

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basededonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

15 March 2012

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Burundi: The practices involved in issuing proof of birth documents, particularly in Bujumbura; whether proof of birth documents are normally issued at birth; if not, when they are normally issued and for what purpose; the information and documents that parents must provide when applying for a proof of birth document several years after the birth of their child; the documents required to register a child at school

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Two Burundian government sources consulted by the Research Directorate stated that proof of birth documents can be issued for a child at birth or several years after the birth (Burundi 29 Feb. 2012; *ibid.* 28 Feb. 2012). However, in a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 28 February 2012, a civil status officer from the Bujumbura city hall provided the following information:

In the Burundian administration, there is a distinction between an attestation of birth and an act of birth. An attestation of birth is issued to people born before 1980; in principle, it is assumed that at that time, the birth of those people was not registered anywhere because the Burundian government did not yet have a civil status office. As for the act of birth, it is issued to people who were born after 1980. The civil status office issues attestations of birth and acts of birth at any time to anyone who submits an application. To obtain an attestation of birth, in addition to documents such as an identity card, the parents must provide the name of the child and his or her date and place of birth. Moreover, they must provide a document signed by the authorities in the place where the child was born or by the persons considered to be witnesses to the birth of the child, in which they swear that the information provided about the child is true. They must also pay a fee of 500 Burundian francs [CA\$0.30 (XE 5 Mar. 2012)]. To obtain an act of birth, the parents must provide their identity card, the child's name and date of birth, and the name of the commune where the child was born; they must also pay a fee of 10,000 Burundian francs.

According to the civil status officer at the Bujumbura city hall, parents who live abroad can appoint on site in Burundi a lawyer or a family member to take steps on their behalf by providing that person with a [translation] "legalized power of attorney" (Burundi 28 Feb. 2012). In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate on 29 February 2012, the chargée d'affaires of the Embassy of Burundi in Ottawa stated that parents living abroad can submit their legalized application file for an attestation or act of birth with the Embassy of Burundi or with one of its other diplomatic missions, who will forward it to the competent authorities in Burundi; or they can send it to the country themselves.

Several sources consulted by the Research Directorate indicated that an act of birth is required to register a child at school in Burundi (Burundi 29 Feb. 2012; *ibid.* 28 Feb. 2012; École indépendante de Bujumbura 2 Mar. 2012; École belge de Bujumbura 1 Mar. 2012). According to a representative of the École indépendante de Bujumbura (2 Mar. 2012) and the Director of the École belge de Bujumbura (1 Mar. 2012), report cards are also required to register children who are already attending school. According to the Director of the École belge de Bujumbura, parents who do not have an act of birth for their child can submit an official document indicating the child's date of birth (École belge de Bujumbura 1 Mar. 2012). Additional information on this topic could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Burundi. 29 February 2012. Embassy of Burundi in Ottawa. Telephone interview with the chargée d'affaires.

_____. 28 February 2012. Mairie de Bujumbura. Telephone interview with the Civil status officer.

École belge de Bujumbura. 1 March 2012. Telephone interview with the Director.

École Indépendante de Bujumbura. 2 March 2012. Telephone interview with the Accounting Secretary.

XE. 5 March 2012. "Currency Converter Widget." <<http://www.xe.com/ucc/convert/?language=fr&Amount=500&From=BIF&To=CAD>> [Accessed 5 Mar. 2012]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: Attempts made to contact representatives from the following organizations were unsuccessful: Collège Africain, Collège Avenir, Collège Buyenzi, École française de Bujumbura, École de la Fraternité, École internationale de Bujumbura, École municipale de Bujumbura, École primaire islamique, École Stella Matutina, École tanzanienne, Enseignement secondaire général et pédagogique, Ligue burundaise pour l'enfance et la jeunesse, Lycée du Saint-Esprit, Université des Grands Lacs, Université Lumière de Bujumbura, Université de Ngozi.

Internet sites, including: Afrik.com; AllAfrica.com; Central African Media Organization; Education Without Borders; Ligue burundaise des droits de l'homme; Organisation internationale de la francophonie; Radio France internationale; Syfia Grands Lacs; United Nations – United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Development Programme; United States – Bureau of Consular Affairs; Université Lumière de Bujumbura; University of Burundi; University of Ngozi.

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