

SECURING THE RIGHT TO STAY: LOCAL INTEGRATION OF IDPS IN BURUNDI

Greta Zeender, Senior Country Analyst

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The government of Burundi has made significant efforts through legislation, policies and programmes to find sustainable and lasting solutions for people affected by the country's conflict, and much has been accomplished for returning refugees. Some 17 years since the conflict broke out there are still a significant number of cases of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have received little attention or support in recent years. The last comprehensive survey in 2005 found 117,000 IDPs in settlements throughout the country.

The situation of IDPs is broadly comparable to that of surrounding communities, but there are also some substantial differences. Most notably, IDPs tend to live in more concentrated settlements with houses closer together than other Burundians, whose homes and land are scattered across the hilly countryside. They have a harder time cultivating their land, and their settlements are often built on territory that is the subject of various state or private claims.

This report examines the extent to which local integration is an option for IDPs living in settlements. It is based on information gathered from a field visit during May and June 2010, and on a review of available literature, including the government policy documents mentioned above. NRC monitors interviewed IDPs in four settlements, and members of local communities living near two of these settlements and in a peace village. IDMC also conducted extensive interviews with officials from central and regional government, donor governments and civil society organisations.⁴⁹

The mission looked into the following questions:

- What is the preferred durable solution for long-term IDPs - return, local integration or settlement elsewhere the country?
- Do IDPs have access to their original land, and how far away is it from their current settlement?
- What are the obstacles to, and factors that facilitate local integration?
- What steps could be taken to foster local integration, taking into consideration the relevant national and international legal frameworks, and the policies and programmes designed to support lasting solutions for IDPs?

⁴⁹ IDMC thanks the staff of NRC Burundi, in particular the country director, Kate Norton, the ICLA programme manager, Roel Debruyne, and the ICLA team for their invaluable assistance and insight. IDMC also thanks the government officials, donor government representatives and experts with whom we spoke for sharing their knowledge and experience.

The report's main finding is that 90 per cent of the IDPs interviewed expressed a preference to remain in their current settlement, even when their original land is far from their new home, or when they live in settlements without easy access to a town or basic services. The primary reasons were that they had become used to living in their current settlement, and that they still had painful memories of, or concerns about, their former neighbours.

Where local integration is the IDPs' preferred option, the security of tenure of the land on which their settlements are built becomes a key issue. According to various reports and to government representatives, most of the settlements have been built on land belonging to the state, and as such, the IDPs' continued presence is generally not a problem. According to our study, however, 75 per cent of IDPs interviewed said they felt at risk of expulsion from their settlement, and NRC teams found that there were indeed restitution claims on all or part of the land in the four settlements we visited. The supposed land rights holders are generally seeking compensation, but none has been awarded thus far. It follows that a key challenge in finding sustainable and lasting solutions for IDPs lies in providing them with security of tenure in the settlements, and resolving outstanding land rights claims.

Our assessment is that the best solution for the vast majority of IDPs is to promote local integration. In order to do this, accurate data on the location, size and composition of IDP settlements will have to be collected, holders of pre-existing land rights on which settlements have been built will have to be compensated, and programmes to shore up the livelihoods of particularly vulnerable groups, including ethnic Batwa, elderly people and orphan girls, will have to be implemented. Political leadership will be necessary to promote a shared understanding of the future of IDP settlements among relevant ministries, the National Commission for Land and Other Properties (known by its French acronym, CNTB), provincial governors, local administrators and neighbouring communities, with the aim of transforming the settlements into permanent villages with security of tenure for their inhabitants.

I. BACKGROUND ON THE CONFLICT

Since Burundi's independence in 1962, members of the majority Hutu community and soldiers from the Tutsi minority (who make up some 15 per cent of the country's population of 8.7 million) have massacred hundreds of thousands of people. Millions more have been driven from their homes. In 1972, a Hutu rebellion led to violent repression by the Tutsi-dominated army. An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 people died in the ensuing wave of violence, and more than 300,000 fled to neighbouring countries, primarily Tanzania.⁵⁰

The 1993 assassination of the country's first elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, sparked a new wave of violence, massacres and displacement. At first, the majority of those displaced were ethnic Tutsi, who fled the northern and central provinces in fear of retaliation, or because they were targeted by Hutu rebel groups. Both Hutu and Tutsi civilians subsequently became targets of the rebels and the army's campaign against them.

Most of the Tutsi left their upland homes and land to find refuge closer to administrative centres or military posts on the lowland plains, while many Hutu fled to Tanzania. The violence was further fuelled by economic inequalities and by other conflicts in the region, particularly the genocide of Tutsi and moderate Hutu in Rwanda and two major wars in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

⁵⁰ René Lemarchand and David Martin, *Selective Genocide in Burundi*, (Washington, DC: Minority Rights Group, 1974), pp. 29-30; Geneviève Boutin and Salvatore Nkurunziza, "Burundi: Developing Strategies for Self-Reliance. A Study of Displacement in Four Provinces," in *Caught Between Borders*, ed. by Marc Vincent and Birgitte Refslund Sorensen (London: Pluto Press, 2001), p. 48.

From 1996, as conflict between the government and rebel groups escalated, both Tutsis and Hutus found refuge in settlements, especially in the south. As part of a military strategy against the rebel groups following the 1996 *coup d'état*, the Tutsi-led government twice ordered the relocation of hundreds of thousands of (mostly Hutu) civilians into 'regroupment camps' in the late 1990s.⁵¹ The number of IDPs peaked in 1999 at over 800,000, or around 12 per cent of the population.⁵² By 2003, it is estimated that 300,000 people, mostly civilians, had been killed.⁵³

The 'regroupment' camps were dismantled in 2000 under international pressure, but many other IDP settlements remained. The same year, the government, opposition parties and armed opposition groups signed a peace agreement in Arusha, Tanzania. Large-scale displacement continued, however, as the army fought two rebel groups which had not joined the peace process.

In 2003, the larger of the two remaining groups, the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy (known by its French acronym CNDD-FDD) signed a ceasefire agreement with the government, and the resulting improvements in security allowed for the return of tens of thousands of IDPs to their homes.

A government headed by Pierre Nkurunziza, a Hutu and former head of the FDD rebel movement, was elected in 2005 - the first democratic election since the start of the conflict 12 years earlier. The last remaining rebel group, the Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People-National Liberation Forces (known by its French abbreviation Palipehutu-FNL) fought on before finally signing a comprehensive ceasefire agreement with the government in 2006. However, the ceasefire was not respected in practice, and insecurity and displacement continued in the capital and in surrounding provinces until the Palipehutu-FNL returned to the negotiating table in April 2008. Following talks with the government brokered by the heads of state of neighbouring countries, the group's leaders renounced the use of arms and registered the FNL as a political party. No new conflict-related displacement has taken place since.

In May 2009 the Ministry of National Solidarity, Refugee Return and Social Reintegration (hereafter the Ministry of National Solidarity) released a preliminary report on the situation of IDPs and repatriated refugees in settlements.⁵⁴ The report found that between 2002 and 2009 over 50 per cent of IDPs had returned to their places of origin, and close to half of the IDP settlements had been closed, particularly those in the south of the country.⁵⁵ As the report failed to differentiate between IDPs and repatriated refugees unable to return to their former homes, it put the number of people living in settlements at 157,167, a figure nearly 50 per cent higher than the 117,000 cited by the *Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs* (OCHA) in 2005, the last comprehensive survey undertaken by the UN. It is important to identify IDPs and returning refugees separately, as they may require solutions tailored to their specific needs. Returning refugees who are unable to repossess their land in their place of origin may end up in IDP settlements and in essence become IDPs, while the majority of IDPs in settlements can still access their land. However, common solutions could be

51 UN Commission on Human Rights, *Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/53—Addendum—Profiles in Displacement: Forced Relocation in Burundi*, March 2000, E/CN.4/2001/5/Add.1, http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?m=71.

52 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Burundi*, 1 November 1999, p. 6, www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/87465440b0628237c125681c004f76b4.

53 International Crisis Group, *Defusing the Land Time-Bomb*, Africa Report N°70, October 2003, www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/burundi/070-refugees-and-displaced-persons-in-burundi-defusing-the-land-time-bomb.aspx.

54 Government of Burundi, Ministry of National Solidarity, Refugee Return and Social Reintegration, *Rapport sur l'étude d'actualisation de la base de données sur la situation des déplacés et des rapatriés encore dans les sites*, May 2009.

55 For example Makamba province, which had over 13,000 IDPs in 2005 according to the 1999 OCHA survey, had only 678 people living in settlements, according to the government's 2009 survey.

sought for returning refugees and for IDPs who are unable to cultivate their original land, or who do not have any land. Today, the majority of people still living in IDP settlements—mostly in northern and central provinces—are ethnic Tutsi. Their current number is unclear, but the Ministry of National Solidarity is planning to provide more details, including a breakdown of the total into internally displaced, repatriated refugees and others in a forthcoming published version of its study.⁵⁶

The majority of people consulted in the 2005 OCHA survey declared that they felt well-integrated into their current location and comfortable among their new neighbours, and expressed a wish to remain in the IDP settlements.⁵⁷ While all IDP settlements in the south have officially been closed since 2005, few IDPs in the north and centre of the country are thought to have returned to their places of origin.

Presidential elections in June 2010 gave a second mandate to Pierre Nkurunziza. The main opposition parties, however, withdrew their candidates, mainly following allegations of fraud during the local elections in May of that year.

II. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES ON REFUGEES AND IDPS

Since the August 2000 Arusha peace agreement, the government has put in place various policies and mechanisms to assist and protect returning refugees and IDPs. It has also signed up to the relevant international treaties. Between 1999 and 2005, an estimated 700,000 IDPs returned to their homes under improved security conditions, some of them with international support.⁵⁸

In recent years most efforts have been directed towards assisting returning refugees. Between 2002 and 2009, over 500,000 refugees returned, mostly from Tanzania. Their reintegration, particularly of the 50,000 who fled in 1972, presented extraordinary challenges for the government.⁵⁹ Many returned to find their land occupied, expropriated, sold or redistributed to others, and finding solutions to their pressing problems has accounted for the majority of the government's resources earmarked for helping the victims of successive conflicts.

IDPs were on the agenda of the 2000 peace agreement, which established a power-sharing arrangement between the Tutsi government that had taken power through a coup and Hutu rebel groups. A chapter of the agreement focuses on the rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees and other victims of conflicts, or *sinistrés*.⁶⁰ It laid the ground for the establishment of a national commission (the *Commission Nationale de Réinsertion des Sinistrés*, or CNRS) to coordinate the return, resettlement and reintegration of refugees and IDPs with international organisations. The agreement sets out fairly detailed guidelines for this process, including the settlement close to home of

56 Interview with official from the Ministry of National Solidarity, 7 June 2010.

57 OCHA, *Enquête sur les populations déplacées au Burundi 2005*, 26 May 2005, [www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/FB6FC239587F7796802570B700587C9B/\\$file/BDI_enquete_IDP_2005.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/FB6FC239587F7796802570B700587C9B/$file/BDI_enquete_IDP_2005.pdf).

58 OCHA, *Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP): Mid-Year Review of the Humanitarian Appeal 2005 for Burundi*, 23 June 2005, [http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2005_Burundi/\\$FILE/MYR_2005_Burundi_SCREEN.PDF?OpenElement](http://ochadms.unog.ch/quickplace/cap/main.nsf/h_Index/MYR_2005_Burundi/$FILE/MYR_2005_Burundi_SCREEN.PDF?OpenElement).

59 UNHCR, *Repatriation of 1972 Burundian Refugees hits 50,000 Mark*, 16 September 2009, 2011, www.unhcr.org/4ab0db636.html.

60 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, *Protocol IV, Chapter I, Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Refugees and Sinistrés*, 28 August 2000, www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/burundi.aspx.

all those who believed they could not yet return to their property in order to allow them to access their land, and the construction of housing clusters in order to free up further land for cultivation.⁶¹

In 2001 the government in conjunction with the international community established a coordination mechanism to discuss and solve protection issues faced by IDPs.⁶² Civil and military authorities engaged in dialogue on the issues, and the mechanism, which remained in place until 2005, served as a forum to pursue advocacy on behalf of IDPs.⁶³ It did not, however, focus on lasting and sustainable solutions.

In March 2003, the CNRS was established, as foreseen by the Arusha agreement, but it suffered from a shortage of funds and staff, and focused its attention on returning refugees to the detriment of IDPs.⁶⁴

Between 2003 and 2008, the government resettled some victims of the conflict in “peace villages”, sometimes around IDP settlements. This approach was criticised for providing little more than shelter to their vulnerable inhabitants.⁶⁵

In 2005 the Support Project for the Repatriation and Reinsertion of Conflict Victims (known by its French acronym PARESI) assumed the CNRS’s responsibility to provide basic housing and infrastructure to returning refugees and IDPs. It works in collaboration with and is funded by UNHCR, and still operates today.

In 2006, the government established the CNTB under the office of the first vice-president to resolve the land and other property disputes of *sinistrés*.⁶⁶ Since 2009, provincial commissions made up of CNTB employees and local government officials have investigated the cases in order to decentralise the process. If mediation is successful, the parties to the dispute sign a legally binding agreement. If the provincial commissions fail in their mediation attempt, the CNTB can refer the case to the courts. CNTB services are free of charge, and are used extensively by repatriated refugees. However, less than one per cent of cases relate to IDP land disputes.⁶⁷

Also in 2006, the government ratified the Great Lakes Pact, a comprehensive package of new norms and mechanisms for protecting forcibly displaced people in the countries of the Great Lakes region.⁶⁸

61 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, *Protocol IV, Chapter I, Rehabilitation and Resettlement of Refugees and Sinistrés*, articles 3 and 4, 28 August 2000.

62 Groupe Technique de Suivi (GTS), *Protocole relatif à la création d’un cadre permanent de concertation pour la protection des personnes déplacées* [Protocol for the Creation of a Permanent Framework for Consultation on the Protection of Displaced Persons], 7 February 2001, available in French and English at: www.brookings.edu/projects/idp/Laws-and-Policies/burundi.aspx.

63 Tullio Santini, “Addressing the Protection Gap: the Framework for Consultation on IDPs in Burundi,” *Forced Migration Review*, Iss. 15, October 2002, p. 43.

64 *Forced Migration Review*, “Reintegration Challenges for Burundi,” compiled by the FMR Editors, Iss. 21, September 2004, p. 27, www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR21/FMR2109.pdf.

65 IRIN, BURUNDI: “Peace” villages come with a price, 31 March 2010, www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=88623.

66 The first vice-president is responsible for political affairs, the second vice-president for economic affairs. Land conflicts are seen as a political rather than an economic issue. According to article two of Law n.1/17 of 4 September 2009 reviewing the CNTB mandate, the term *sinistré* encompasses the physical or moral person, including repatriated refugee, IDP, “regrouped “ or “dispersed “ IDP, widows, orphans, or any other person who lost their property due to the tragic events which occurred since independence (IDMC translation).

67 IDMC Interview with CNTB official, 2 June 2010.

68 *Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region*, December 2006, www.icglr.org.

In 2008 an *ad hoc* commission for return and reintegration (the *Commission Intégrée Ad-hoc pour le Rapatriement et la Réintégration*) was set up within the Ministry of National Solidarity with UNHCR and UNDP support. The same year, it published a ‘villagisation’ strategy document to guide the repatriation and integration of returning refugees without land.⁶⁹ The document drew on lessons learned from the shortcomings of the peace villages in adopting a more integrated approach. It foresaw the creation of new villages with basic services and the making of additional land available to allow greater numbers of beneficiaries to re-establish viable livelihoods. One of its main thrusts was to accommodate various ethnic groups in the same location in an effort to foster reconciliation, peace and security. The programme also envisaged the development of simplified procedures to allow the rural population to register their homes and land with the commune in order to avoid potential land conflicts. The programme, which mentions IDPs but only as secondary beneficiaries, has been run by the PARESI agency.

In parallel, the government developed a new national land policy (*Lettre de politique foncière*), to take into account developments since the introduction of its 1986 land code, most notably the fundamental changes brought about by displacement.⁷⁰ Its main objective was to reduce conflict over land via the creation of ‘integrated rural villages’ (known by their French acronym VRIs) to accommodate people from different ethnicities.

In 2009 Burundi signed the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.⁷¹ In the same year, UNDP undertook a socio-economic study of IDP settlements in the three provinces worst affected by the most recent conflict between the government and the Palipehutu-FNL - Bujumbura Rural, Bubanza and Cibitoke, in an effort to assist the most vulnerable to find sustainable and lasting solutions.⁷²

In March 2010, the government adopted its ‘socio-economic reintegration strategy for people affected by the conflict’ (hereafter ‘the national strategy’), the ultimate goal of which is “to create an environment conducive to the country’s sustainable development”.⁷³ It aims to “foster the setting up of rural development centres in concentrated settlements that facilitate access to land and infrastructure” in VRIs.⁷⁴ On displacement, it declares that the return of IDPs to their community of origin or the transformation of IDP settlements into VRIs “...is an essential objective of a socio-economic reintegration strategy leading to the consolidation of peace.”⁷⁵ The national strategy envisages the creation of an IDP technical group to review all IDP settlements, and on the basis of its findings,

69 Government of Burundi, Commission Intégrée Ad Hoc - Rapatriement et Réintégration, *Document de stratégie, Programme de villagisation dans le cadre du rapatriement et de la réintégration au Burundi*, 2008, [www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/F4385A676EA7983FC12574A3006D5033/\\$file/Commission+intégrée+Document+de+stratégie+sur+la+villagisation.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/F4385A676EA7983FC12574A3006D5033/$file/Commission+intégrée+Document+de+stratégie+sur+la+villagisation.pdf).

70 République du Burundi, Ministère de l’Environnement, de l’Aménagement du Territoire et des Travaux Publiques, *Lettre de Politique Foncière*, 15 September 2008, [www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/EDF29BD73D718B45C12576D90065FF09/\\$file/Lettre+de+politique+fonciere+2009.doc](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/EDF29BD73D718B45C12576D90065FF09/$file/Lettre+de+politique+fonciere+2009.doc).

71 African Union, *List of countries which have signed, ratified/acceded to the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa*, 6 August 2010, www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/list/Convention%20on%20IDPs%20-%20displaced.pdf.

72 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Projet d’Appui à la réintégration socioéconomique des populations affectées par les crises et au relèvement communautaire dans les provinces de Bubanza, Bujumbura Rural et Cibitoke*, March 2009. The project was being carried out in Bubanza province when this study was undertaken.

73 République du Burundi, Ministère de la Solidarité Nationale, du Rapatriement des Réfugiés et de la Réintégration, *Stratégie Nationale de Réintégration Socio-économique des Personnes affectées par le Conflit*, March 2010, p. 7, para.14. (IDMC translation).

74 République du Burundi, Ministère de la Solidarité Nationale, du Rapatriement des Réfugiés et de la Réintégration, *Stratégie Nationale de Réintégration Socio-économique des Personnes affectées par le Conflit*, March 2010, p. 25, para.76. (IDMC translation).

75 République du Burundi, Ministère de la Solidarité Nationale, du Rapatriement des Réfugiés et de la Réintégration, *Stratégie Nationale de Réintégration Socio-économique des Personnes affectées par le Conflit*, March 2010, p. 25, para.79. (IDMC translation).

to define a reintegration policy. Taking into account IDPs' preferences, it would either determine the feasibility of their return, or work towards the formal recognition of their settlement, the latter including the resolution of any outstanding land claim pertaining to the settlement in question.⁷⁶ The IDP technical group is to be created within the community development and repatriation forum (*Groupe sectoriel relèvement communautaire et rapatriement*), where representatives of the government and of the international community coordinate their action.

The issue of land titles for the inhabitants of peace villages and VRIs is still outstanding; as of June 2010, it was still under discussion among the various ministries involved.⁷⁷ By the end of August they had agreed upon a draft for a policy document that would prioritise the granting of 'letters of attribution' to those living in VRIs. Those living in peace villages—including the former IDP settlement of Nyarunazi, which was visited for this study—would receive their documents in a second phase.⁷⁸ At the time of writing, a final version of the policy document has not yet been published. Draft terms of reference for the IDP working group foreseen by the national strategy had been developed, and the group convened for the first time in October 2010.

III. METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this report was gathered via a desk review of the literature on IDPs in Burundi and related topics.⁷⁹ The author also undertook a two-week mission to Burundi to interview relevant actors in the capital Bujumbura and the north-eastern provinces of Muyinga and Karuzi. These actors included provincial governors, local administrators and representatives of the Ministry of Solidarity, the Ministry of Land Administration, the CNTB, NGOs, UN agencies and donor governments. All meetings were facilitated by the NRC country office in Burundi. Various follow up discussions to seek additional information also took place after the mission.

The mission looked into the following questions:

- What is the preferred durable solution for long-term IDPs—return, local integration or settlement elsewhere in the country?
- Do IDPs have access to their original land, and how far away is it from their current settlement?
- What are the obstacles to, and the factors that facilitate local integration?
- What steps could be taken to foster local integration, taking into consideration the relevant national and international legal frameworks, and the policies and programmes designed to support lasting solutions for IDPs?

In June 2010, NRC teams carried out 93 individual interviews and seven focus groups (each with 15 participants) in the IDP settlements of Bwasare in Muyinga province, Ruvubu in Karuzi province, Kigoma in Karuzi province and Ruvumu in Bubanza province.

76 République du Burundi, Ministère de la Solidarité Nationale, du Rapatriement des Réfugiés et de la Réintégration, *Stratégie Nationale de Réintégration Socio-économique des Personnes affectées par le Conflit*, March 2010, pp. 26–27, para.81–84. (IDMC translation).

77 IDMC interview with officials from the Government of Burundi, Ministry of Land Management and Urban Planning, 9 June 2010.

78 NRC Burundi, email message to author, 29 August 2010.

79 This literature can be found at www.internal-displacement.org.

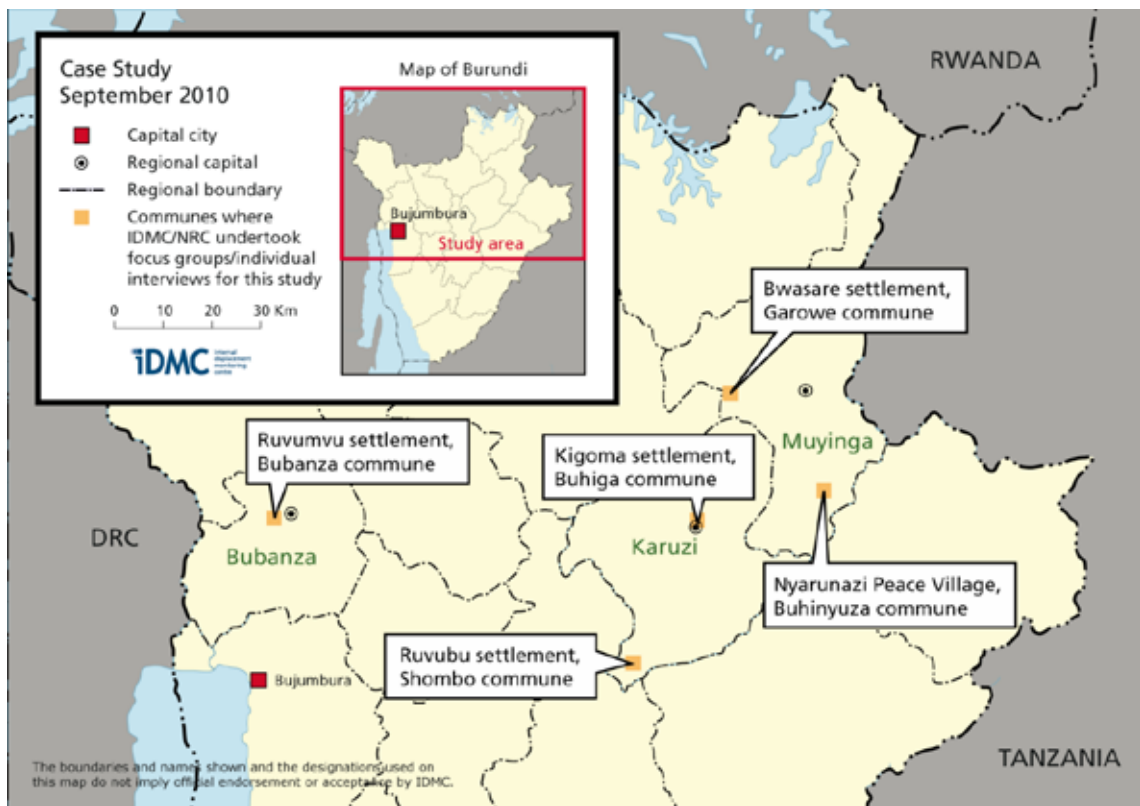
The four communities studied are representative of the various types of settlements that exist today. Some are mono-ethnic, others multi-ethnic; some are close to roads and administrative centres, others isolated; some are close to IDPs' place of origin, others are several hours walk away.

- **Bwasare settlement (in Gasorwe commune, Muyinga province)** was set up by the local administrator in 1998 to settle ethnic Tutsi and Batwa closer to their place of origin. These IDPs had fled five years earlier to various locations in the province. About 550 people currently live in the settlement, which is close to a communal centre and a main road. Most of the inhabitants are able to farm the land from which they were displaced.
- **Ruvubu settlement (in Shombo commune, Karuzi province)** was set up by the local administrator in 1994. Ethnic Tutsis had taken refuge there the year before, when they were displaced from their upland farms some 20 kilometres away. It was established for 130 families, many of them including widows and orphans. It is near a major road, but far from any urban centre. The provincial capital is around 30 kilometres away. Some houses were badly damaged during the rainy season of 2010. Those who can afford to do so rent land to farm in a nearby swamp.
- **Kigoma settlement (in Buhiga commune, Karuzi province)** is home to more than 6,000 people from three ethnic groups. The original inhabitants were Tutsi and Batwa, and they were later joined by Hutus. It was set up in 1993 by the local administrator, and is on the outskirts of the provincial capital. Some inhabitants walk up to five hours to farm the land they were displaced from, while many others make a living from informal trade and jobs in the service sector
- **Ruvumvu settlement (in Bubanza commune, Bubanza province)** was set up by the local administrator in 1993. Close to the provincial capital, it is home to around 1,100 families from all three ethnic groups. IDPs have been joined at the settlement by returnees and members of neighbouring communities. Some of the IDPs are able to farm the land they were displaced from, while others (whose land is too far away) work as traders, civil servants or labourers, and may have rented or bought land nearby.

NRC teams also held four focus group meetings with 60 neighbours of the Bwasare and Ruvumvu settlements, and two focus groups with 30 inhabitants of the former IDP settlement of Nyarunazi (in Muyinga province) which has been turned into a peace village.

The author accompanied the NRC teams who carried out the interviews in Bwasare, Kigoma and Ruvubu. The questionnaire used for the individual interviews focused on current living conditions, plans and aspirations for the future and access to land. The focus group discussions were guided by the themes laid out in the *LASC Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs*.⁸⁰

80 Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *LASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, April 2010, www.brookings.edu/reports/2010/04_durable_solutions.aspx. Adopted by UN in: UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Walter Kälin—Addendum—Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, A/HRC/13/21/Add.4, 9 February 2010.



IV. LOCAL INTEGRATION: THE MOST LIKELY SOLUTION

Of the three options available to IDPs as lasting solutions to their situation—local integration, return or settlement elsewhere—it is local integration that seems most viable. During IDMC’s mission to Burundi, both central and local government officials stated that the return of IDPs is their ultimate goal, with local integration as an interim solution. The research team found, however, that over 90 per cent of IDPs interviewed for this study said local integration was their preferred solution, and that they had no intention of returning.⁸¹ The discrepancy between the government’s emphasis on return and IDPs’ apparent preferences has led to practices which, in some cases, do not reflect the IDPs’ choices in terms of a durable solution. For example, according to IDPs’ accounts from the Ruvubu focus groups, the local administrator refused to help them rebuild houses destroyed during the last rainy season, and told them that they would only get assistance if they agreed to return.

The following factors should be taken into consideration to facilitate the local integration of IDPs:

Housing: IDPs live on small land plots (15x20 metres), generally determined by the local authorities. Most of

81 This number only reflects the opinion of people interviewed for this study, and does not necessarily represent the opinion of all Burundi’s IDPs. However, the finding came as no surprise to the national actors with whom we shared it, including officials at the Ministry for National Solidarity. Among the 10 per cent who were interested in other options, a few IDPs said they could consider returning to their upland farms under certain conditions (reconnaissance visits, assistance, etc). Others, in particular ethnic Batwa who do not own land, and some living in Ruvubu expressed an interest in resettlement elsewhere, due to their difficult living conditions. While there have not been other recent studies looking at IDPs’ preferred solution, The OCHA 2005 survey already mentioned that 50 per cent of IDPs had no intention of returning to their former homes.

them settled in their current location on the basis of an oral commitment from the local administrator or other government official. In Ruvumvu, for example, IDPs felt that Burundi's then-president Pierre Buyoya had confirmed their right to settle in their current location in 1998. At the same time, they said that they now fear expulsion as people from nearby communities claim plots of land on the settlement (see the section below on *Security of tenure in IDP settlements*). In all the settlements we visited, IDPs had built their houses in adobe bricks and had received roof tiles from humanitarian organisations or local authorities. Many of these houses have not been properly maintained due in part to IDPs' lack of resources, but also possibly as a result of uncertainty regarding their future in their current location. In all the settlements visited, many roof tiles were missing or broken.

Ethnic Batwa are marginalised and live in particularly difficult conditions, in huts with leaf roofing set apart from other IDPs.

One of the main characteristics of protracted displacement in Burundi is the crowded arrangement of displaced families. IDPs' houses have been built close together due to the lack of available land, and in the four settlements surveyed, young married couples had difficulty in finding space to build a home for themselves. The situation was particularly difficult in Ruvubu, where several generations live together in tiny houses. That said, IDMC/NRC found that the housing conditions of neighbouring communities were generally as poor as IDPs' but that the plots were usually bigger than in IDP settlements and allowed for subsistence agriculture.

Security of tenure in IDP settlements: Although IDPs have been living in their current location for 10 years or more, 75 per cent of those interviewed for this study said they still felt at risk of expulsion from their settlement. IDP settlements were generally set up on what was thought at the time to be state land, but the state ownership has either been disputed by individuals or by organisations such as the Catholic Church. All four settlements visited for this study revealed disputes of this type.

- In Bwasare, IDPs were under the impression they were living on state land, but the local administrator and the president of the CNTB's Muyinga province delegation said the grandson of the land's former alleged owner had claimed it in 2009. The land had been taken over by the state for coffee cultivation and to set up a cemetery, but the grandson claimed his family had not received compensation. As of June 2010, the CNTB was still considering the case.
- In Ruvubu, some of the owners of nearby plots have claimed that the land on which the settlement is built is also theirs, and these claimants are cultivating the little land still available within the settlement with the local administrator's agreement, according to the focus group discussions.
- In Kigoma, in 2005, the local administrator issued documents to IDPs who had settled there in 1993, showing that they owned their plots of land (*attestations de possession d'une parcelle*). The subsequent administration, however, declared these documents invalid on the basis that local authorities did not have the right to issue them, a position seconded by the president of the CNTB's Karuzi province delegation. According to the focus group discussions, the local administrator has asked IDPs to return these documents, but so far they have not complied.
- In Ruvumvu, the land on which the current settlement was established is reported to belong to people displaced from there to other areas in 1993.⁸² Current IDPs said in interviews that as the land was

82 According to local officials and to neighbours of the settlement, NRC interviews, June 2010.

unoccupied at the time of their arrival, they settled there with the agreement of the local administrator, who encouraged them to build permanent housing, and plant bananas and other crops. The returnees are seeking compensation via the CNTB, which is trying to help the various parties reach an agreement. To complicate matters further, however, some of the returnees may have already sold part or all of their land to current IDPs, or exchanged it for IDPs' original land.⁸³ During interviews with neighbours of the settlement, several men said they thought that some of the alleged owners might try to take their land by force if they were not compensated.

In the focus groups, IDPs also cited concern about their possible expulsion to make way for a new university.

Livelihoods: Burundi is the least urbanised country in the world, but it has the second-highest population density in sub-Saharan Africa.⁸⁴ It has very few natural resources, and IDPs, like other Burundians, live, for the most part, off their land.⁸⁵ Much of the land available, however, is not particularly fertile and plots are often too small to meet families' needs. The latter is a result of plots being divided amongst heirs as land is passed down from one generation to another, and of court and government decisions to share the land among conflicting parties.

Burundi was estimated to be the third worst country in terms of food security in 2010.⁸⁶ The UN World Food Programme estimated that 16 per cent of the population—whether displaced or not—needed food aid in 2009.⁸⁷ IDPs only have space to grow a few vegetables or fruit on the small plots allocated to them in the settlements.⁸⁸

According to the 2005 OCHA survey, 75 per cent of IDPs continue to access and cultivate the land they worked prior to displacement. While most of the people interviewed by IDMC/NRC in the settlements of Bwasare, Kigoma and Ruvubu said they were still able to access their land, a third of those interviewed in Ruvumu said they were not able to do so, either because their land had been taken over by neighbours or family members, or because they had sold it.⁸⁹ Only a minority have sought justice through traditional authorities such as NGOs, the CNTB or the courts. None of the displaced ethnic Batwa interviewed had access to the land they cultivated prior to displacement since they had been renting it for a portion of their harvest.⁹⁰ The focus groups also highlighted the particular difficulties that widows and orphan girls face in accessing their original land. This is not a problem specific to IDPs - widows and orphan girls, whether displaced or not, often struggle to recover the land of their deceased husbands or parents, and find themselves forced out by male family members. The law states that women cannot officially

83 According to IDP and neighbouring residents' testimonies, NRC interviews, June and July 2010.

84 UNDP, *Human Development Report 2009, Table L*, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_Tables_rev.xls.

85 U.S. Department of State, *Background Note: Burundi*, 18 August 2010, www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2821.htm.

86 Maplecroft, *Food Security Risk Index 2010*, 19 August 2010, www.maplecroft.com/about/news/food-security.html.

87 UNHCR, *Burundi Country Briefing*, August 2009, 3, [www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/38C3774DC165AC53C12576490035959A/\\$file/UNHCR,+August+2009.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/38C3774DC165AC53C12576490035959A/$file/UNHCR,+August+2009.pdf).

88 In Ruvubu, the owners of the plots next to the settlement, who claim the land on which it is built, have started to grow vegetables on the small plots still available inside the settlement with the administrator's agreement, according to an IDMC/NRC focus group discussion.

89 The number of IDPs who have sold their land may very well be underestimated. In another land study in Karuzi province, "...the researchers witnessed many attempts to hide the truth regarding the size or legal status of plots of land", EU/Swiss Development Agency, *Transition Foncière dans l'Afrique des Grands Lacs*, (2008), p.46, (IDMC translation from French).

90 Serfdom, which affected all of Burundi's landless people, was outlawed in 1976, but the Batwa generally continue to provide unpaid labour in return for the right to build a hut on someone else's property, contributing to their living in extreme poverty, see IRIN, "Great Lakes: Displaced in Bujumbura," 15 April 2004, www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=49527.

inherit land or sell it, but can only manage family assets in their husband's absence.⁹¹ Widows can, however, hold land in trust for their male children under the customary system. The constitution, meanwhile, does provide for equality between men and women, and some courts have granted the right of inheritance to women on that basis, but others have not.⁹²

The 2005 OCHA survey did not specify how close IDP land had to be to settlements in order to be termed “accessible,” but according to IDMC/NRC interviews with IDPs who still had access to their land, a third felt they could not go there regularly because it was too far away (i.e. a two to five hour walk from the settlement). Access is further complicated by the fact that many settlement dwellers are elderly, unwell or both. Another consequence of making only sporadic visits to their land is that it makes it impossible for IDPs to raise livestock, thus depriving them of a source of manure to fertilise their plots for cultivation. As a result their subsistence crops are low-yield, providing only enough food for day-to-day living. Several IDPs also said that the theft of crops from their original land was an issue. In addition, some said they had to sell or rent their original land for several years to pay for unexpected expenses such as medical treatment. Others sold the roof tiles of their settlement home to generate the cash to respond to an emergency.

While the majority of IDPs live off the land, several in Kigoma and in Ruvumvu said during interviews that their main activity was no longer subsistence farming. In both settlements, which are close to urban areas, many earn a living by building roads, providing a range of services in jobs from hairdressers to drivers, or by selling goods at the market.

Documentation: IDPs interviewed for this study did not generally mention any problems in obtaining personal documents such as birth certificates (which guarantee free healthcare for children under five), identity cards and electoral registration cards.⁹³ Ethnic Batwa, however, told IDMC/NRC that they had not registered their children with the state, and were unaware of the free healthcare that would have been available to them. Most of the IDPs interviewed said they had voted during the 2005 and 2010 local elections, and a number—both men and women—stood as candidates. In 2005, several were elected to village councils.⁹⁴

IDPs, like other Burundians, do not generally hold land titles or other official documents confirming their land rights. Although legislation in 1986 detailed regulations governing the buying, selling and inheritance of land and associated rights, practices outside the main urban areas remain informal or traditional.⁹⁵ Indeed, about 98 per cent of plots, the majority in rural areas, have not been registered, and the right to use rural land is generally established via on-going occupation, sometimes over generations. In this context, forced displacement over 40 years has caused many disputes, with refugees, but also IDPs, returning to find their land occupied or sold by family members or neighbours. Land on which IDPs settled based on assurances it was state-owned has also been the subject of claims by various parties without proper documentation, which makes the work of the CNTB and other mediating or adjudicating bodies both complex and time consuming.

91 Government of Burundi, *Decree nb1/024 on the reform of the 1980 Code of Persons and Families*, 28 April 1993.

92 P. Prettitore, *The Role of Customary Norms and Land Rights in Post-Conflict Countries: Experience in Angola, Burundi and Uganda*, NRC/IDMC, October 2007, 19; Interview with the Swiss Development Agency's programme officer on land issues, Bujumbura, 27 May 2010.

93 A presidential decree adopted in 2006 guarantees free healthcare for pregnant women and children under five.

94 Thereby representing the inhabitants of one “hill” or “*colline*.”

95 A new draft land law to be reviewed by parliament after the 2010 national elections had not been adopted as of April 1, 2011.

Access to services: The situation of IDPs living in settlements is comparable to that of other vulnerable Burundians, with limited access to basic services due in large part to their poverty.⁹⁶ Settlements received international assistance at the height of the conflict, but IDPs said in interviews that they had not received any help for at least five years.⁹⁷ As a rule, IDPs do not have the means to repair and maintain the few services available in the settlements. Most or all of the public taps were not working, and most IDPs could not in any case afford the charges for drawing water from them in the settlements visited. As a result, IDPs said that they had to walk some two kilometres to get water.

All interviewees confirmed that their children were able to attend primary schools set up in neighbouring communities without fear of discrimination. Children of the settlements and of surrounding communities all faced difficulties in accessing secondary education, mainly due to the lack of available space and the high cost of education.

Life expectancy in Burundi is below its pre-1993 levels, and UNICEF has reported that the country has one of the worst infant mortality rates in Africa.⁹⁸ IDPs can access health centres outside the settlements, but these are generally overcrowded, poorly stocked, and IDPs do not have the resources to pay for the treatment of chronic conditions.⁹⁹

Safety and security: IDPs in all four settlements said that while the country had experienced widespread violence and banditry over the years, living closer together rather than in traditional scattered upland homes has made them feel safer. That feeling of security is enhanced further by the fact that many IDP settlements are located close to military installations or police stations, according to focus group discussions.

Relationship to neighbouring communities: The fact that surrounding communities were not consulted prior to or during the establishment of IDP settlements, and that humanitarian assistance was exclusively channelled to IDPs at the height of the crisis were mentioned during focus group meetings with settlement neighbours, but did not seem to have caused lasting resentment.¹⁰⁰ All focus groups with IDPs and neighbouring communities (in Bwasare and Ruvumvu) emphasised the positive relationships between IDPs and members of the surrounding communities. IDPs were seen as just like any other inhabitants of the *colline*, taking part in local development projects such as the construction of school or roads, farming and herding associations and local elections. IDPs and their neighbours reported that they helped each other to harvest their crops and invited each other to weddings, funerals and other events. Marriages between IDPs and their neighbours were also mentioned. They reported that their children went to the same schools, played and watched football matches together, took part in the same church-led activities, and shared some of their families' daily tasks such as collecting firewood and water.

IDPs' neighbours noted that living closer together in the settlements played a significant role in improving security. This was particularly the case in the multi-ethnic settlements, which were seen as a model for development. In the case of Bwasare (a settlement inhabited by ethnic Tutsi and Batwa) their neighbours—mostly ethnic Hutu—said

96 During focus group interviews, neighbours of Bwasare and Ruvumvu had similar complaints to those living in the settlements as regards the poor housing and the lack of accessible and affordable basic services.

97 This information is consistent with the 2005 OCHA survey, which found that few settlements still received assistance as of 2005.

98 UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Burundi background*, www.unicef.org/infobycountry/burundi_2774.html.

99 In Ruvubu, focus group participants said that there were many cases of malaria in the settlement, which is located above a swamp, and that few could afford medication.

100 It should be noted that members of surrounding communities may not have been present at the time, having been displaced themselves, as was reported in focus groups close to Ruvumvu.

that while they had good relations with the IDPs, they would prefer them to return to their upland homes now that the violence had abated.

The only significant sources of conflict with neighbouring communities are the competing claims to the land on which IDP settlements have been established.

Relationship to communities of origin: While some IDPs—in Kigoma in particular—reported good relations with their former neighbours, others talked about fear and bad memories associated with their displacement.¹⁰¹ This was the case in Bwasare, where IDPs said they were afraid of visiting their community of origin alone, and so travelled together in groups to their fields, about an hour away. In Ruvubu, focus group participants said that they did not know how they would get on with their former neighbours, many of whom were repatriated refugees from Tanzania whom they had not seen since 1993. Older IDPs generally said that they would not contemplate living with their former neighbours again, while the younger ones—who were children when they were displaced—were more open to the idea.

Access to remedies and justice: Like other poor Burundians living in rural areas, IDPs rarely go to court in search of justice, as it is expensive and time consuming. They tend to turn instead to local authorities or traditional leaders to settle disputes. Asked whether they would like the option of going to court to obtain justice from those who had forced them to flee, or whether they supported the setting up of a truth commission, IDPs said they would be interested in a process of reconciliation and forgiveness to help them move on, rather than going through costly court proceedings which would neither bring their family members back to life nor recover their lost assets.

It is also interesting to note that the IDPs interviewed never used the CNTB or other conflict resolution mechanism in an attempt to secure land in their settlement, believing rather that it was the government's responsibility – given that it was the state who authorised their settlement in the first place – to resolve land disputes, and to settle any related claims for compensation. Few IDPs were open to the idea of exchanging some or all of their original land for a guaranteed right to remain in the settlement.¹⁰² In Kigoma, several people said they felt the offer of a small plot of land on the settlement was meagre compensation, given that as result of displacement they had lost family members, homes, livestock and belongings.

In contrast, people holding rights over the land on which settlements have been built have, for the most part, used the CNTB in search of compensation or in some cases the return of their land. This strategy has negated the need for direct contact with IDPs regarding this matter, and so avoided a potential source of open conflict.¹⁰³ If land disputes are allowed to run on, however, people may take justice in their own hands, as interviews with neighbours of the Ruvumvu settlement indicated.

101 Even in Kigoma problems were reported. One displaced woman said that she had tried to rebuild her upland home, but that the neighbours had destroyed it before it was finished. She said that an inquiry ordered by the local administrator had led nowhere, IDMC/NRC interviews, 3 June 2010.

102 Only two of the 93 people interviewed for this study, both of them in Ruvumvu, said they had already exchanged their original land for a plot in the settlement.

103 In Ruvubu and in Ruvumvu, IDPs and the presumed owners of settlement land live close together in apparent harmony, despite the fact that the presumed owners had taken recourse to the CNTB in search of compensation.

V. MAIN OBSTACLES TO LOCAL INTEGRATION

The main obstacle to sustainable local integration of IDPs is that they have no security of tenure in their area of settlement. Whether the land on which their settlement has been built is claimed by others or not, their continued presence there depends on the goodwill of both local and national government. There are no up-to-date inventories of state land and few written records of private ownership, a situation that has led to conflicting claims on settlement land.

Ethnic Tutsi and Batwa settlements with no Hutu inhabitants are seen as less sustainable than fully multi-ethnic settlements. This point was made by local officials as well as IDPs and members of surrounding communities. Several IDPs in Ruvubu said, for example, that they would prefer to be resettled in a peace village alongside ethnic Hutus as most communities in Burundi are multi-ethnic.

The distance between the settlement and IDP's original land, (which varies from one to five hours' walk) does not seem to be a factor in IDPs' decision to return to their land or integrate locally. However, those who live far away from their land have more difficulty in finding adequate means of subsistence. The situation is particularly difficult for older IDPs as in Ruvubu who have been farmers all their lives, and do not have the necessary resources or skills to turn to activities other than agriculture to make their living.

VI. MAIN FACTORS FACILITATING LOCAL INTEGRATION

The main factor facilitating local integration is the strong desire of IDPs to remain where they are today. Having lived in their current location for up to 17 years in some cases, they have developed strong relationships with other members of the settlements. Many are elderly people and/or widows, and as such a social support network is crucial to them. One widow in Ruvubu interviewed for this study said that her neighbours' help in making regular visits to the local health centre had been invaluable. IDP children are generally well-integrated as, according to interviewees, they socialise with non-displaced children and were reported to suffer no discrimination based on their displaced status. IDPs seem to have good relationships with members of surrounding communities and participate in community affairs. The IDPs' neighbours view the settlements as helping to improve security in the area. All the IDPs interviewed also emphasised the fact that living closer together made them feel more secure.

Despite the prevalence of poverty, multi-ethnic settlements close to towns, such as Kigoma and Ruvumvu, have the potential to develop into more thriving economic centres. Those living in Kigoma and Ruvumvu stressed during the interview that they did not feel like IDPs, and would prefer not to be referred to as such.

VII. POSSIBLE STEPS TO FOSTER LOCAL INTEGRATION

For local integration to be a lasting and sustainable solution for IDPs, the issues of security of tenure, access to livelihoods and to basic services in the settlements need to be addressed. Instead of a temporary right to live in the settlements pending their return or resettlement to other areas, the right of IDPs to settle permanently at their current residence should be respected and balanced with the rights of any rightful owner contesting the land. It is essential to address this issue before land disputes seriously damage the relationship between IDPs and members of surrounding communities. To do so would require a series of steps:

1. Collect accurate data on the location, size and composition of IDP settlements, as well as the durable solution preferred by IDPs, and resolve disputes related to the land on which the settlements are built – in other words, finish the work undertaken by the Ministry of National Solidarity in its 2009 draft survey. The data should then be shared with the CNTB, the Ministry of National Solidarity and the Ministry of Land Management to determine the possibility of converting the settlements into permanent villages.
2. Promote a shared understanding of, and approach to the future of IDP settlements among the relevant ministries (National Solidarity and Land Management), the CNTB and provincial governors and local administrators in areas affected by displacement. Currently, some officials argue for ‘voluntary’ return, without having devised the measures needed to accompany it; others would prefer to see the settlements transformed into peace villages—a solution put forward by the national land policy and the national strategy, but here too the measures needed to implement their proposals have not been put in place. Consultation with those living in the settlements should be a prerequisite in establishing which policy to pursue.
3. Promote the exchange of information on efforts to find lasting and sustainable solutions for IDPs at all government levels, and among civil society organisations and international partners, particularly through the IDP technical group to be created within the community development and repatriation forum, as envisaged in the national strategy. The government should do its utmost to provide IDPs with all the details related to the factors enabling or hindering their local integration in the settlements, in order to avoid the spread of rumours due to the lack of accurate information.
4. The government should verify the nature of pre-existing land rights on IDP settlements and compensate land rights holders adequately, based on the recognition of public utility with the objective to contribute to peace and reconciliation. The government could reflect on the various types of compensation that could be offered to the land rights holders where IDP settlements have been built, including in-kind compensation. If the government were to decide that the resettlement of IDPs was the only solution in such cases, it should ensure that past mistakes are not repeated by clarifying that there are no outstanding claims on the land earmarked as an area for resettlement. Ideally, any such resettlement area would allow for easy access to IDPs’ original land or to new land offered in exchange, and would be close to an urban centre or at least a major road.
5. Once land claims on settlement land have been resolved, the government should clarify IDPs’ right to remain there in accordance with the local integration option set out in the national strategy. In particular, it is important that the government recognise at the highest level the right of IDPs to secured tenure in their current area of settlement. Existing government proposals vary from a simple declaration from the local administration to issuing IDPs with land certificates, or letters of attribution similar to those planned for the inhabitants of VRIs. Letters of attribution appear to be a promising way forward, not least because they would be relatively quick to process. It is important that IDPs are given the same land rights as other Burundians, and that their situation is considered in the wider context of land reform.
6. One of the solutions promoted by the government and mentioned above has been the transformation of IDP settlements into VRIs. While not planned as such, some IDP settlements—particularly multi-ethnic ones such as Kigoma or Ruvumvu—have taken on many characteristics of such villages in that people live close together, meaning land is freed up for other uses and basic services are provided. The government should ensure that as many IDP settlements as possible are transformed into VRIs. The local

administration together with the Ministry of Land Management should identify available land nearby that can be offered to vulnerable groups who have no access to land outside the settlements. These groups include ethnic Batwa, widows, the elderly in general, and orphan girls. A key challenge will be to find enough suitable land for this purpose, especially as state land is not always properly registered and much of it is infertile.

7. The term IDP should no longer be applied to people who are given security of tenure in their settlements, provided that they can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement. This should be part of a concerted effort by the local administration to acknowledge the integration of former IDPs in the way it refers to the people concerned and their villages and neighbourhoods.
8. It is also important to consider the situation of communities that live next to the IDP settlements and so avoid tensions, especially where assistance is given to make the settlements more sustainable, or confirmations of land tenure are issued. It may be that in some cases, vulnerable members of neighbouring communities could be invited to settle in the new village, so improving their living conditions and promoting multi-ethnic coexistence. In many cases, however, the settlements are already too small to support their current and growing populations, meaning that additional land would have to be found, with the inherent challenges mentioned above.