1. In the 2022/2023 Burundian state budget, the amount allocated to child protection is BIF 41 billion, or US$ 20.2 million. It represents 1.7% of the national budget compared to 2.3% in 2020-2021. In relation to the national economy as a whole, the child protection budget represents 0.5% of GDP.

2. The child protection sector involves several ministries and institutions, namely the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security, the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Gender and the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research. In order to increase efficiency, it is therefore necessary to strengthen efforts relating to the programing and monitoring of child protection expenditures.

3. Children represent nearly half of Burundi’s population (47.2%). They face a high prevalence of violence of all kinds (69.6%)\(^1\), as well as various other challenges in the area of protection: birth registration (only 62.3%)\(^3\) of children have a birth certificate), child labor (30.6%), as well as justice for minors and also for children living in street situations.

Key messages

Recommendations

- As this sector involves several ministries and institutions, there is a need to strengthen efforts related to coordination, programing, and monitoring of child protection expenditures.

- Local administrations do not have budget lines for child protection services, even though they provide key services to this sector. There is a need to identify a mechanism that would allow communes to take child protection services into account in their communal planning and budgeting, especially with the preparation of communal community development plans.

- Considering the lack of statistics in this sector, it is necessary, on the one hand, to accelerate the establishment of the Single Social Register, and on the other hand, to strengthen the civil registration system (facts and statistics) to better identify and respond to the priority needs of children and their families.
Child protection aims to ensure that children’s basic needs are met, to support their physical, emotional, intellectual and social development, to guarantee their safety, morality and education in accordance with their rights. Children are victims of insidious forms of violence, exploitation, and abuse throughout the world.

Child protection is an integral part of international commitments, including:
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948),
- the Sustainable Development Goals,
- the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),
- the Convention 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Conventions 182 and 186 concerning the Prohibition of the Worst Forms of Child Labor,

At the national level, child protection refers to Burundi’s National Development Plan 2018-2027, the National Social Protection Policy and the Health Development Policy, and the sectoral policies related to children’s rights of the different ministries. Violence against children knows no borders. It occurs in all countries, and in the places where children should be safest: at home, at school and online.

Whether emotional, physical, or sexual in nature, these acts of violence are most often perpetrated by people they trust. Children represent nearly half of the Burundian population (47.2%). They face a high prevalence of violence of all kinds (89.6%)\(^4\), as well as various other protection challenges.

Every country must ensure the protection of the child, prevent and respond to his or her needs, so that he or she can follow a normal development. Protecting children means protecting them from all situations that may expose them to abuse such as sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking, hazardous work, violence, lack of shelter, forced recruitment into armed political groups and movements, early marriage and lack of fair justice, etc.

In the process of implementing the child protection policy, Burundi has signed and ratified international texts that are incorporated into national law. Additional texts have been voted for its implementation in accordance with international standards.

Since January 18, 2005, Burundi has signed and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on children in armed conflict. In addition, Burundi has a national child protection policy whose vision is to offer every child, from 2020 to 2024, a reassuring political, legal, institutional and community environment through a solid protection system that meets the principles of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In addition, initiatives complementing this policy aim at adopting minimum standards for the children deprived of parental care and children placed in institutions, a strategy for the prevention and reintegration of street children, the child protection code, the civil status law and the law to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence, and the national policy on gender equality.

Children have been victims of harmful practices such as human trafficking, sexual violence, cases of child murder (including those committed by their mothers after childbirth), and cases of illegal imprisonment of children. All of which have been documented in Burundi over the past few years.
The lack of investment in this sector is the source of many problems such as the overcrowding of children in the classrooms of the various schools, the lack of desks, the malnutrition of a large proportion of children, and the increase in the number of street children.

Child protection is also part of Burundi’s National Development Plan 2018-2027 (Strategic Direction 2, axes 4 to 7: improving the performance of collaboration in the areas of health, strengthening the education system and improving the supply of training, development of the social protection sector, decent employment and youth) and in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The updating of the “National Child Protection Policy” and the adoption of the “National Strategy for the Prevention of Street Children and Adult Beggars, and their Integration into Communities”, are positive developments. These two documents will enable state structures and other actors involved in child protection to mobilize the necessary resources to improve the living conditions of vulnerable children.

To improve the living conditions of vulnerable children in Burundi, the state and its partners have mobilized the necessary funds for the community and economic reintegration of street children and youth.

The main challenges faced by children include: problems of nutrition, health, schooling, insufficient birth registration, displaced people, refugee or unaccompanied children, discrimination and exclusion, difficulty in finding work, violence against children, etc.

Considering the needs of this sector and the limited budgetary space, the budgetary allocations to the child protection sector remain insufficient to implement its programs responding to these challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Values in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children aged 0-17 in 2020, as% of total population (ISTEEBU: population projections 2010-2050)</td>
<td>47.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children registered at birth (ISTEEBU, EDS III 2016-2017)</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant mortality rate in 2017 per 1,000 live births (EDS III 2016-2017)</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Labor (ISTEEBU, EDS 2016-2017)</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 1-14 who experienced any form of violence (ISTEEBU, EDS 2016-2017)</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic malnutrition rate (Nutrition Survey 2022)</td>
<td>55.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural children living below the national poverty line: 576,751 FBu (Étude MODA, 2022)</td>
<td>55.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of state budget allocated to child protection (202-2023)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Burundian state budget allocation for the child protection sector in fiscal year 2022-2023 is 1.7%, compared to 2.3% in fiscal year 2021-2022. As a proportion of GDP, budget allocations to this sector represent 0.5% in 2022-2023.

In the 2011-2022/2023 period, budget allocations for the child protection sector increased from BIF 11.4 billion in 2011 to BIF 41.0 billion in 2022-2023, so an increase of 2.5% over the eleven-year period.

The resources allocated to child protection (in real and nominal terms) change erratically from 2011 to 2022-2023. Indeed, over the 2011-2014 period, budget allocations to the sector trended upward, but declined from 2015 to 2017, and trending upward in 2018-2019 (Figure 1). The increasing budgetary allocations observed between 2018 and 2019 and 2022-2023 shows to the importance of the sector for the government.

Analysis of budget allocations for child protection as a% of GDP and as a% of the state budget shows that these allocations follow a similar trend (figure 2). Overall, these allocations for child protection remain low regarding to the pressing need to improve child welfare.

**Fig. 1 : Evolution of budget allocations to the child protection sector, in nominal and real terms, in billions of BIF**

**Fig. 2 : Evolution of budget allocations for child protection as a % of total budget and as a % of GDP**

Sources: Budget Acts 2011-2022/2023
Budget allocations in nominal terms are reported for a given period. Budget allocations in real terms adjusted, according to price increases relative to a baseline or reference.
Five ministries are involved in child protection, including:
- the Ministry of National Solidarity, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Gender,
- the Ministry of Justice,
- the Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security,
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, and
- the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research.

It should be noted that the Ministry of Internal Affairs runs several programs (birth registration, adoptions, marriages, etc.) and is committed for a significant share of the sector’s budget.

Figure 3 shows the budget allocations of the different ministries to finance of child protection.

Programs related to child protection include:
- the basic education program,
- gender equality and HIV/AIDS prevention among young people,
- improving access to justice for the most vulnerable,
- the national program for the enforcement of judgments, recording and capacity building, etc.
Credibility and budget execution

Figure 4 compares the expenditures planned in the Budget Law and those executed during the period under review. Execution rates have consistently approached 100%, indicating good quality budget programming for the child protection sector from 2016 to 2021-2022.

Funding sources

The analysis of child protection sector funding comes from both internal and external sources. Overall, internal resources contributed significantly over the study period except for fiscal year 2014. However, the budget allocations for fiscal year 2016 and fiscal year 2017 come entirely from internal resources. Finally, there is a relatively timid return of external resources beginning in fiscal year 2018-19.

Acknowledgment

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