal, the market official and CNDD-FDD activist Emmanuel Niyomwungere, along with the market guard and member of the Imbonerakure youth league, violently assaulted her in front of customers before throwing her into a gutter. Residents pointed out that these two individuals, politically affiliated with the CNDD-FDD, were reportedly released after a few days of detention at the Mabanda communal police station.

Alerted by the public on the day of the incident, law enforcement intervened and arrested the two men. However, several witnesses claim that they were released shortly afterward, reinforcing the sense of impunity in this case.

The residents emphasize the importance of respecting every merchant's right to freely sell the fruits of their labor and call for justice to intervene impartially. According to them, the release of the perpetrators without exemplary sanctions sends the wrong message and risks encouraging the repetition of such acts of violence in the country's markets, especially since the victim was attacked by those responsible for the market.

The people of Mabanda therefore call on the authorities to act quickly and firmly, so that this case serves as an example and the security and freedom of merchants are fully guaranteed in all Burundian markets.

Ex2: A violent incident occurred on October 14, 2025, in the Maramvya neighborhood (new Mutimbuzi neighborhood), Mutimbuzi commune (new Ntakangwa commune) in Bujumbura province, where a young Imbonerakure member of the CNDD-FDD, named Simon, tried to burn a citizen by pouring gasoline on him. The victim, who had a small amount of fuel for domestic use, was accused by Simon of illegal trading. Thanks to the quick intervention of the neighbors, the fire was extinguished, thus saving the victim's life, who was taken to a clinic for intensive care.

The residents, shocked by this brutal act, tried to go after the attacker. The police had to fire shots into the air to disperse the crowd and evacuate Simon. Law enforcement stated that he would be prosecuted, but the population doubts the chances of justice, believing that Simon enjoys impunity because of his affiliation with the Imbonerakure. The residents are demanding that justice be served and that Simon pay for the victim's medical care, while calling for an end to Imbonerakure violence in the area.

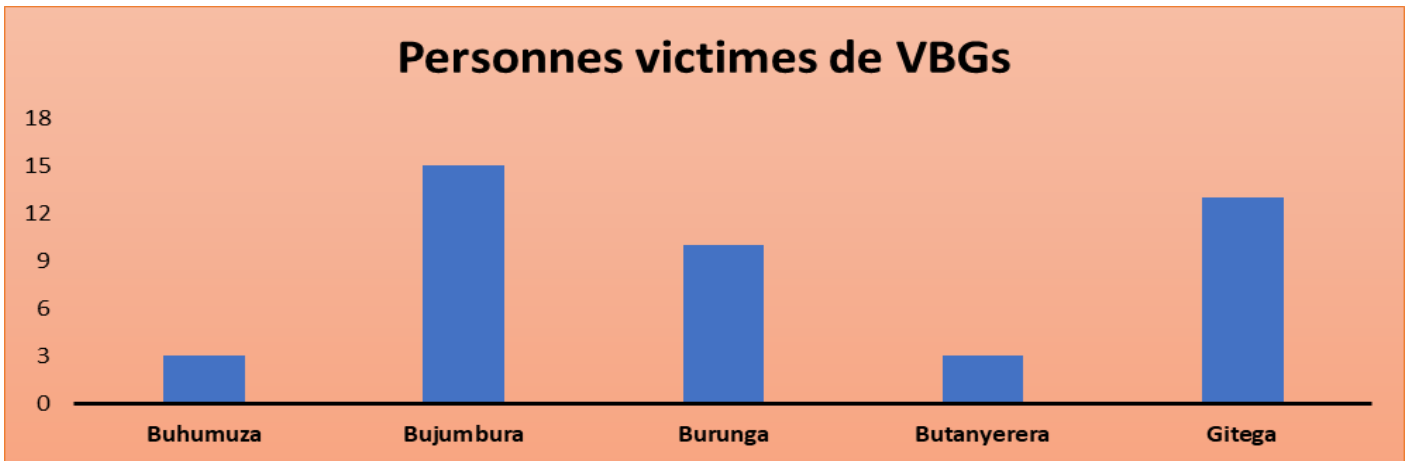
II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE / RAPE

The Law on Gender-Based Violence adopted in Burundi in 2016 was 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.

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

During the period covered by this report, cases of GBV were observed at an acute rate. The Iteka League recorded at least 46 people victimized by gender-based violence. Among these victims, 30 are victims of sexual violence. As indicated in the graph below, the provinces of Bujumbura and Gitega lead with 15 and 13 cases respectively, followed by the province of Burunga with 10 cases in third place, and Buhumuza and Butanyerera with 3 cases each. How many men and women?

Figure 6: Graph 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

EX 2: On the evening of October 5, 2025, on Mutambara hill, Rumonge area and commune, Burunga province, 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 spot, the alleged perpetrator would have taken the girl to his house before committing the act, under strong intimidation. After the fact, he would have gone out to inspect the surroundings, leaving the girl inside the house. It was then that neighbors, having suspected something abnormal, hid to observe the situation. They then saw the girl leave the house. The neighbours then arrested the alleged perpetrator and took him to the nearest police station. The latter was then transferred to the cell of the Rumonge police station.

As for the girl, she was taken to the Humura center for holistic care. The flagrancy was supposed to take place in the afternoon of this Wednesday, but it was postponed to October 15, 2025, the defendant having said that he had a witness.

Ex 3: On October 27, 2025, on Nyarunazi hill, Rutegama zone, Kiganda commune, Gitega province, a young boy was raped at around 7 p.m. T. E, 15 years old, student at Ecofo Nyarunazi, was called by Nizirazana Gabriel, 46 years old, farmer.

II.2.2. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL VIOLENCE (Continued)

He offered to share the local banana wine "urwarwa", which he accepted.

The man started mixing this wine with a strong local liquor called "kick" and the child became very drunk. The man took him to a bush and raped him anally.

As he was also drunk, he left with the child but the child had left his jacket there. It was when he went back to pick it up the next day that he told the parents everything. The alleged perpetrator was arrested by the police and is being held in the police jail 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 11 cases of arrest involving at least 26 individuals arbitrarily detained, including 2 women and 24 men. The suspected perpetrators are police officers in 6 cases, Imbonerakure in 1 case, and SNR agents in 2 cases. The most affected province is Bujumbura with 10 victims, followed by Burunga and Butanyerera with 6 victims each, then Buhumuza province with 3 victims, and finally Gitega with 1 victim.

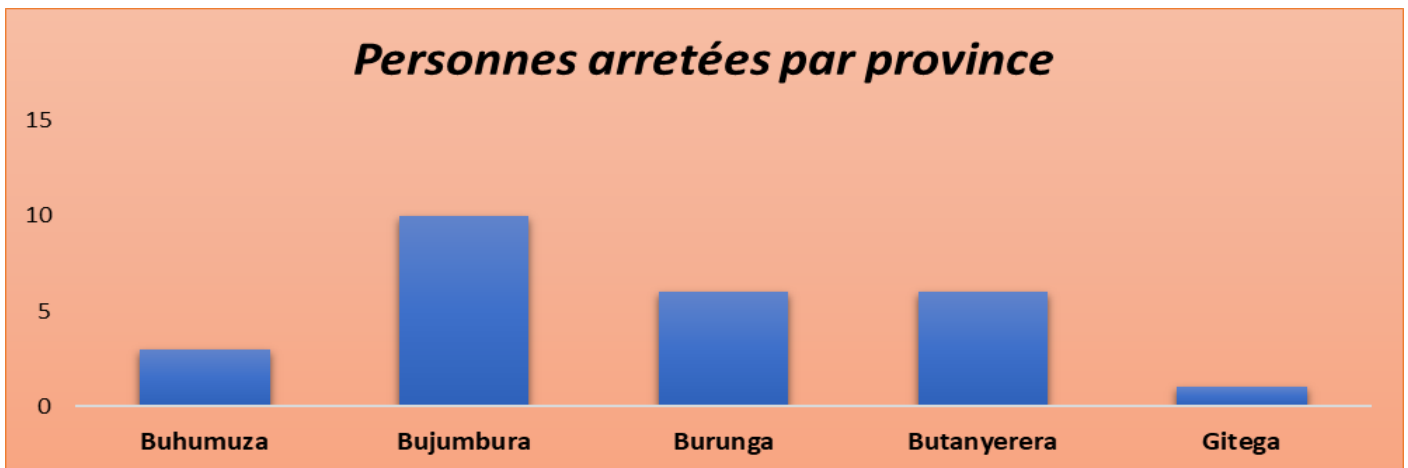


Illustration case:

Ex1: *Cyprien Sindayihebura has been held since December 2, 2025, in the cell of the National Intelligence Service in Ngozi, in the Ngozi commune, Butanyerera province.*

This man worked at the Burundian-Tanzanian border in Kobero as a phytosanitary inspector. According to his family members, he refused the entry into Burundi of phytosanitary products coming 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, wants at all costs for these products to get through, even attempting to bribe the National Intelligence Service. Cyprien Sindayihebura refuses this. According to information from Kobero, these products are still in Kobero. Before being arrested, according to his family members, he was called by 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 also called journalist Sandra Muhoza by phone, who has been imprisoned since April 18, 2024.

The members of Cyprien Sindayihebura's family fear for his safety and are asking the authorities to do everything possible to release their loved one, who has been unjustly imprisoned.

II.3.1. ARBITRARY ARRESTS (the following)

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.

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

The former soldier faced 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 armed movement M23, and a police officer from the communal station claimed to recognize him for having exchanged fire in Musaga in 2015.

Ex3: On 11/8/025, a deputy prosecutor of Kirundo named Nshimirimana Jean Paul was arrested and detained at the central prison of Ngozi by the Attorney General of Ngozi, accused of releasing 2 people who had been illegally held for a month in the Kirundo prosecutor's cell. They had been brought by the head of the SNR of Kirundo but faced no charges. After submitting the case file to the prosecutor, he was authorized to release them, but afterwards Jean Paul was accused of releasing 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 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.

III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE

In the last quarter of 2025, Burundi experienced a social and economic crisis worsened by various events. On October 1, the "torch of peace" in Buhumuza sparked concerns about the resources used while the population faced a shortage of essential goods such as fuel. Farmers in Butanyerera denounced the unequal distribution of seeds, exacerbated by discrimination from local leaders linked to the opposition. In Burunga, complaints about favoritism in seed distribution emerged, prompting farmers to demand a return to local seeds while fearing a food crisis. Repression in Cibitoke against those suspected of connections with armed groups threatened food security. Despite subsidies for seeds, many farmers were unable to buy them due to prohibitive prices, fueled by allegations of speculation. In the health sector, embezzlement in Makamba revealed cases of corruption. Growing discontent in Kirundo due to the lack of manure affected the harvests, while celebrations in Mugina disrupted economic activities. In Cibitoke, conflicts over public land diverted by corrupt officials created the crisis.

III.1. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE (Continued)

In November 2025, economic rights in Burundi were in decline. President Ndayishimiye, accused of illegally controlling resources, saw cooperatives impoverished, and the Iteka League denounced his involvement in fraudulent mineral trafficking. Mining cooperatives faced closure, leaving many miners uncertain about their future. The situation around the Rugofarm lands deteriorated, worsened by the expropriation of farmers. In Burunga, farmers struggled with unsold crops, and a ban on exports to Tanzania complicated their sales. The tensions in Kaburantwa over compensation related to an expropriation highlight a crisis of trust between the population and the authorities. In Bururi, a delay in the distribution of fertilizer worried farmers, while in Matongo acts of revenge had led to the destruction of fields. In Buhumuza, embezzlement in the distribution of agricultural inputs heightened general mistrust.

In December, the economic situation deteriorated with fraud in the management of inputs in the Muramvya commune, resulting in losses for farmers. The city of Ruyigi experienced power outages after a storm, disrupting economic activities, and drought in the KUMOSO region threatened crops. Harsh police crackdowns in Butanyerera to enforce the ban on alcohol sales led to seizures and arrests.

A surge in fuel prices in Bubanza and Mpanda was worsening the plight of transporters. Price hikes at gas stations, combined with a climate of insecurity due to armed conflicts, were making the situation difficult for users. Motorcycle taxi drivers in Kayanza were complaining about excessive fines, calling for reforms. Despite the approach of the holidays, people in Cankuzo were celebrating with uncertainty, as the price of meat was high, and the stress over rising food prices weighed on their minds. Some were trying to build their businesses, often at prices considered exorbitant.

III. 2. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

During the fourth quarter of 2025, the right to education in Burundi was seriously hindered by several events. On October 5, at Mwaro I Communal High School in Gitega, the principal, Célestin Nduwimana, demanded a contribution of 5,000 FBU per student for computers, even for those at the primary level, causing dissatisfaction among parents. Furthermore, computers previously provided by the ministry had been transferred to the University of Mwaro, raising questions about the current management of resources. The Gitega province experienced a supply crisis, particularly with chalk, while stocks remained undistributed, making teaching difficult.

On October 6, students in Bururi were mobilized for official political activities, which sparked outrage among child rights advocates. At ECOFO Cuzwe school, a religious conflict broke out when Catholic students had their rosaries confiscated, prompting a response from parents. The communal education director promised a meeting to clarify the situation. The Communal Directorate of Education in Ruyigi also experienced problems, notably a shortage of teachers, raising concerns among parents about the educational future of their children. Furthermore, extortion practices at the Islamic Higher Institute of Muyinga raised security questions, worsened by threats against the administration. The events of October highlighted alarming gaps in the Burundian education system.

⁶<https://x.com/Liguelteka/status/1988246579988271394>

III.3. RIGHT TO HEALTH

In the last quarter of 2025, the right to health in Burundi was severely disrupted, particularly in October with a cholera outbreak in the communes of Cibitoke and Bukinanyana, causing 13 deaths out of nearly 480 cases. Identified on September 4, the outbreak spread to hills such as Mparambo, while local authorities chose silence in the face of the crisis, fueling distrust among the population. Doctors Without Borders and the Red Cross tried to help, but complaints about freedom of expression and the lack of data persisted. The use of polluted water was cited as the cause of the outbreak, and access to safe drinking water remained a major challenge. Despite appearances of stabilization, the risk of new cholera outbreaks remained high without investment in water and sanitation.

In the province of Burunga, the lack of water also affected Anders Gahore Hospital and schools, making emergency care difficult. In Ruyigi, unreported cases of diarrhea raised fears of an epidemic, while in Kizuka, cholera continued to increase. At Saint Augustine Hospital, disinfection efforts were hampered by a shortage of drinking water. Promises of free care fell short of reality, and the urgency for support is intensifying.

In November, the crisis continued with a nurse refusing to treat victims of a road accident, prompting a reaction from the governor who personally transported the injured. The nurse was suspended, and questions arose about hospital practices, revealing problematic institutional standards. In December, the cholera outbreak spread to Nyanza and Rumonge, with 260 cases and two confirmed deaths. A crucial meeting brought together the Minister of Health and partners, who distributed essential supplies to combat the crisis.

Inadequate latrines and access to drinking water were problematic, and Civil Protection was trying to provide potable water. At Mukenke hospital, the lack of medical staff was compromising emergency care. Congolese refugees in Rumonge were also suffering, and seven of them had lost their lives due to inhumane conditions. Authorities warned about the lack of resources and called for help to respond to this humanitarian crisis. Authorities planned to move refugees to the Bweru camp starting from December 23. Authorities planned to deploy security measures and coordinate with humanitarian agencies to ensure the return and support of refugees, while assessing risks and conditions on the ground to ensure a possible voluntary and orderly reintegration. Since the takeover of Uvira by the M23, Burundi has recorded over 100,000 refugees.



Anyone should be respected

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

During the period covered by this report, a persistent deterioration of human rights was observed in various parts of the country. This report highlights incidents concerning violations of the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom, also including category-specific rights, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights. Furthermore, it addresses issues related to security and the overall context of the country.

The Iteka League provides an analysis of major events that influenced the political, judicial, and governance landscape, as well as security, environmental, and humanitarian contexts throughout the quarter. The Iteka League expresses its outrage at the impunity of the criminal acts observed and presents the following recommendations:

To the Burundian authorities:

1. To ensure the respect of human rights, particularly the right to life, physical integrity, and freedom.
2. To take measures to end the impunity of crimes and ensure that those responsible for human rights violations are held accountable for their actions.
3. To guarantee access to basic services, including water, health, education, and justice, for all citizens.
4. To investigate and severely punish violence against minors, which has become common in Burundi in view of the local administrative authorities.
5. To take measures to eradicate the impunity of crimes and ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations are held accountable for their actions.

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

1. Support the efforts of the Iteka League and other organizations dedicated to defending human rights in monitoring human rights violations in Burundi.
2. Use their influence to urge Burundian authorities to respect human rights and put an end to impunity.

To human rights organizations:

1. Continue monitoring the human rights situation in Burundi and advocate for the protection of fundamental rights.
2. Prioritize joint work in the interest of effectiveness and efficiency in their diverse interventions.
3. Provide support to victims of human rights violations and work to ensure their access to justice.



Anyone should be respected