



Burundi Watch Update

20 – 26 February 2018



More aid needed in 2018

A report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) showed that there is a 20% increase in the Burundians that will require humanitarian aid in 2018 as compared to 2017. According to Garry Conille, Burundi representative of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), there has been a deterioration in living conditions and access to basic needs and services. The UNDP estimated that about \$141 million will be needed to provide humanitarian aid to Burundians in need.¹

The government of Burundi has however rejected the OCHA report. A spokesperson of the Burundian government Philippe Nzobonariba rejected the report calling it fabricated and accusing the UN of exaggerating the numbers. Nzobonariba said that food security in Burundi is better in 2018 than it was in 2017.²

5 million register for the referendum

The electoral commission of Burundi declared that over five million people had registered for the referendum that is to take place this May to approve or reject a series of constitutional amendments. The chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) Pierre-Claver Ndayicariye, said that the number of people that registered is more than the number they had estimated. Those registered were people who are of voting age, those who would be of voting age by the time of the election and also those that will be eligible to vote in the 2020

¹ "A third of Burundi population needs humanitarian aid: UN" News24, 21 February 2018, available at <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/third-of-burundi-population-needs-humanitarian-aid-un-20180221>

² "Burundi rejects UN report on country's food crisis," Xinhua, 22 February 2018, available on http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-02/22/c_136989669.htm

presidential elections in Burundi. Last week, the Burundian opposition accused the Burundian government of forcing people to register.³

Harsh life in Burundi for Congolese

Care International says that Congolese refugees in Burundi are facing hardships in the camps they are living in. Many of them can't afford the basic necessities such as food, health care and proper shelter. Many children are suffering from malaria and their conditions in addition to lacking food. The violence in DRC that broke out in January 2018 forced more than 5 million people to flee their homes with more than 600,000 of those fleeing to Burundi.⁴

³ AFP, "Over 5 million seek to vote in controversial Burundi poll: election chief" *The New Vision*, 20 February 2018, available at https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1471625/million-seek-vote-controversial-burundi-poll-election-chief

⁴ Care International, "Life is hard for Congolese refugees in Burundi," 21 February 2018, available at <https://www.care-international.org/news/stories-blogs/life-is-hard-for-congolese-refugees-in-burundi>