N°2

REPORT ON THE ANALYSIS OF THE SALARY SITUATION OF BURUNDIAN CIVIL SERVANTS: PURCHASING POWER, SALARY DISPARITIES, AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

UMUSEKE - JOINT PROGRAM LIGUE ITEKA & KING UMURUNDI FREEDOM
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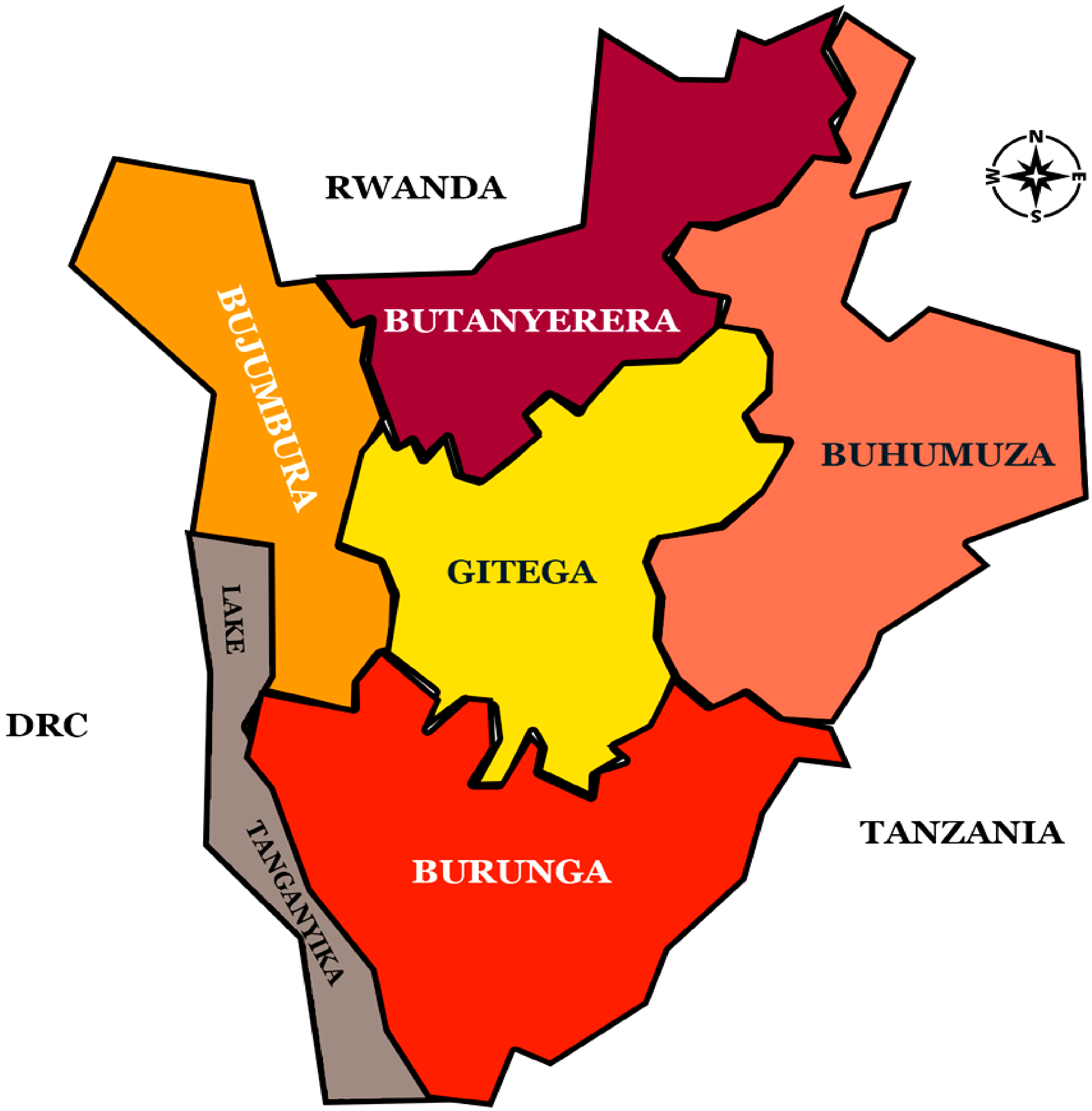
THE NEW ADMINISTRATIVE MAP OF BURUNDI



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PARCEM **:** Words and Actions for Awakening Awareness and Evolving Mindsets

GDP **:** Gross Domestic Product

P.U :Unit Price

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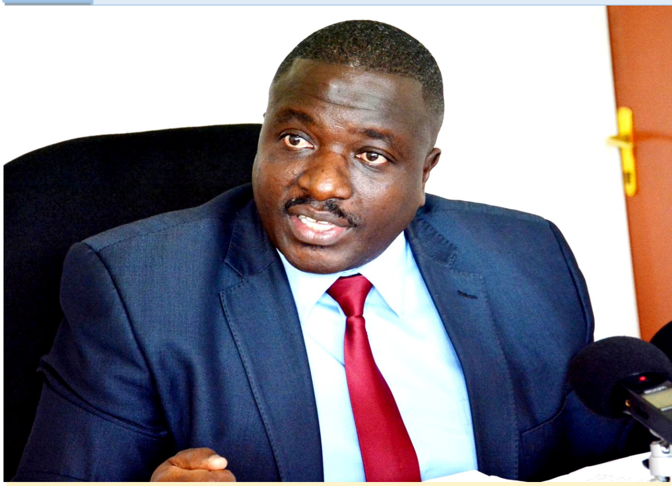
BURUNDI, THE CRISIS OF PURCHASING POWER FOR STATE EMPLOYEES AND THE PARADOX OF A RISING PAYROLL WHILE REAL WAGES ARE FALLING.

0. ANALYSIS OF FAUSTIN NDIKUMANA , PRESIDENT OF PARCEM



The issue of state employee pay has long been a major problem in Burundi. The current situation is particularly worrying: despite an overall increase in resources allocated to paying public workers, individual salaries remain very low compared to the current cost of living. This situation reflects a real crisis in the purchasing power of civil servants and raises, beyond the question of salaries, concerns about the very effectiveness of public administration.

Since 2021, inflation has accelerated sharply. According to Faustin Ndikumana's analysis, it has risen from approximately 8% to 34%, with peaks reaching nearly 40%. Inflation rates have thus quadrupled, a development he considers particularly worrying given the situation in other countries of the sub-region. This inflation primarily impacts food products, which constitute a significant portion of household spending. It is exacerbated by the increased cost of transportation, notably due to fuel shortages, as well as by rising housing prices. When the costs of food, transportation, and housing increase simultaneously, overall living conditions deteriorate. For civil servants, salaries gradually lose their ability to cover basic needs.

⇒ ***A paradox between the wage bill and individual income***

The analysis takes on a particular dimension when viewed at the macroeconomic level. Since 2020-2021, the amount allocated by the Treasury to civil servant salaries has nearly tripled, reaching approximately 1.272 trillion Burundian francs (BIF), representing almost 34% of tax revenue. This increase is largely due to the situation created by the freeze on civil servant salary calculations since 2015. However, the overall budget increase has not translated into a corresponding improvement in the individual living standards of public employees.

This is precisely the paradox highlighted by Faustin Ndikumana: how can we explain that, at the macroeconomic level, resources allocated to salaries are increasing sharply, while at the individual level, civil servants continue to receive a paltry income relative to the cost of living? The issue therefore requires going beyond simply examining the total amount of the wage bill to analyze the structure and management of the civil service workforce.

⇒ ***When low salaries weaken public services***

The consequences of this situation are directly reflected in the functioning of the administration. One of the first is absenteeism. Some employees, faced with insufficient income, are forced to seek other activities to supplement their remuneration and ensure their subsistence.

According to this analysis, low wages also constitute a factor likely to foster corruption in public services. Some public servants may seek direct payment from citizens for services that fall within their official duties. Citizens then find themselves in a particularly troubling situation: after paying taxes intended, among other things, to finance public services, they may be forced to pay the public servant responsible for providing that service again. This creates the feeling of paying twice for the same public service.

⇒ ***A Public Service Drained of its Skills***

In addition to these phenomena, there is another consequence: the gradual exodus from the public sector. Teachers, doctors, journalists, and other public servants leave their jobs to seek better opportunities elsewhere, develop private initiatives, or leave the country. This phenomenon is progressively depriving the administration of skills it needs to fulfill its missions: a portion of its human resources, even though it has invested in their training.

For those who remain, some may end up viewing their position in the administration as merely an address, while devoting their time to other activities. Public office can also become a platform for patronage practices, with some seeking to exploit their administrative position.

The issue of salaries is thus directly linked to the actual presence of civil servants, their motivation, and the quality of services provided to the public.

⇒ ***Returning to a more rational civil service***

For Faustin Ndikumana, the solution should not simply be to increase salaries. It requires administrative reform, which was already initiated before 2015 and whose objective should be pursued. The goal is to achieve a less bloated civil service, with fewer but competent, fully engaged, and properly compensated employees. This reform should also help combat ghost employees, corruption, and the politicization of recruitment, all of which contribute to swelling the ranks of the civil service.

The challenge, therefore, is to reorganize staffing levels so that available resources can be concentrated on those who are actually performing their duties and whose contribution to public service is real.

⇒ ***A new prioritization of public spending***

This administrative reform must go hand in hand with a fundamental reassessment of budgetary priorities. In a context of limited resources, the State must implement more rigorous management of its spending and identify areas where public resources are allocated to expenditures that are not priorities for public action. Better prioritization and more rigorous management would free up resources currently absorbed by non-priority spending or lost due to mismanagement and corruption.

These resources could then be redirected towards essential State functions and contribute, in particular, to improving the remuneration of public servants. The objective is clear: to enable civil servants to live decently on their salaries and to have the necessary conditions to properly carry out their responsibilities.

⇒ ***An equation to solve***

Faustin Ndikumana's analysis ultimately highlights a central equation of public governance in Burundi: a rapidly increasing wage bill cannot be a satisfactory solution if civil servants continue to lose purchasing power. The answer must therefore be sought simultaneously in workforce reform, the elimination of ghost employees, the depoliticization of recruitment, the fight against patronage and corruption, and better prioritization of public spending.

The objective should not simply be to spend more on the civil service, but to make better use of available resources in order to build a leaner, more competent administration that is truly effective and capable of providing decent wages to those who operate it.

Only under these conditions can wage reform truly contribute to restoring the motivation of public employees, reducing the problems associated with precarious employment, and improving the quality of service provided to citizens.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The quality of any public administration depends largely on the motivation, commitment, and living conditions of its civil servants. When a public employee does not have sufficient income to meet their family's basic needs, the efficiency of the state itself suffers. In a context marked by persistent inflation, a continuously rising cost of living, and a gradual erosion of purchasing power, the issue of civil servant salaries has emerged as one of the major governance and development challenges facing Burundi.

It is with this in mind that the Iteka League and King Umurundi Freedom, within the framework of the UMUSEKE program, undertook this study to assess the current state of salaries for Burundian civil servants. The objective is to measure the alignment between actual salaries and the real cost of living, to analyze existing salary disparities, and to assess their impact on the living conditions of civil servants, the quality of public services, and the country's socio-economic development.

The study covers 103,510 civil servants distributed across the fourteen ministries and the General Secretariat of the State. The analyzed data shows that the Burundian civil service is largely dominated by the education sector, which employs 82,008 teachers, representing 79.23% of the total workforce. Civil servants with permanent status account for 15,161 (14.65%), while contract employees number 6,341 (6.13%). This structure demonstrates that any salary policy affecting teachers directly impacts nearly four out of five civil servants and significantly influences national public finances.

The salary analysis reveals a particularly alarming situation. Of the 103,510 civil servants, 80,154, or 77.54%, receive a monthly salary between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu, while 6,849 (6.63%) earn less than 250,000 FBu. In total, 84.17% of civil servants live on an income of 500,000 FBu or less per month, while only 0.27% receive a salary exceeding 750,000 FBu. These figures demonstrate that wage insecurity is not marginal; it constitutes the daily reality for the vast majority of state employees.

The study also highlights a particularly concerning gap between salaries and the actual cost of living. The minimum budget required to cover the basic needs of a household of eight is estimated at 1,473,500 FBu per month. However, more than eight out of ten civil servants have an income that represents less than half of this amount. This situation means that many civil servant households are forced to make difficult choices: cutting back on food, postponing healthcare, limiting children's education expenses, forgoing essential purchases, or resorting to debt to survive.

Beyond the overall low salaries, the study highlights particularly stark wage inequalities. The lowest salaries are less than 70,000 FBu, while the highest exceed 8.5 million FBu per month. The gap between the minimum and maximum salaries thus exceeds a ratio of 130, revealing a high concentration of high salaries in the hands of a minority, while the vast majority of civil servants remain confined to the lowest salary brackets.

The consequences of this situation extend far beyond the issue of purchasing power alone. They directly affect civil servants' motivation, reduce their ability to effectively carry out their duties, encourage them to seek supplementary income to ensure household survival, and exacerbate the exodus of skilled workers to the private sector or abroad. Ultimately, this precariousness compromises the quality of public services, weakens state institutions, and hinders Burundi's economic and social development.

The results of this study demonstrate that low salaries are not merely a human resources management problem; they constitute a major challenge for governance, social justice, and national development. An administration in which the majority of employees cannot meet their basic needs struggles to provide efficient public services, attract and retain qualified personnel, and effectively support public policies.

In light of these findings, the **Burundian League for Human Rights "Iteka" and King Umurundi Freedom** call upon the Burundian authorities to undertake an ambitious, progressive, and sustainable reform of the civil service salary policy. Such a reform should allow salaries to be aligned with the actual cost of living, reduce excessive disparities between professional categories, strengthen the motivation of public servants, and preserve the human capital essential to the country's development.

Ultimately, this report is not merely a statistical observation. It highlights a human, economic, and institutional reality that demands urgent action. Improving the remuneration of civil servants means investing in the quality of public services, restoring citizens' trust in the administration, strengthening social stability, and creating the conditions for sustainable and inclusive development in Burundi.

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II. RECOMMENDATIONS

⇒ ***To the Government of Burundi:***

1. Regularly review salaries to adapt them to the rising cost of living and inflation;
2. Accelerate the implementation of a coherent national equitable wage policy guaranteeing decent remuneration and enabling workers to meet their basic needs;
3. Regularly assess workers' purchasing power to anticipate the effects of price increases on households;
4. Provide access to credit at affordable rates.

⇒ ***To the Ministry of Labor:***

1. Periodically conduct a study on the real cost of living to establish an objective basis for adjusting salaries;
2. Strengthen monitoring compliance with wage standards in the public and private sectors;
3. Promote social dialogue between the Government, employers, and workers' representatives.

⇒ ***To the Ministry of Finance and relevant public institutions:***

1. Improve transparency in the management of the public wage bill;
2. Reduce unjustified wage disparities between different categories of workers;
3. Ensure the efficient use of public resources allocated to salaries and benefits.

⇒ ***To public and private employers:***

1. Gradually improve employee compensation, taking into account inflation and productivity;
2. Review compensation when price increases lead to a significant loss of purchasing power;
3. Guarantee fair compensation based on skills, responsibilities, and performance.

⇒ ***To trade unions and workers' representatives:***

1. Strengthen advocacy for decent wages;
2. Actively participate in social negotiations on pay policies;
3. Regularly document the difficulties faced by workers to help fuel necessary reforms.

⇒ ***To technical and financial partners:***

1. Support studies on employment, income, and the cost of living;
2. Support programs that promote the creation of decent jobs and improve household incomes.

⇒ ***To statistical and research institutions:***

1. Regularly produce reliable data on wages, inflation, and household living conditions.
2. Provide policymakers with analyses that help guide salary policies.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

III.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Analyze wage trends and their alignment with current economic and social conditions to assess their impact on workers' purchasing power and household living standards.

III.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. Examine wage trends over recent years, highlighting changes in compensation levels across sectors and occupational categories.
2. Evaluate the impact of inflation and the rising cost of living on workers' purchasing power, particularly through price changes for essential goods and services.
3. Compare wage trends with national economic indicators, including economic growth, GDP per capita, and the general price level.
4. Identify the main challenges faced by workers regarding compensation, particularly insufficient income to meet basic household needs.
5. Analyze existing wage disparities across sectors, occupational categories, and levels of responsibility to assess issues of fairness and pay equity.
6. The report aims to formulate recommendations for sustainably improving wage conditions, preserving purchasing power, and promoting a compensation policy more aligned with economic realities.

III.3. MAIN QUESTIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

In particular, the report seeks to answer the following questions:

- Do current wages allow workers to cope with the real cost of living?
- Have wage increases kept pace with price increases and inflation?
- Is there an imbalance between economic growth and improvements in household incomes?
- What measures can be considered to strengthen workers' purchasing power?

IV. ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

This study takes an analytical and descriptive approach aimed at examining the evolution of wages, their real purchasing power, and their alignment with workers' economic and social conditions.

IV.1. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The analysis is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, allowing for the cross-referencing of available economic data with the realities experienced by workers.

⇒ ***The quantitative approach allows for the analysis of:***

a) changes in wage levels over the period studied;

b) changes in inflation and the prices of essential goods and services;

c) macroeconomic indicators such as GDP, GDP per capita, and the economic growth rate;

d) changes in household purchasing power.

IV. ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY (the following of page 12)

⇒ **The qualitative approach allows for an assessment of:**
a) workers' perceptions of changes in their living conditions;
b)difficulties related to insufficient income;
c)the social consequences of low wage levels.

IV.2. DATA SOURCES

The study draws on various sources of information, including:
a)reports and statistics from the relevant national institutions in the areas of economics, labor, and finance;
b)data on inflation, consumer prices, and national economic indicators;
c)budget documents and official reports;
d)Studies and publications from national and international organizations working on economic and social issues;
e)Information gathered from workers and stakeholders.

IV.3. ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

The collected data is processed through an analysis of:
a)a comparative analysis of wage trends and the cost of living;
b)the gap between nominal and real income;
c)trends that identify factors influencing purchasing power;
d)an interpretation of the economic and social consequences of wage policies.

IV.4. LIMITS OF THE STUDY

The analysis takes into account the limitations related to the availability and reliability of detailed wage data, particularly in certain sectors where information may be insufficiently documented (e.g., the absence of wage data from the Ministry of National Defence). However, combining several sources allows for a comprehensive assessment of the wage situation. In summary, this methodology aims to provide an objective analysis to understand wage trends, their effects on workers' living conditions, and the measures needed to sustainably improve purchasing power.

INTRODUCTION

Civil servant compensation is not simply a budgetary matter. It touches upon the dignity of the worker, the ability of households to meet their basic needs, and, more broadly, the quality of public services and the efficiency of the state. When incomes no longer keep pace with the rising cost of living, salaries gradually cease to be a source of stability and become a source of social vulnerability.

In Burundi, this issue is of particular importance today. In a context marked by a rising cost of living and declining purchasing power, it is necessary to examine, beyond nominal amounts, what salaries actually allow civil servants and their families to live on. It is also important to assess the disparities that exist between the different categories of public employees and their consequences for fairness, motivation, and the functioning of the administration.

It is from this perspective that the Burundian League for Human Rights “Iteka” and King Umurundi Freedom conducted this analysis of the salary situation of Burundian civil servants.

INTRODUCTION *(the following of page 13)*

The study focuses on salary levels, their distribution among different professional categories, their relationship to the cost of living, and their economic, social, and institutional implications.

Through the analysis of available data, this report aims to move beyond simple statistical observation to examine a now central issue: to what extent does the salary of a Burundian civil servant still allow them to live with dignity and effectively fulfill their public service mission? This question necessarily leads to reflection on the fairness of salary policy, the preservation of purchasing power, and the reforms essential for building a fairer, more motivated, and more efficient civil service.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE SALARY SITUATION OF BURUNDIAN STATE CIVIL SERVANTS AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

In Burundi, the issue of civil servant salaries revolves around both legal and structural criteria, as established by the General Statute of Civil Servants and revised through a fair salary policy implemented by the government. The government begins by defining individual criteria to establish the base salary. Thus, the monthly salary of a public employee is based on three essential elements. First, there are diplomas and qualifications: the level of initial training, whether in categories A, B, C, or levels D6/D7 for teachers, plays a crucial role in classification upon hiring. Second, there is the grade and job category: the public administration is divided into different strata (management, support, implementation) under a strict index scale, associated with a system of indices. Finally, performance appraisal and evaluation come into play: an evaluation is required after a specified service cycle, and the assigned ratings, such as "Elite," "Very Good," or "Good," impact promotion prospects and salary increases.

On a broader scale, macroeconomic and national factors are also considered. According to Burundian legislation, adjustments to salary scales by the Council of Ministers must take into account the economic environment, encompassing the general price level, the cost of living, changes in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), observed remuneration in the private and semi-public sectors, and the state's budgetary capacity, often determined by available resources. Additional compensation components also supplement the overall net income received. These include allowances and bonuses, such as the mandatory housing allowance, as well as family allowances, transportation allowances, and retirement bonuses. Furthermore, a disparity adjustment allowance has been established to compensate for historical differences between ministries and institutions with special status.

In parallel, Burundi adopted a "Fair Salary Policy" in July 2022, designed to guarantee respect for the principle of "equal pay for work of equal value." Its implementation is spread over 10 years, with the progressive release of 12.5 billion Burundian francs (Fbu) each year. This reform encompasses job classification and grading, aiming to align salaries with the actual responsibilities and content of positions, while limiting unjustified category-based bonuses to establish a uniform salary calculation method. Within the Burundian public administration, employees are divided into hierarchical categories (A, B, C, and sometimes D), each corresponding to a specific level of responsibility and required qualifications for hiring, as well as a salary bracket predetermined by the State.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE SALARY SITUATION OF BURUNDIAN STATE EMPLOYEES AND ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS (the following of page 14)

To describe each category in more depth, Category A, which includes Senior Managers, includes senior management and control personnel. These agents generally have a higher education diploma, such as a Bachelor's or Master's degree, and are responsible for the development of public policies as well as the direction of ministries, with salaries which vary between 500,000 FBu and 1,500,000 FBu per month, although certain positions with special status can exceed 3,000,000 FBu. Category B, corresponding to Middle and Application Managers, includes intermediate administrative staff, responsible for application and proximity functions, generally holding a state diploma or a higher technical diploma, and who can receive salaries ranging from 150,000 FBu to 500,000 FBu per month. Finally, Category C, which brings together Executing and Supervisory Agents, includes staff assigned to basic administrative tasks, requiring a secondary or professional level of education, with remuneration ranging between 100,000 FBu and 150,000 FBu per month. There is also a Category D for simple, low-skilled executive jobs, such as drivers, watchmen or maintenance workers, whose salaries are at the bottom of the public scale.

Although the criteria established for determining salaries appear objective at first glance, they do not faithfully reflect the reality of current life. Indeed, we observe notable disparities in the figures, which vary according to professional categories and sectors of activity.

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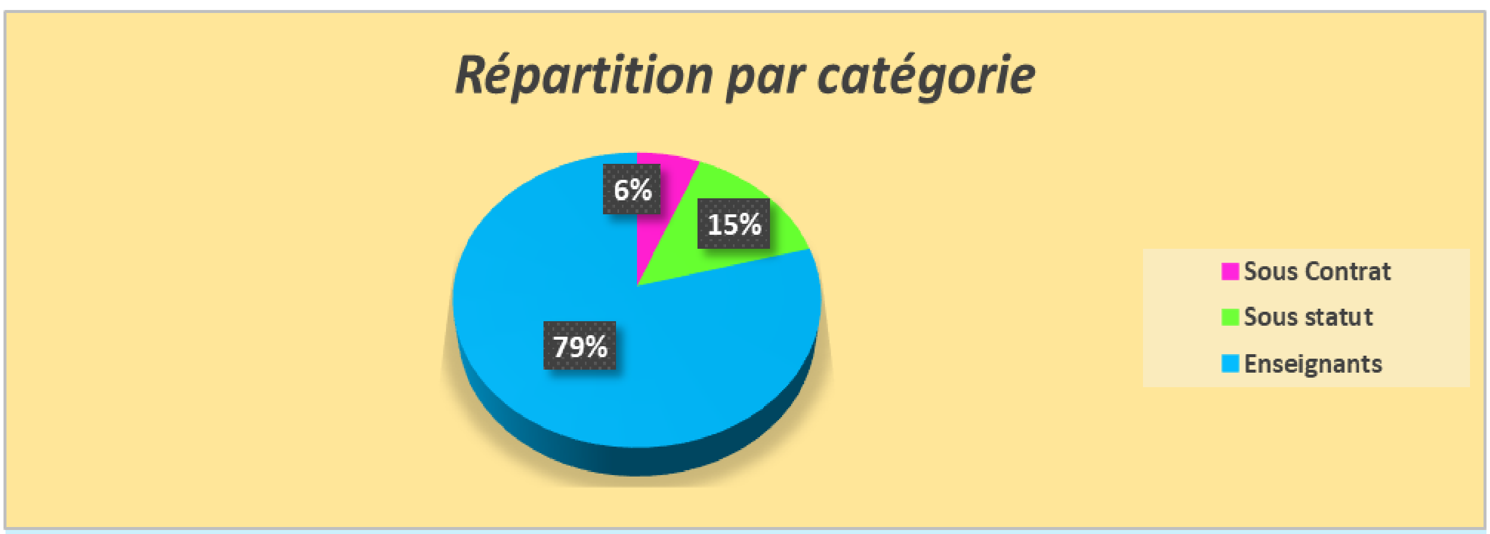
V.1. DISTRIBUTION OF CIVIL SERVANTS BY PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

The structure of the Burundian civil service is marked by a very high concentration of staff in the education sector. Out of a total of 103,510 civil servants, 82,008 are teachers, which is 79.23% of all public employees. 15,161 statutory staff make up 14.65% of the workforce, while 6,341 contract staff account for only 6.13% of state employees.

Illustrative chart of salaries by category

Category	Total employees	%	Total Net remuneration
Teachers	82.008	79.23%	35.615.245.119
Under status	15.161	14.65%	6.302.273.852
Under Contract	6.341	6.13%	983.687.857
Total	**103.510**	**100%**	**42.901.206.828**



V.1. DISTRIBUTION OF OFFICIALS BY PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY (the following of page 15)

This distribution shows that nearly eight out of ten civil servants are teachers. This predominance reflects the importance the State places on the education sector, considered a pillar of human development and the formation of human capital.

However, this high concentration of staff in a single professional category also poses a major challenge to public finances. Indeed, any decision regarding the revaluation of teachers' salaries automatically entails a considerable budgetary impact, given their significant share of the civil service workforce. This reality partly explains the difficulties encountered by the authorities in substantially improving their remuneration.

Analysis of the total payroll confirms this concentration. Teachers receive a total net salary of 35.62 billion FBu, representing 83% of the total payroll, estimated at 42.90 billion FBu. Civil servants with permanent status receive 6.30 billion FBu (nearly 15%), while contract employees share less than one billion FBu, or approximately 2% of the total payroll. However, these figures should be interpreted with caution. The high volume of teachers' salaries does not reflect higher individual wages; it is primarily explained by their very large numbers. In reality, as the analysis of salary brackets shows in the following sections, the majority of teachers are among the lowest-paid civil servants. Their weight in the total payroll is therefore a consequence of their numbers, not of a higher salary level.

This situation highlights a structural dependence of the public administration on teachers. Any deterioration in their living conditions is likely to have direct repercussions on the education system, particularly in terms of motivation, teaching quality, student support, and academic performance. In the medium and long term, these difficulties risk jeopardizing efforts to develop human capital, which is essential for economic growth and social progress.

Furthermore, the low proportion of contract employees (6.13%) shows that the Burundian administration relatively favors permanent positions. While this approach may contribute to a degree of institutional stability, it also implies a greater responsibility for the State in guaranteeing remuneration conditions that are compatible with the demands of public service and the actual cost of living.

Ultimately, this initial analysis reveals that the Burundian civil service is heavily dependent on the education sector, which alone accounts for nearly four-fifths of the workforce and more than four-fifths of the total payroll. This reality makes teachers' salary policy a strategic issue for the quality of public services, the stability of the administration, and the sustainable development of Burundi. Any reform of civil servant remuneration should therefore give priority to this category, without neglecting other state employees, in order to guarantee a salary policy that is more equitable, more motivating, and better adapted to the country's economic realities.

V.2. ANALYSIS OF REMUNERATION BY SALARY BRACKET: A PUBLIC SECTOR FACING WIDESPREAD SALARY PRECARIOUSNESS

The analysis of the distribution of civil servants across different salary ranges is one of the main takeaways from this study. It highlights a particularly worrying reality: the vast majority of state employees live on incomes that are far from enough to cover the current cost of living. The data show that the salary structure of the Burundian civil service is heavily concentrated in the lower income brackets, revealing a wage precarity that has become structural.

Table showing the distribution of civil servants across different salary ranges

Salary group	Number of employees	Salary ranging in Burundian Francs	Salary between in euros
Low salary	6.849	1 - 250.000	1 - 35
Relatively low salary	80.154	250.000 - 500.000	35 -70
Average salary	16.225	500.000 - 750.000	70 -105
Relatively high salary	147	750.000 - 1000.000	105 - 140
High salary	135	1.000.000 et plus	Plus 140

Indeed, out of a total of 103,510 civil servants, 80,154 employees, or 77.54%, receive a monthly salary between 250,001 and 500,000 Burundian francs (FBu). They alone represent more than three-quarters of all civil servants. In addition to this category, 6,849 employees (6.63%) receive 250,000 FBu or less, a particularly low level considering the basic needs of a household.

Thus, 86,003 civil servants, or 84.17% of all public employees, have a monthly income of 500,000 FBu or less. In other words, more than eight out of ten civil servants (8/10) belong to the lowest 6 1salary brackets, reflecting a worrying impoverishment of the Burundian civil service.

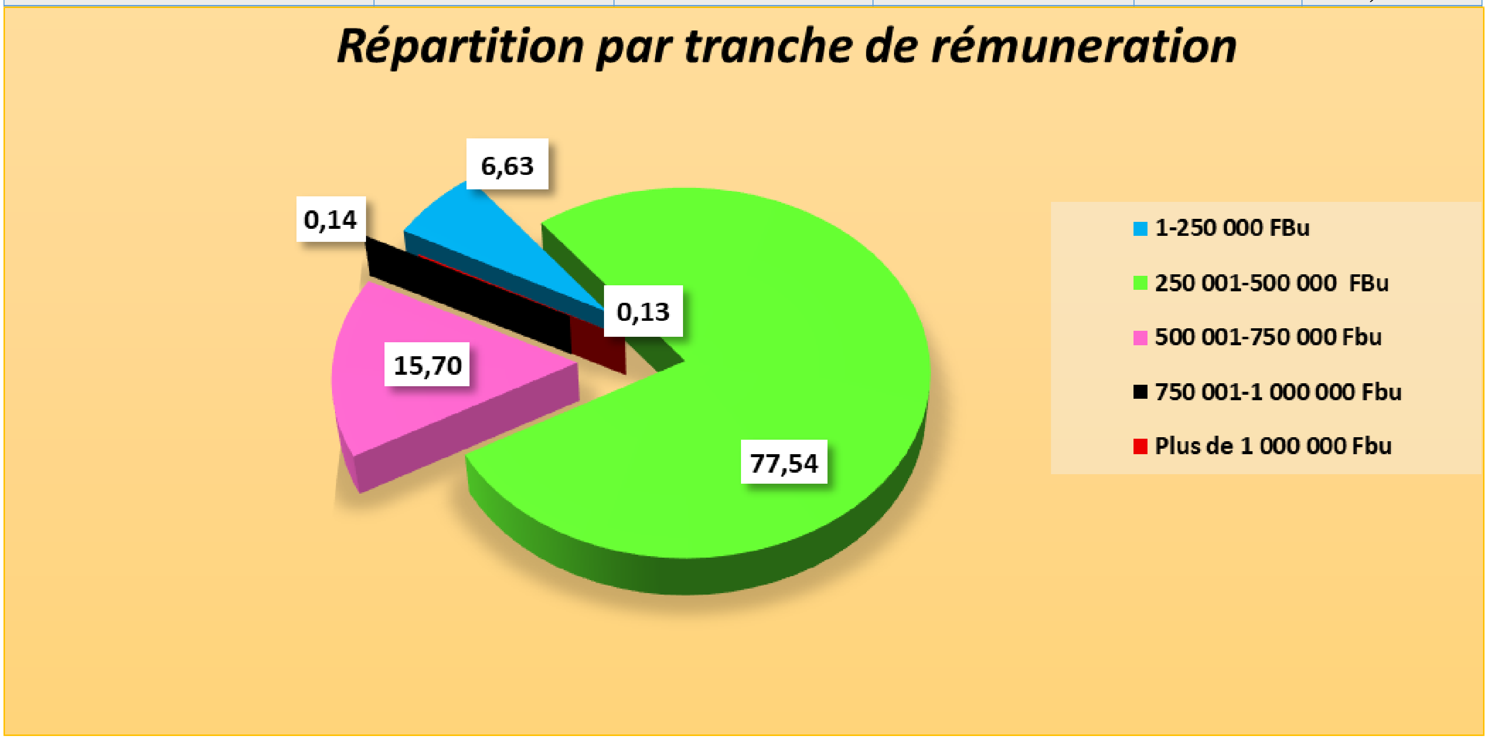
Only 16,225 employees (15.70%) receive a salary between 500,001 and 750,000 FBu. This category, considered the average salary, remains relatively small and generally only covers essential expenses without offering any real capacity for saving or investing.
The highest-paid categories are almost nonexistent. Only 147 civil servants, or 0.14%, earn between 750,001 and 1,000,000 FBu, while 135 employees, representing barely 0.13%, receive a salary exceeding 1,000,000 FBu. Combined, these two categories comprise only 282 people, or 0.27% of all civil servants surveyed.

In other words, fewer than three civil servants per thousand (less than 3/1000) earn a salary exceeding 750,000 Burundian francs (FBu) per month, or approximately 105 euros.

This structure reveals a particularly unbalanced salary pyramid. In a high-performing public administration, a more progressive distribution of salaries is generally observed, reflecting different levels of qualification, responsibility, and seniority. In the case of Burundi, the massive concentration of staff in the first two salary brackets translates into a downward pressure on salaries, limiting the prospects for improving the living conditions of public employees.

Analysis chart of salary ranges by category (the following of page 17)

Salary brackets in Fbu	Number of employees by category			Total	General %
	Teachers	Under contracts	Under Status		
1-250.000 FBu	131	5.801	917	**6.849**	**6,63**
250.001-500.000 FBu	68.203	534	11.417	**80.154**	**77,54**
500.001-750.000 Fbu	13.495	6	2.724	**16.225**	**15,70**
750.001-1.000.000 Fbu	98	0	49	**147**	**0,14**
Plus de 1.000.000 Fbu	81	0	54	**135**	**0,13**



Analysis by professional category confirms this trend. Of the 82,008 teachers, 68,203, or over 83%, earn a salary between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu, while 13,495 teachers fall within the 500,001 to 750,000 FBu range. Only 179 teachers receive a salary exceeding 750,000 FBu.

The situation is even more concerning for contract workers. Of 6,341 contract workers, 5,801, or over 91%, earn less than 250,000 FBu; 534 earn between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu. No contract worker receives a salary exceeding 750,000 FBu. These figures demonstrate a particularly marked economic vulnerability for this category of workers. Civil servants with permanent status show a slightly more favorable distribution, but remain largely concentrated in the lower salary brackets: 11,417 receive between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu, 2,724 between 500,001 and 750,000 FBu, while only 103 earn more than 750,000 FBu.

In light of these figures, it is clear that low salaries are not a problem limited to a few professional categories, but a widespread phenomenon affecting the entire civil service. This situation weakens household purchasing power, reduces civil servants' savings and investment capacity, increases their vulnerability to economic shocks, and jeopardizes their well-being.

Moreover, this wage insecurity is likely to have deep effects on the functioning of public administration. Employees facing significant financial difficulties on a daily basis may see their motivation drop, their productivity decrease, and their trust in institutions erode. In the long run, this situation can also lead to people looking for extra income, moving to better-paying sectors, or even leaving the country, all of which undermines the efficiency of public services.

In the end, looking at different pay levels highlights a public service where low salaries are widespread, and most employees live on incomes that don't match the importance of their responsibilities or the current cost of living. This shows even more clearly the need for a bold reform of salary policies to restore public servants' purchasing power and ensure a public administration that is effective, motivated, and able to meet the needs of the people.

V.3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SALARIES OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF CIVIL SERVANTS

An analysis of salaries by professional category reveals significant disparities between teachers, tenured civil servants, and contract employees. While all three categories contribute to the functioning of the public administration, they do not benefit from the same levels of remuneration or the same prospects for salary progression. These discrepancies raise questions about fairness and efficiency in the management of the state's human resources.

⇒ ***Teachers: the main actors in the public service, but with modest salaries***

With 82,008 employees, teachers represent 79.23% of all civil servants and constitute the backbone of the Burundian public administration. They ensure the development of human capital, essential for the country's economic and social development. Yet, their salary situation remains particularly concerning. Indeed, 68,203 teachers, or more than 83% of this category, receive a salary between 250,001 and 500,000 Burundian francs (FBu), 13,495 teachers, or 15.70%, receive a salary between 500,001 and 750,000 FBu, while 131 teachers earn less than 250,000 FBu. Only 179 teachers out of more than 82,000 have a salary exceeding 750,000 FBu.

These figures reflect a major paradox: the most strategic professional category for the country's future is also one of the lowest paid. Such a situation risks having a lasting impact on teacher motivation, the quality of teaching, and ultimately, the competitiveness of the Burundian education system.

⇒ ***Contractual employees: the most vulnerable category***

6,341 contractual employees appear to be the most vulnerable category within the civil service. Data shows that 5,801 employees (over 91%) receive a salary below 250,000 FBu, while another 534 earn between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu. No contractual employee reaches the two highest salary brackets.

This situation reflects extreme economic insecurity. With such low incomes, it becomes extremely difficult for these employees to meet their families' basic needs, particularly in terms of food, housing, healthcare, and education.

Beyond financial insecurity, these low salaries can also generate a feeling of exclusion, low professional motivation, and high staff turnover, to the detriment of the continuity and quality of public services.

Civil servants: a relatively more favorable but still insufficient situation 15,161 civil servants have a relatively more advantageous salary structure. Among them, 11,417 earn between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu, 2,724 receive between 500,001 and 750,000 FBu, while only 49 earn between 750,001 and 1,000,000 FBu and 54 exceed 1,000,000 FBu.

Even though this category accounts for the majority of the highest salaries, these remain extremely limited in relation to the total workforce. More than 93% of tenured civil servants also continue to earn less than 750,000 Burundian francs per month.

⇒ ***Very limited salary progression***

The analysis also highlights the slow progression of salaries between different professional categories. In a modern administration, improvements in qualifications, experience, and responsibilities should translate into progressive salary increases. However, the data shows that this progression remains very limited in the Burundian civil service. Opportunities to access higher salary brackets remain exceptional, which reduces career prospects and can discourage the highest-performing employees.

⇒ ***A salary policy that raises questions***

The results of this analysis show that the current salary policy does not always reflect the strategic importance of the different categories of civil servants. While teachers are the main driver of human capital development, they remain concentrated at the lowest salary levels. Contract employees live in a highly vulnerable situation, while only a few tenured civil servants have access to the highest salaries. This situation can exacerbate inequalities, weaken cohesion within the public administration, and undermine efforts to modernize the state.

Ultimately, a comparison of professional categories shows that low salaries are a widespread phenomenon, even if their severity varies according to the employee's status. It underscores the need to implement a more equitable salary reform, based on qualifications, responsibilities, performance, and the actual cost of living, in order to boost civil servant motivation and sustainably improve the quality of public services.

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V.4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE WAGE BILL BY MINISTRY: A CONCENTRATION OF RESOURCES IN A FEW SECTORS.

Analyzing the distribution of the payroll by ministry highlights a very noticeable concentration of personnel expenses in a limited number of public administration sectors.

This situation is mainly explained by the significant differences in staff numbers between ministries, but it also reflects the government's budget priorities when it comes to managing human resources.

Ranking chart according to total compensation and by ministry

Ministry				Total Remuneration	% of the total
	Teachers	**Under Contrats cathegories**	**Under Statuts**		
National education and scientific research	35.615.245 119	194.641.943	-	35.809.887.062	83,5%
Public health and the fight against AIDS		210.277.014	3.601.565.489	3.811.842.503	8,9%
Environment, agriculture, and livestock		459.749.835	618.030.823	1.077.780.658	2,5%
Justice		46.299.587	883.372.971	929.672.558	2,2%
Interior, community development, and public safety		8.446.439	356.301.504	364.747.943	0,9%
Public service, labor, and employment		9.642.717	215.119.754	224.762.471	0,5%
Finance, budgeting, and economic planning		2 547 665	142.241.432	144.789.097	0,3%
Infrastructure, equipment, and social housing		17.703.010	90.316.812	108.019.822	0,3%
East African Community affairs, youth, sports, and culture		12.028.976	94.341.417	106.370.393	0,2%
Trade, transport, industry, and tourism		5.648.338	89.673.558	95.321.896	0,2%
Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation		4.036.442	79.474.764	83.511.206	0,2%
National solidarity, social affairs, human rights, and gender		8.708.342	61.538.083	70.246.425	0,2%
Hydraulics, energy, and mining		1.577.975	42.356.297	43.934.272	0,1%
Communication, information technology, and media		1 460 765	24.865.343	26.326.108	0,1%
General Secretariat of the State		918.809	3.075.605	3.994.414	0,0%

V.4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE WAGE BILL BY MINISTRY (the following of page 21)

The results show that the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research alone has a total net remuneration of 35,809,887,062 FBu, or 83.5% of the total public service payroll. This proportion is exceptionally high since it represents more than four francs out of five spent by the State to pay its civil servants.

This situation is mainly explained by the fact that the Ministry of Education employs 82,930 agents, or nearly 80% of all civil servants. However, this high salary bill does not mean that teachers benefit from high salaries. As demonstrated previously, the majority of them receive salaries between 250,001 and 500,000 FBu. The large payroll is therefore the direct consequence of the very high number of teachers and not of a particularly favorable salary policy.

The Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS occupies second position with a payroll of 3,811,842,503 FBu, or 8.9% of the national total. It employs 9,843 agents. This budgetary weight reflects the importance given to the health sector, particularly in a context where health needs remain significant.

The Ministry of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock comes in third position with a payroll of 1,077,780,658 FBu, representing 2.5% of the total. It is followed by the Ministry of Justice, whose payroll amounts to 929,672,558 FBu, or 2.2% of the total. These two ministries combined represent less than 5% of the national wage bill, which already illustrates the considerable gap with the education sector.

The other ministries have relatively modest payrolls, all below 1% or slightly higher for some. These include the Ministries of the Interior, Civil Service, Finance, Infrastructure, Commerce, Foreign Affairs, National Solidarity, Hydraulics, Communication as well as the General Secretariat of State. Together, these administrations represent a small share of public salary expenditure.

This distribution highlights a public administration whose human resources are highly concentrated in a few essential sectors, mainly education and health. This choice reflects a desire to favor sectors directly linked to human development. However, it also reveals the constraints faced by the State when it comes to improving remuneration. A uniform increase in salaries would have a particularly high budgetary impact due to the very significant weight of the education sector.

The analysis also shows that some strategic ministries have relatively low staffing levels. This is particularly the case for the ministries responsible for finance, infrastructure, energy, communication and even foreign affairs. Although their payroll is limited, these institutions play a determining role in economic governance, public resource mobilization, investments and international relations. This situation invites us to think not only about the quantitative distribution of staff, but also about their adequacy with the strategic missions of each ministry.

Besides, looking at the breakdown of staff by salary range within ministries shows that low pay is a widespread issue. Even in ministries with relatively large payrolls, most employees are still concentrated in the first two pay brackets, meaning below 500,000 FBu per month. This reality

V.4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE WAGE BILL BY MINISTRY (the following of page 22)

confirms that the problem is less about how resources are divided between sectors and more about the overall level of pay given to civil servants.

Ultimately, this analysis shows that the state's payroll is heavily concentrated in the education sector because of its demographic weight. However, this concentration does not lead to an improvement in teachers' living standards, nor does it provide satisfactory pay for other categories of civil servants. Instead, it highlights the need for a comprehensive salary reform, along with consideration of strategic human resource management and the state's budget priorities, to ensure a public administration that is efficient, motivated, and capable of meeting citizens' expectations.

V.5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PAY LEVELS: WAGE GAPS REVEALING DEEP INEQUALITY.

The analysis of minimum and maximum salaries highlights the existence of significant pay gaps within the Burundian civil service. While differences in pay between professional categories are normal in any administration due to qualifications, responsibilities, and hierarchical levels, the gaps observed in this study seem particularly large and raise questions about the principle of fairness that should guide the state's salary policy.

Salary Hierarchy Chart

Classification	**Under contract**		
	Teachers	**Category**	**Under statuts**
Minimum pay	74.530 FBu	81.753 FBu	63.859 FBu
Maximum pay	8.516.455 FBu	621.084 FBu	8.528.659 FBu

The data shows that minimum salaries vary significantly across civil service categories. Permanent staff receive the lowest salary at 63,859 FBu per month, followed by teachers at 74,530 FBu, while contract staff receive a minimum of 81,753 FBu. Although these amounts differ slightly, they all share one common characteristic: they are extremely low compared to the current cost of living in Burundi.

At the other end of the salary scale, maximum salaries reach particularly high levels. Permanent staff receive up to 8,528,659 FBu per month, teachers can earn up to 8,516,455 FBu, while the maximum salary for contract staff is capped at 621,084 FBu.

These figures reflect a striking reality. Between the lowest minimum wage (63,859 FBu) and the highest maximum wage (8,528,659 FBu), the gap exceeds 8.4 million Burundian francs. In relative terms, the highest-paid civil servant earns more than 130 times the income of the lowest-paid civil servant. Such a level of inequality is exceptionally high within a single public administration and raises questions about the coherence and fairness of the compensation system.

The analysis also shows that the highest salaries remain concentrated in a very limited number of positions of responsibility. Indeed, only 282 civil servants, or 0.27% of all public employees included in this analysis, receive a salary exceeding 750,000 FBu per month. Conversely, more than 84% of civil servants live on less than this amount.

V.5. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF REMUNERATION LEVELS (the following of page 23)

A salary of 500,000 FBu or less. This concentration of income reflects a strong wage polarization: a tiny minority enjoys high salaries while almost all employees remain in modest pay situations. These disparities can have several consequences for the functioning of the public administration. First, they can fuel a sense of injustice among low-paid employees, especially when the differences are not clearly justified by the responsibilities held or by individual performance. This feeling is likely to affect motivation, professional commitment, and trust in human resource management mechanisms.

Second, such significant salary gaps can weaken cohesion within the civil service. Civil servants who perform essential functions, particularly in the education and health sectors, may feel that their efforts are not sufficiently recognized in light of the responsibilities they assume daily. This perception is likely to reduce their motivation and encourage them to seek higher-paying opportunities in the private sector or abroad.

Furthermore, the study reveals that the low minimum wages stand in stark contrast to the rising cost of living. A salary of less than 100,000 Burundian francs per month is insufficient to cover a household's basic food needs, let alone expenses related to housing, healthcare, transportation, or education. This situation exposes the lowest-paid civil servants to significant economic and social vulnerability.

However, it is important to clarify that the aim of this analysis is not to challenge the principle of salary differentiation, which is legitimate in any public administration. Management positions, technical responsibilities, and specialized skills naturally justify higher salaries. On the other hand, the magnitude of the observed disparities calls for reflection on their proportionality and the need to guarantee all civil servants a minimum income compatible with a dignified life. Ultimately, this analysis highlights a compensation system characterized by a twofold problem: on the one hand, generally low salaries for the majority of civil servants and, on the other hand, particularly significant pay gaps between the lowest and highest-paid categories. This situation underscores the urgent need for salary reform based on the principles of fairness, transparency, merit, and social justice, in order to boost the motivation of public employees, improve the performance of the administration, and strengthen citizens' trust in state institutions.

V.6. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SERVANTS' PURCHASING POWER IN RELATION TO THE COST OF LIVING: A STRUCTURAL DEFICIT BETWEEN INCOME AND BASIC NEEDS.

Assessing the purchasing power of civil servants is one of the most telling parts of this study. Indeed, beyond the nominal salary amounts, it's important to gauge their real ability to allow public employees and their families to meet their basic needs. To this end, salaries were compared to the minimum monthly budget needed to cover the essential expenses of an eight-person household, estimated at 1,473,500 FBu.

Table of the minimum budget for an eight-person family.

Products	U.P	Number of times/Mois	Total
Beans	5.500	25	137.500
Rice	10.000	25	250.000
Peas	13.000	5	65.000
Cassava flour	3.000	15	45.000
Sweet potato	1.500	20	30.000
Potato	2.300	10	23.000
Meat	35.000	8	280.000
Palm oil 5l	65.000	1	65.000
Coton oil 5l	90.000	1	90.000
Powder milk NIDO	80.000	1	80.000
Quarter box of spaghetti	25.000	1	25.000
Sugar	8.000	2	16.000
Soap half– Box	16.500	1	16.500
Salt	2.500	1	2.500
Thea	8.000	1	8.000
Charbon	95.000	2	190.000
House rent	150.000	1	150.000
Total for a month			**1.473.500**

The consumption basket used in this study includes the main expenses a family faces each month, notably food (beans, rice, meat, potatoes, cassava flour, oil, sugar, milk, etc.), housing, charcoal, hygiene products, and other necessities for a decent life. **It does not take into account certain significant expenses such as specialized healthcare, school fees, transportation, clothing, communication, unforeseen events, or savings.** Consequently, the amount of 1,473,500 FBu can be considered a subsistence minimum rather than a standard of living.

A comparison between this reference budget and civil servants' salary levels reveals a particularly significant gap. The vast majority of public employees, 84.17%, earn a salary of 500,000 FBu or less per month. This income represents barely 34% of the minimum monthly budget required for a family of eight. In other words, these households are short more than 973,000 FBu each month to cover their basic needs.

Even civil servants in the middle salary bracket (between 500,001 and 750,000 FBu) do not have sufficient income to adequately meet their household needs. A salary of 750,000 FBu, the maximum for this category, covers only about 51% of the estimated minimum budget.

This means that a household living exclusively on the salary of a single civil servant remains faced with a significant financial deficit, despite remuneration higher than that of the majority of public agents.

V.6. ANALYSIS OF CIVIL SERVANTS' PURCHASING POWER IN RELATION TO THE COST OF LIVING (the following of page 25)

This reality shows that the weakness of purchasing power does not only concern the least paid civil servants; it also affects a significant portion of qualified agents occupying intermediate functions.

Pay insecurity thus appears to be a widespread phenomenon within the public service. The consequences of this insufficient income are numerous. Faced with the impossibility of covering all of their expenses, many households are forced to change their consumption habits. Food expenditure is often reduced in quantity or quality, which can lead to malnutrition problems, particularly among children. Health expenses are sometimes postponed, medical consultations postponed and the purchase of medicines limited due to lack of financial resources.

Difficulties also affect the education sector. Many families have difficulty paying school fees, uniforms, supplies or contributions required by establishments. This situation can compromise children's academic success and contribute to the reproduction of poverty from one generation to the next.

Access to decent housing is also a major challenge. A significant part of income is absorbed by paying rent, forcing some families to live in overcrowded homes or in precarious conditions. Added to this are expenses related to domestic energy, particularly charcoal, the cost of which represents a significant burden on household budgets.

On the economic level, the weakness of purchasing power considerably reduces the savings and investment capacity of civil servants. As disposable income is entirely devoted to current expenses, households have virtually no financial margin to invest in income-generating activities, acquire assets or deal with emergency situations. This lack of savings increases their vulnerability to economic shocks and unforeseen events.

At the national level, this situation also has a negative impact on the economy. When more than four out of five civil servants have limited purchasing power, household consumption declines, which directly affects business activities, local production, tax revenues and, more broadly, economic growth. The low incomes of civil servants thus become a brake on the economic dynamics of the country.

The analysis therefore highlights a profound imbalance between public sector remuneration and the real cost of living in Burundi. Current salaries no longer allow a very large majority of civil servants to satisfy their essential needs or to live in conditions consistent with the requirements of human dignity. This situation compromises not only their well-being, but also their motivation, their professional efficiency and the quality of the public services they provide to the population.

In the end, this study shows that the issue of salaries goes beyond just paying public servants. It's a major matter for social protection, economic development, governance, and national stability. So, a reform aimed at gradually improving civil servants' purchasing power seems like a key step to boost public administration performance, improve household living conditions, and support Burundi's sustainable development.

V.7. ANALYSIS OF THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF LOW WAGES

The results of this study demonstrate that low civil servant salaries are not solely a problem related to the living conditions of public employees. They also represent a major challenge to economic development, social stability, the quality of governance, and the efficiency of public administration. Low salaries produce a series of interdependent effects that gradually weaken state institutions and limit their capacity to effectively meet citizens' expectations.

V.7.1. A PROGRESSIVE DEMOTIVATION OF CIVIL SERVANTS

Compensation is one of the main motivators at work. When it no longer allows for the satisfaction of basic needs, it loses its incentive role and becomes a constant source of frustration.

Based on the results of this study, the majority of civil servants carry out their duties under particularly difficult financial conditions. This reality can lead to a decline in professional commitment, a diminished sense of belonging to the public administration, and a loss of confidence in public human resource management policies.

In the long term, this demotivation risks affecting the quality of work performed, reducing individual initiative, and hindering efforts to modernize the administration.

V.7.2. A DROP IN THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Civil servants are the primary instrument for implementing public policies. When their living conditions deteriorate, the services provided to citizens are also likely to suffer.

In the education sector, underpaid teachers may struggle to prepare lessons, acquire teaching materials, or dedicate their time fully to their duties.

In the healthcare sector, economic difficulties can impact staff availability, the quality of patient care, and continuity of treatment.

The same effects can be observed in local government, the judiciary, public finance, and other government services. Low salaries thus become an indirect factor in the deterioration of the quality of public services.

V.7.3. AN INCREASE IN THE RISK OF CORRUPTION

The study does not establish an automatic link between low salaries and corruption. However, economic literature and international experience show that insufficient income can increase the vulnerability of public officials to corruption. When a civil servant can no longer meet their family's basic needs, they may be more susceptible to outside pressure or the pursuit of illicit income.

This situation can foster: informal payments; bribery; abuse of power; embezzlement of public funds; and certain forms of administrative favoritism. Even if these behaviors remain individual and do not affect all civil servants, their proliferation undermines citizens' trust in public institutions.

V.7.4. AN ACCELERATION OF THE BRAIN DRAIN

One of the most worrying consequences of low salaries is the emigration of skilled workers. The report highlights that many Burundians now see emigration as an opportunity to improve their living conditions. The education, health, justice, engineering, public finance, and information technology sectors are particularly affected.

This brain drain has several consequences: a decrease in qualified personnel; recruitment difficulties; increased training costs for new staff; loss of institutional experience; and a slowdown in the implementation of public policies. In the long term, this situation can compromise the State's ability to effectively fulfill its missions.

V.7.5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARALLEL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Faced with insufficient salaries, many civil servants seek to supplement their income with secondary activities.

These activities can take various forms: small businesses; agriculture and livestock farming; transportation; private services; consulting; and informal work.

While these initiatives sometimes improve household incomes, they also reduce the time devoted to public service, increase professional fatigue, and can create conflicts of interest when private activities interfere with administrative responsibilities.

V.7.6. A WORSENING OF HOUSEHOLD POVERTY

Low salaries have direct repercussions on the living conditions of civil servants' families. The most frequent consequences are: reduced food quality; difficulty accessing healthcare; inability to cover certain school-related expenses; chronic debt; inability to save; and precarious housing. This situation particularly affects large families, whose expenses are naturally higher.

V.7.7. A SLOWDOWN IN NATIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Civil servants represent a significant portion of consumers in the national economy. When their purchasing power decreases, their consumption also declines. This reduction in domestic demand directly affects small businesses, local markets, companies, agricultural producers, and tax revenues.

Thus, low salaries have effects that extend far beyond the civil service and slow down national economic growth.

V.7.8. A THREAT TO SOCIAL STABILITY

When economic difficulties persist for an extended period, they can fuel social tensions. Low wages are likely to encourage: union demands, strikes, social conflicts, a loss of trust in public institutions, and citizen disengagement from government.

Such a situation can weaken social cohesion and complicate the implementation of public policies.

The analyses presented in this report demonstrate that low civil servant salaries have become a strategic issue in public governance.

V.7.9. AN EMERGENCY NEED FOR REFORM

They are no longer simply a matter of human resource management, but a cross-cutting challenge that simultaneously affects economic development, the fight against poverty, the quality of public services, social stability, good governance, the country's competitiveness, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Consequently, a gradual and sustainable reform of salary policy is now a national priority. This reform should be based on several fundamental principles: equity between professional categories, adjustment of salaries to the actual cost of living, recognition of skills, sound public finances, and increased transparency in payroll management. Therefore, improving civil servant compensation is not merely an additional budgetary expenditure, but a strategic investment in human capital, public administration performance, and the sustainable development of Burundi.

VI. GENERAL CONCLUSION

The salary policy of the Burundian public service, once designed to guarantee a minimum of well-being, has turned into a real burden for the decent living of state agents. Looking at the figures, a truth becomes clear: among the 103,510 civil servants, an overwhelming majority, or 84.17%, receive a monthly salary barely reaching 500,000 FBu. However, to meet the needs of a family of eight people, a minimum amount of 1,473,500 FBu would be required. This glaring disproportion between income and the cost of living represents a colossal challenge for the public service.

The education sector plays a central role in this administration, encompassing nearly 80% of agents and absorbing more than 83% of the national payroll. However, this preeminent place is not enhanced by appropriate remuneration, even though teachers have enormous responsibilities in the training of younger generations and in the development of the country. In addition, there are glaring salary gaps between the different professional and hierarchical categories. While a few hundred civil servants enjoy comfortable salaries, the vast majority remain trapped in the lowest brackets. These differences, which can reach a ratio of 130 between the lowest and highest salaries, raise questions about the equity and social justice that should characterize modern wage policy.

The consequences of this situation reverberate throughout society. Insufficient wages erode the purchasing power of households, making them more vulnerable to inflation and thus hindering their ability to save and invest. This complicates access to basic needs such as health, food, housing and education. The impact is such that it generates demotivation among agents, causes an incessant quest for additional income and, in certain cases, leads to a flight of skills towards more promising horizons. It also harms the quality of public services and opens the way to corrupt practices. The repercussions of this situation go beyond the administration, thus slowing down economic development and undermining the social stability of Burundi.

VII. CONCLUSION *(the following of page 29)*

This study highlights the importance of understanding the issue of salaries as a strategic challenge for national development, and not simply as a budgetary problem. It is essential that a well-paid civil service guarantees efficient services, attracts and retains qualified talent, while also aligning with the country's aspirations for growth, poverty reduction, and improved governance. In this regard, the Burundian League for Human Rights "Iteka" and King Umurundi Freedom are calling on the authorities to accelerate the implementation of the updated "fair wage policy." This reform should be based on principles of aligning salaries with the real cost of living, reducing pay gaps, and rewarding merit, as the current policy relies on studies conducted since 2014, which now appear insufficient to meet current challenges. It is also imperative to establish an indexation mechanism to protect civil servants' purchasing power against inflation.

This transformation must be part of a broader vision for modernizing the public administration and rigorously managing state finances. Indeed, improving compensation should not be seen as a budgetary constraint, but as a crucial investment in the state's human capital. A better-paid, motivated, and valued civil service will be decisive for improving public services, strengthening citizens' trust in their institutions, and supporting economic growth.

Finally, the Burundian League for Human Rights "Iteka" and King Umurundi Freedom call upon public authorities, as well as technical and financial partners, unions, civil society, and all stakeholders, to make salary reform a major national priority. The dignity of civil servants, the efficiency of the state, social cohesion, and the future of Burundi's economic and human development depend on it.