

**HIGHLIGHTS** (1 day ago)

- Hygiene promotion, safe WaSH practices and disinfecting affected households: key for cholera prevention
- Local Communities are crucial in fighting Ebola
- World Humanitarian Day 2019 - Heroine #1: Christine Ntahe, 'Maman Dimanche'
- Humanitarian Snapshot - June Edition 2019



*Huguette Mulyanza speaks to students attending La Vérité school about how she survived Ebola in Buntembo, North-Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo on 21 March 2019. Huguette, 24, had almost finished her university studies when Ebola struck. However, because of her involvement in Ebola sensitization campaigns, she sought help at the local treatment centre and survived, deciding to re-commit to raising awareness about the virus. Every week she visits several schools to share her story with students and answers their questions. Since the beginning of the epidemic, UNICEF and its partners have deployed more than 650 staff to work with Government, civil society, churches, and NGOs to raise awareness about Ebola treatment, as well as the best behavioural practices to prevent the deadly virus from spreading.*

**KEY FIGURES**

**1.77M** People in need (2019)  
**116.000** Nbre pers déplacées internes (Avril 2019)

**710.000** Population ciblée (2019)  
**1,7M** Pers. en insécurité alimentaire

**FUNDING** (2019)

**\$106.3M** Required  
**\$32.4M** Received



FTS: <https://fts.unocha.org/appeals/721/summary>

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**BACKGROUND** (1 day ago)

**Hygiene promotion, safe WaSH practices and disinfecting affected households: key for cholera prevention**

on Thursday, 6 June 2019, the Minister of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, Dr. Thaddée Ndikumana, declared a cholera epidemic in the provinces of Cibitoke and Bujumbura Mairie.

As a result, and to halt and prevent it from spreading, UNICEF organized a rapid needs assessment with the Ministry of Public Health, the Burundi Red Cross, Médecins sans Frontières and the Ministry of Public Safety and Disaster Management. The assessment outcome recommended setting up four water access points in four localities of Rugombo, providing seven water tanks in the provinces of Cibitoke and Bujumbura Mairie, disinfecting the 2,550 houses where cholera cases were reported and promoting hygiene-related practices to mitigate the cholera epidemic.



*Water access points in Rugombo commune – photo credit: J.M. Mafuko*

## COORDINATION (1 day ago)

### Local Communities are crucial in fighting Ebola

Close to the border with the Ebola-hit Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), health workers are busily planning surveillance actions to detect and protect against potential Ebola cases. The Ebola virus disease (EVD) is closer than ever to the 147 km land border separating Burundi and the DRC since the outbreak began in August 2018 in North Kivu. “The potential victims are their children, their neighbours, their community members,” explains Dr. Céléstin Ndayahoze, Chief Medical Officer of the Cibitoke District and a trainer, “so the disease threat directly impacts them.”

Health workers and health facility providers are being rigorously trained on Infection Prevention and Control by the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight Against AIDS, and with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), to detect EVD symptoms, take appropriate measures, and keep communities involved in the fight against EVD.

Strong involvement of communities in surveillance is crucial to preventing local transmission of EVD in all four priority states – Uganda, South-Sudan, Rwanda and Burundi - that border with the DRC’s affected areas. Since the outbreak began, over 66 million travelers have been screened in the DRC and along its borders. In Burundi, which has 21 official border crossing points, over 4,000 community health volunteers have been trained so far as part of a coordinated national surveillance strategy. “Surveillance is going well,” says Dr. Ruhana Bisimwa, WHO Emergency Coordinator in Burundi. “All district health staff, as well as all teams that supervise community-based surveillance actions are now fully trained.”

“To date, we’ve screened around eight million people,” explains Dr Bisimwa. Dr Leonidas Misago, Director of Health Promotion for Burundi’s Health Ministry, says that alongside surveillance, the wider population is being informed about the risks.



*16 January 2019 - Beni, Democratic Republic of Congo. Masika Lubaho and her husband Katsuva Mukuro visit their daughter Julie (15) in an Ebola Treatment Center, who is suspected of being infected by Ebola. “I am here because my daughter is sick. She has been sick for three weeks now. When I can come see her here, they let me speak to her. I used to be afraid to come here, but now that the doctors are treating her, I have faith that she will be cured.”*

“We work with the media and we use tools like posters and leaflets, but behaviour change is complex, it’s a process, so encouraging people to wash their hands, for example, takes time.” According to Dr Bisimwa, border screening, surveillance and outreach is very much the frontline in a comprehensive set of systems being built to fight Ebola.

“Preparedness involves all levels,” he says. “Nationally, in the districts and in communities. At the national level, we have several coordination structures, including an emergency task force.” WHO has helped set up two rapid response teams to manage cases in the country and has supported a number of simulation exercises, including for safe and dignified burials – considering the risk associated with unsafe burials.

The organization is also helping to set up facilities for Ebola diagnosis, a national Ebola treatment centre and is supporting the training of health professionals on case management. Burundi is also gearing up to vaccinate 6,000 front-line health workers. “While surveillance is going well,” notes Dr. Bisimwa, “we have significant challenges related to coordination.”

“We still don’t have a Public Health Emergency Operation Centre, which is key to overall coordination, and at the health district level, there are still lots of gaps. Another challenge is the insufficient material for Infection Prevention and Control,” notes Dr. Bisimwa. “For this, we’re mobilizing donors to support Burundi as it is a highly expensive.” Additional funds are urgently needed for EVD preparedness, which is crucial for countries to put in place systems to detect, investigate, report, and adequately manage EVD cases. The budget in the four most at-risk countries was nearly \$US 70 million over the past year, but there remains a 40% funding gap for the next six months. “We’ve seen how good groundwork – good preparedness work – has helped ensure an effective and timely response in Uganda, so I can only urge the international community to keep up the support,” said WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti. “I’ve seen with my own eyes how this investment saves lives. Preparedness works.”

**FEATURE** (1 day ago)

**World Humanitarian Day 2019 - Heroine #1: Christine Ntahe, ‘Maman Dimanche’**

Children of all ages, girls and boys, run excitedly in front of the bougainvillea-adorned gates. Others wait anxiously for the faded red door to open, quietly sitting with their backs against the wall to avoid the blaring midday sun. The door opens at 12h30 sharp, manned by teenage boys – veterans of this place – who try to stem the oncoming rush. The children shout and squeeze and cram through the little entrance to be greeted open-armed by a beaming woman in a bright yellow tie-dye dress. Some embrace her affectionately, others offer a fist bump or write with coal on her door, in Kirundi “Maman Dimanche, Turagukunda” (Mother Sunday, we love you).



*Christine Ntahe stands with the teenagers she has watched grow, who now help her to help others.*

Behind the courtyard, in the kitchen, volunteers are cooking generous plates of steaming rice, beans and cabbage. These teenagers, who once received her care years ago as children, now help her take care of others in turn. Her small team of helpers prepare a basin of water and soap; each child must wash their hands before eating – and Maman Dimanche will make sure of it. The children huddle in groups on the floor on straw mats, the little ones gather in the shade of the mango trees. It’s a cacophony of giggles and carefree playfulness, as Maman Dimanche and her boys carry and place a large sharing platter in the middle of each group.

Her name is Christine Ntahe. A retired journalist, she lives in Ngagara commune of Bujumbura, where, since 1993, she has been opening her home every Sunday to Burundian children living on the street or in impoverished communities. Christine now welcomes these children into her house to offer them food every single day of the year.

“At first there were few, but now there are about two hundred. I would go to places where there were dumpsites to ask street children to come home so that I could give them a decent meal” she explains. “I give the children love. Most of them feel rejected by the country and their family. I try to reintegrate them into schools, there are those who leave school because of the lack of food, I encourage them to come to my house to eat and go back to school.”

At the beginning of each school year, despite a modest pension, Christine manages to find notebooks, pens and uniforms. Some 20 children are able to attend school with her personal support as well as her efforts to raise funds for food, clothing, and tuition fees.

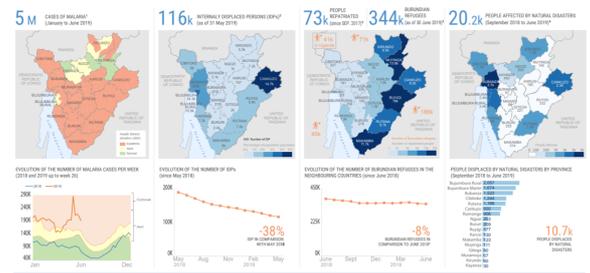
Christine’s contributions have been praised throughout the country and she is a recipient of numerous awards and certificates of merit issued by the Government of Burundi, (I)NGOs, and the Embassy of the United States of America.

OCHA is highlighting the achievements of Christine Ntahe as part of its World Humanitarian Day 2019 campaign (Monday 19 August) in honour of women humanitarians.

## COORDINATION (1 day ago)

### Humanitarian Snapshot - Burundi (June 2019)

**Epidemics** | According to the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight Against AIDS’s epidemiological data, five million cases of malaria were recorded in the first six months of the year. This represents a 97 per cent increase compared to the same period in 2018. As of the 26th week, 34 health districts have passed the epidemic threshold and 7 were above the alert threshold. Since January, the Ministry has also registered 245 cases of cholera, mainly in Bujumbura province. In addition, with the EVD\* epidemic in the DRC\*\* being declared an International Emergency, the Government of Burundi and its partners are redoubling its preparedness activities. The Government is planning to vaccinate 6,000 people in the coming weeks.



Humanitarian Snapshot - Burundi (June 2019)

**Internally Displaced Persons** | According to the latest Displacement Tracking Matrix the number of internally displaced people stands at 116,000, a 38 per cent reduction in comparison to May last year.

**Repatriation** | Between January and June, over 16,000 Burundians have been voluntarily repatriated, mainly from Tanzania.

**Refugees** | The number of Burundian refugees living in neighboring countries stood at 344,000 by the end of June.

**Natural Disasters** | In June, 806 people were affected by natural disasters, mainly in Bujumbura, due to unseasonal rains. No such cases were recorded in the same month last year.

[See the full humanitarian snapshot here.](#)



OCHA

# BURUNDI

## Situation Report

Last updated: 30 Jul 2019

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<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/burundi>

<https://www.unocha.org/burundi>

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