



Doing Business in Burundi: 2013 Country

Commercial Guide for U.S. Companies

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- [Chapter 1: Doing Business In ...](#)
- [Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment](#)
- [Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services](#)
- [Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment](#)
- [Chapter 5: Trade Regulations, Customs and Standards](#)
- [Chapter 6: Investment Climate](#)
- [Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing](#)
- [Chapter 8: Business Travel](#)
- [Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events](#)
- [Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 1: Doing Business In Burundi

- [Market Overview](#)
- [Market Challenges](#)
- [Market Opportunities](#)
- [Market Entry Strategy](#)
- [Market Fact Sheet](#)

Market Overview

[Return to top](#)

- Since the late 1980s, in consultation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Burundi has made some progress in moving from an economy heavily dependent on public and semi-public companies to a more market-oriented economy.
- Twelve years of civil war, from 1993-2005, interrupted progress towards a market-oriented economy. One result of the war was a reduction in the GDP and a dramatic decline in purchasing power. Since the installation of a democratically-elected government in 2005, Burundi has had no sustained outbreaks of political violence that would actively deter foreign investors. Please see Chapter 2 for full details on the current political situation.
- The economy is based largely on subsistence agriculture and heavily dependent on foreign aid. Coffee and tea are the major exports, accounting for 70.8% of the government's export revenue in 2012.
- In 2007, Burundi joined the East African Community (EAC), which also includes Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda. As the region's largest economy, Kenya tends to dominate most regional markets, but Rwanda has become increasingly competitive in the coffee and handicrafts sectors. The EAC continues to work towards integration and instituted a customs union in 2009 and a common market in 2010 while an agreement on monetary union is under discussion among the EAC monetary authorities. The U.S. currently has no significant commercial interests in Burundi. Outside of the EAC, the country's major trading partners are the Benelux countries, France, China, India and Japan.
- Basic economic indicators:
 - Population (2012): 10.5 million
 - Total GDP (2012): \$2.3 billion
 - GDP per capita (2012): \$170
 - Total imports (2012): \$732.3 million
 - Total Exports (2012): \$131.3 million
 - Inflation rate (2012) (annual average): 18.2%

Source: World Bank, Department of State

Market Challenges

[Return to top](#)

- Burundi is landlocked and transportation costs are high.
- Infrastructure is underdeveloped and has been neglected in many sectors in the aftermath of Burundi's 12-year civil war. Roads are particularly underdeveloped and in poor condition.
- Hydroelectric turbines generate virtually all of Burundi's electricity, but the machinery is old and poorly maintained. Although the Government received World Bank support in 2008 to upgrade facilities and expand capacity, power supplies are unreliable and the country can only generate an average of 25 MW. For the last three years drought conditions have reduced production capacity, and the state-run company REGIDESO has recently resorted to rotating power cuts that cause major gaps in service throughout the country. Capacity to expand production rapidly to service new industries is very limited. The government is actively pursuing additional power generation capacity but it will be a number of years before these projects will be online.
- Institutionalized corruption is a problem, but the Government has made some efforts to address the issue. Independent groups in civil society have also raised public awareness of corruption.
- Outside of the capital, the workforce is comprised largely of subsistence farmers, and skilled labor is difficult to find.

Market Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

After more than a decade of civil war, Burundi is liberalizing trade policies intended to encourage economic reconstruction and development. The Investment Code enacted in September 2008 encourages foreign direct investment and provides tax deferrals for new investors. Tax and customs reforms were completed in July 2009 to enable Burundi to comply with the EAC's customs union; this included the introduction of an EAC-compatible value-added tax and harmonized customs procedures. Please see Chapter Five for full details. International financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank are funding infrastructure projects designed to increase Burundi's capacity to transport goods internally and to neighboring countries, as well as to supply more electricity and water to consumers. In 2010, the government created the Investment Promotion Authority to facilitate investment and aid investors in meeting the regulatory and legal requirements for operating in Burundi. In 2012, Burundi continued to institute economic reform and encourage foreign investment in the areas of registering a business, construction permits, registering property, and trading across borders. With the new reforms, it now takes less than one day to establish an enterprise and creation fees have been also reduced. The country improved its rank in the World Bank's 2013 "Doing Business" report by ten positions coming in at 159 out of 185 countries.

Good prospects for investment are:

- Agribusiness and Food Processing – The World Bank is assisting with the privatization of the coffee sector, Burundi's largest export earner. In 2008, Burundi began direct sales to foreign coffee buyers on a limited scale, and Burundian coffee

has been consistently praised in specialty coffee markets for its excellent quality. Several washing stations won the Presidential award at the 2012 Cup of Excellence recognizing their coffee as world class. Thirteen coffee washing stations were acquired by a Swiss company in late 2009, but the privatization of more coffee washing stations was suspended in anticipation of the summer 2010 elections. In November 2011, the government announced an international tender to privatize the remaining coffee washing stations as well as two dry mills. Other potential growth opportunities exist in the local production of fruit juices, canned foods and dairy products. USAID is funding a number of projects to develop agribusinesses (e.g., dairies) that could take advantage of these opportunities in the future. In addition, USAID and the Netherlands launched a “business incubator” in 2010 designed to stimulate the local private sector. While these activities are still in the early stages, they may result in potential investment platforms in the long-term.

- Telecommunications and Information Technologies - The state-owned telecommunication company ONATEL’s assets are being evaluated for potential privatization. Several new private service providers have recently entered the market. Please see “Telecommunications” in Chapter Four for a full discussion of this topic. Internet services are increasingly in demand for both business and personal use, and the number of cybercafés in the capital is growing. A fiber optic backbone linking Burundi to Tanzania and Rwanda is scheduled to be completed in 2013 potentially bringing new business opportunities in the information technology sector.
- Energy – Burundi’s dependence on an outmoded, unreliable system of hydroelectric production and distribution is a major impediment to economic development. In 2008, Burundi signed an agreement with the World Bank for a five-year, \$50 million project to expand electrical capacity through the rehabilitation of existing hydropower and the construction of a new hydroelectric dam. Additionally, in 2012 the European Union signed an agreement with the EAC to construct an interconnector between Rwanda and Burundi to link the two power grids and help facilitate distribution within the region. The project will take approximately three years to complete.
- Three hydroelectric projects with a total capacity of about 80 MW are still at the feasibility study stage and they are projected to be operational in 2017-2018 assuming necessary funds are available.
- Please see “Energy” in Chapter 4 for a full discussion of this topic.
- Mining - A comprehensive survey of Burundi’s mineral resources conducted in the 1980s confirmed the existence of large nickel deposits near the country’s northern border with Tanzania. Although large, commercial-scale mining has not yet begun, a number of foreign investors are interested in working in this region. (Note: Most mining concessions are currently in the hands of Canadian, Burundian and South African firms.)
- Although there is a long list of different public enterprises set to be privatized, two companies are most likely to be privatized during the year 2013. One is Air Burundi, the national carrier, where the government intends to sell 70 to 90% of the total shares. The second is Sosumo, a sugar company owned 99% by the government and where it intends to sell 25 to 30% of its shares. Discussions to determine the terms of sale of government shares in the two companies are well advanced.

Market Entry Strategy

[Return to top](#)

- Companies considering doing business in Burundi are strongly encouraged to visit the country first. Personal contacts are essential when entering the Burundian

market and the presence of a local representative is very important. For assistance in selecting a representative, contact the Burundi Investment Promotion Authority (contact@investburundi.com), the Burundi Federal Chamber of Commerce (ccib@cbinf.com) and/or the Burundi Enterprises Network (Ben2006burundi@yahoo.com). A local company, Intercontact (<http://www.intercontactservices.com/en/>), specializes in assisting foreign companies in establishing a business presence in Burundi.

- Foreign companies considering economic opportunities in Burundi should also confer with international financial institutions such as the World Bank (www.worldbank.org), the International Monetary Fund (www.imf.org) or the African Development Bank (www.afdb.org).

[Return to table of contents](#)



COUNTRY FACT SHEET: BURUNDI

PROFILE

Population in 2012 (Millions): 9
 Capital: Bujumbura
 Government: Republic

ECONOMY

	2010	2011	2012
Nominal GDP (Current Billions \$U.S.)	2.0	2.4	2.5
Nominal GDP Per Capita (Current \$US)	242	275	282
Real GDP Growth Rate (% change)	3.8	4.2	4.0
Real GDP Growth Rate Per Capita (% change)	1.4	1.8	1.6
Consumer Prices (% change)	4.1	14.9	11.8
Unemployment (% of labor force)			
Economic Mix in 2011: 18.6% All Industries; 10% Manufactures; 46.3% Services; 35.2% Agriculture			

FOREIGN MERCHANDISE TRADE (\$US Millions)

	2010	2011	2012
Burundi Exports to World	118	198	0
Burundi Imports from World	404	1,128	0
U.S. Exports to Burundi	14.4	32.8	20.0
U.S. Imports from Burundi	3.4	9.6	4.8
U.S. Trade Balance with Burundi	11.0	23.2	15.2
Position in U.S. Trade:			
Rank of Burundi in U.S. Exports	187	181	189
Rank of Burundi in U.S. Imports	181	165	180
Burundi Share (%) of U.S. Exports	0	0	0
Burundi Share (%) of U.S. Imports	0	0	0

Principal U.S. Exports to Burundi in 2012:

1. Chemicals (36.7%)
2. Food & Kindred Products (24.4%)
3. Fabricated Metal Products, Nesoi (7.3%)
4. Agricultural Products (7.2%)
5. Textile Mill Products (5.3%)

Principal U.S. Imports from Burundi in 2012:

1. Agricultural Products (89.8%)
2. Food & Kindred Products (8.5%)

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

	2009	2010	2011
U.S. FDI in Burundi (US \$Millions)	1.0	1.0	1.0
FDI in U.S. by Burundi (US \$Millions)			

DOING BUSINESS/ECONOMIC FREEDOM RANKINGS

World Bank Doing Business in 2012 Rank: 159 of 185
 Heritage/WSJ 2012 Index of Freedom Rank: 157 of 179

Source: Created by USDOC/ITA/OTII-TPIS from many sources: FDI from USDOC, Bureau of Economic Analysis. US Trade from USDOC, Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Division. Burundi Trade with World from United Nations where available. National Macroeconomic c from IMF/World Bank databases including World Economic Outlook and World Development Indicators. .WORLD and other country aggregates are summaries of available UN COMTRADE, IMF and other data, and coverage varies over time and by source, but typically represents greater than 85 percent of world trade and production. Note: Principal U.S. Exports and Imports Are 3-digit NAICS Categories

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 2: Political and Economic Environment

For background information on the political and economic environment of the country, please click on the link below to the U.S. Department of State Background Notes.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2821.htm>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 3: Selling U.S. Products and Services

- [Using an Agent or Distributor](#)
- [Establishing an Office](#)
- [Franchising](#)
- [Direct Marketing](#)
- [Joint Ventures/Licensing](#)
- [Selling to the Government](#)
- [Distribution and Sales Channels](#)
- [Selling Factors/Techniques](#)
- [Electronic Commerce](#)
- [Trade Promotion and Advertising](#)
- [Pricing](#)
- [Sales Service/Customer Support](#)
- [Protecting Your Intellectual Property](#)
- [Due Diligence](#)
- [Local Professional Services](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

Using an Agent or Distributor

[Return to top](#)

The use of an agent or a distributor is highly recommended. An agent or a distributor will help overcome communication and cultural barriers. His or her knowledge of local practices will help in reducing costs as well as in identifying distribution networks.

For the selection of a reliable agent or distributor, it is essential to visit the country. The Embassy can assist in establishing contact with an agent or distributor. Refer to “Market Entry Strategy” in Chapter One for information on selecting an agent.

Establishing an Office

[Return to top](#)

The registration of new businesses is mandatory in Burundi. Once company bylaws have been submitted to the Government for approval, the process of registration takes one day following the creation of “one stop shop” for starting a business..

Here are the steps required to establish an office:

- Drafting the bylaws of the business.
- Notarizing the bylaws through a local notary public.
- Opening a bank account in the name of the new company.
- Registering the business for the publication in the Official Government Gazetta (BOB).
- Registering the business with the Tribunal of Commerce, a special court for business issues/disputes.

- Getting the Tax Identification Number (NIF) of the business from the Burundi Revenue Authority (OBR).

Franchising

[Return to top](#)

Although legal requirements for franchising correspond to international norms, very few franchised companies are operating in Burundi. This is probably due to the weakness of the economy and limited purchasing power of the population. Commercial options should grow as economic development continues. Presently, the only U.S. franchise operating in Burundi is Federal Express.

Direct Marketing

[Return to top](#)

Direct marketing channels are extremely limited. Very few persons make online purchases from Burundi, and the use of credit cards is virtually non-existent in Burundi's banking system. However, internet cafes are popular in Bujumbura and the major towns, and local companies could advertise profitably through the internet due to the low cost. In all cases, protective measures should be taken to ensure payment.

Joint Ventures/Licensing

[Return to top](#)

Opportunities for joint ventures and licensing are few, but growing. Foreign capital participation is welcomed in the privatization process, since many Burundian businesses lack the required capital to expand their enterprises. There are no legal obstacles to foreign companies working in partnership with Burundian firms. Burundi has been a member of the East African Community (EAC) since 2007 and issued in 2009 a revised and more attractive Investment Code for local and foreign investors. The new Code was also designed to bring government policies into compliance with EAC legal requirements. This Investment Code, as well as Burundi's entry into the EAC customs union in 2009 and the Common Market in July 2010, have created an atmosphere conducive to joint ventures.

Selling to the Government

[Return to top](#)

The Government issues tenders for all procurement transactions in excess of \$15,000. International companies are encouraged to bid. The time between the issuance of tenders and the closing of bids is customarily between one and two months. The use of a local agent is encouraged. There have been no cases of the Government of Burundi failing to pay its international suppliers.

Opportunities for selling to the government include pharmaceuticals, laboratory equipment, agricultural equipment, chemical products and fertilizers, automobiles and office equipment.

Knowledge of the French language is essential in all formal dealings with the government.

Distribution and Sales Channels

[Return to top](#)

In Burundi, all importers are considered wholesalers. Upon arrival of imported items, the importer pays customs duties prior to warehousing of the goods. It is illegal for a business to operate as both an importer and retailer of the same commodity. Foreign companies must identify importers for distribution or establish their own subsidiaries. Bujumbura is the country's only commercially-viable lake port and operates at less than half of its capacity due to limited formal trade between Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Zambia. Most commercial goods enter Burundi overland via Tanzania and Rwanda. The capital city is the central point for distribution of goods throughout the country.

Selling Factors/Techniques

[Return to top](#)

A foreign company should make a distinction between selling to the government and selling to a private company. In order to sell to the government, a foreign company must monitor the issuance of tenders in the local media. In order to sell to a private business, a foreign company must identify and contact existing local importers of the intended product. If the product is new, the foreign company must identify new local importers.

All sales materials should be in French for the immediate future; however, since Burundi's entry into the EAC, the government and private sector are also promoting the use of English.

Electronic Commerce

[Return to top](#)

Electronic commerce is very limited in Burundi. A few local buyers have used the internet to purchase vehicles abroad. At present, no local company sells electronically. However, as the cost of internet use gradually becomes more affordable, e-commerce should benefit. The use of personal computers is very limited. According to the most recent government estimate (2012), 2% of the population is internet subscribers mostly through their smart phones. Internet cafes, however, are plentiful in Bujumbura and available in all of Burundi's major towns. The government Telecoms Regulation and Control Agency (ARCT) estimates that 10% of the population has access to the Internet via cybercafés. A major impediment to the expansion of e-commerce, though, is the unreliability of Burundi's electrical infrastructure. Frequent power outages due to insufficient rainfall or aging power plants mandate the use of costly individual, diesel-powered generators for continuous business operations.

Trade Promotion and Advertising

[Return to top](#)

Burundi has no locally-established trade fair authorities. In August 2009, the German travel company EOS Visions (<http://www.eos-visions.com>) organized the "Buja en Fete" trade fair in Bujumbura (http://bujaenfete.bi/index_main.php) to showcase local and regional businesses, provide a forum for African investors to share ideas, and encourage greater trade between Burundi and its neighbors. This event, the first of its kind in Bujumbura, set an encouraging precedent for future development of import and export markets. In 2010, Egypt and Kenya each hosted trade fairs jointly with the Burundian government. There was also an EAC trade fair in Bujumbura towards the end of the year in 2012 and a Rwandan trade fair in March of 2013.

Most commercial advertising takes place on billboards, in newspapers and on local radio stations. Radio is the most popular medium in Burundi, reaching the widest audience. Three private radio stations also operate their own websites with advertising: Radio Isangiro (<http://www.isanganiro.org>), RPA Radio (<http://www.rpa-radiyoyacu.org/>) and Radio Rema (<http://www.remafm.com/>). Local television advertising is still in its infancy, with a handful of independent channels and one state-run station that have very limited audiences outside urban areas.

Advertising is also available through the Burundi Chamber of Commerce (email: ccib@cbinf.com) or through the Burundi Enterprises Network (email: Ben2006burundi@yahoo.com). Advertising rates vary widely across media, and it is essential for advertisers to have a reliable local contact to negotiate advertising contracts.

Pricing

[Return to top](#)

In Burundi, the Government sets prices for gasoline, diesel fuel, locally-produced sugar, beer, and soda pop. For all other products, market forces determine pricing. According to an agreement between Burundi and the IMF, the former 17% “transaction fee” on goods became an 18% value-added tax (VAT) in July 2009, in a move to harmonize Burundi’s pricing system with that of other EAC countries.

Sales Service/Customer Support

[Return to top](#)

After-sales service in Burundi is often problematic, and most local firms lack Western-style customer service. A firm that could offer quality customer service would enjoy a competitive advantage.

Protecting Your Intellectual Property

[Return to top](#)

Within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry a sub-department is charged with problems related to intellectual property, and Burundi is a party to major international conventions. Please refer to Chapter Six, under the subheading Protection of Property Rights.

Protecting Your Intellectual Property in Burundi:

Several general principles are important for effective management of intellectual property (“IP”) rights in Burundi. First, it is important to have an overall strategy to protect your IP. Second, IP is protected differently in Burundi than in the U.S. Third, rights must be registered and enforced in Burundi, under local laws. Your U.S. trademark and patent registrations will not protect you in Burundi. There is no such thing as an “international copyright” that will automatically protect an author’s writings throughout the entire world. Protection against unauthorized use in a particular country depends, basically, on the national laws of that country. However, most countries do offer copyright protection to foreign works under certain conditions, and these conditions have been greatly simplified by international copyright treaties and conventions.

Registration of patents and trademarks is on a first-in-time, first-in-right basis, so you should consider applying for trademark and patent protection even before selling your products or services in the Burundi market. It is vital that companies understand that intellectual property is primarily a private right and that the U.S. government generally cannot enforce rights for private individuals in Burundi. It is the responsibility of the rights' holders to register, protect, and enforce their rights where relevant, retaining their own counsel and advisors. Companies may wish to seek advice from local attorneys or IP consultants who are experts in Burundian law. The U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service can provide a list of local lawyers upon request.

While the U.S. Government stands ready to assist, there is little the government can do if the rights holders have not taken these fundamental steps necessary to securing and enforcing their IP in a timely fashion. Moreover, in many countries, rights holders who delay enforcing their rights on a mistaken belief that the U.S. Government can provide a political resolution to a legal problem may find that their rights have been eroded or abrogated due to legal doctrines such as statutes of limitations, laches, estoppel, or unreasonable delay in prosecuting a law suit. In no instance should U.S. Government advice be seen as a substitute for the obligation of a rights holder to promptly pursue its case.

It is always advisable to conduct due diligence on potential partners. Negotiate from the position of your partner and give your partner clear incentives to honor the contract. A good partner is an important ally in protecting IP rights. Consider carefully, however, whether to permit your partner to register your IP rights on your behalf. Doing so may create a risk that your partner will list itself as the IP owner and fail to transfer the rights should the partnership end. Keep an eye on your cost structure and reduce the margins (and the incentive) of would-be bad actors. Projects and sales in Burundi require constant attention. Work with legal counsel familiar with Burundian laws to create a solid contract that includes non-compete clauses, and confidentiality/non-disclosure provisions.

It is also recommended that small and medium-size companies understand the importance of working together with trade associations and organizations to support efforts to protect IP and stop counterfeiting. There are a number of these organizations, both Burundi or U.S.-based. These include:

- The U.S. Chamber and local American Chambers of Commerce
- National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
- International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA)
- International Trademark Association (INTA)
- The Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy
- International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)

IP Resources

A wealth of information on protecting IP is freely available to U.S. rights holders. Some excellent resources for companies regarding intellectual property include the following:

- For information about patent, trademark, or copyright issues -- including enforcement issues in the US and other countries -- call the STOP! Hotline: **1-866-999-HALT** or register at www.StopFakes.gov.
- For more information about registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), contact the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) at: **1-800-786-9199**.
- For more information about registering for copyright protection in the US, contact the US Copyright Office at: **1-202-707-5959**.
- For more information about how to evaluate, protect, and enforce intellectual property rights and how these rights may be important for businesses, a free online training program is available at www.stopfakes.gov.
- For US small and medium-size companies, the Department of Commerce offers a "SME IP Advisory Program" available through the American Bar Association that provides one hour of free IP legal advice for companies with concerns in Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Russia, and . For details and to register, visit: http://www.abanet.org/intlaw/intlproj/iprprogram_consultation.html
- For information on obtaining and enforcing intellectual property rights and market-specific IP Toolkits visit: www.StopFakes.gov This site is linked to the USPTO website for registering trademarks and patents (both in the U.S. as well as in foreign countries), the U.S. Customs & Border Protection website to record registered trademarks and copyrighted works (to assist customs in blocking imports of IP-infringing products) and allows you to register for Webinars on protecting IP.
- The U.S. Commerce Department has positioned IP attachés in key markets around the world. You can get contact information for the IP attaché who covers Burundi at: bujumburaecon@state.gov.

Due Diligence

[Return to top](#)

Due to widespread corruption in the private and public sectors, investors would be wise to perform due diligence on potential local partners, distributors, or agents. The U.S. Embassy's Economic Section can assist in compiling an international company profile (ICP) for selected Burundian enterprises upon request. Burundi is a small country where most people in the business community know each other and considerable value is placed upon personal relationships, hence the need for a reliable local representative who fully understands local norms.

Local Professional Services

[Return to top](#)

- In a small market such as Burundi, professional service providers come and go, and the quality, reputation and capacity of local providers often changes from year to year. The Embassy's Economic Section remains available to assist in identifying

qualified local service providers, such as lawyers and professional servicing companies, on an as-needed basis. The Embassy's Consular section also maintains a list of local lawyers. Complete contact information for the U.S Embassy in Bujumbura may be found at <http://burundi.usembassy.gov/index.html>.

- Intercontact, a local company specializing in assisting foreign companies in establishing a business presence in Burundi, may be reached via <http://www.intercontactservices.com/en/>.

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

- Burundi Investment Promotion Authority: contact@investburundi.com
- Burundi Chamber of Commerce: ccib@cbinf.com
- Burundi Enterprises Network: Ben2006burundi@yahoo.com
- Intercontact (Burundian company assisting foreign investors): <http://www.intercontactservices.com/en/>
- U.S. Embassy Bujumbura Website: <http://burundi.usembassy.gov/index.html>
- Private Burundian radio stations:
 - Radio Isangiro: <http://www.isanganiro.org/>
 - Radio Rema: <http://www.remafam.com/>
 - RPA Radio : <http://www.rpa-radiyoyacu.org/>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment

Commercial Sectors

- [Telecommunications](#)
- [Energy](#)

Telecommunications

Overview

[Return to top](#)

Unit: USD thousands

	2011	2012	2013 (estimated)	2014 (estimated)
Total Market Size	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Local Production	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Exports	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Imports	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Imports from the U.S.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Exchange Rate: 1 USD				

*This data is not available from the government or private sources.

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Data Sources:

Total Local Production:

Total Exports:

Total Imports:

Imports from U.S.:

Until recently, Burundi's telecommunications sector was a monopoly controlled by the government and operated by the state-owned company, ONATEL. ONATEL continues to control all telephone landlines and a small portion of the cellular phone market. In 1997, liberalization in the telecommunication sector allowed private companies to compete for cellular phone business. In addition to the small market share controlled by ONATEL, there are a number private cellular phone companies, most notably: LEO (formerly U-COM; owned by the Egyptian company Orascom), Africell (majority owned by VTL Holdings of Dubai) and Econet (a 65% owned subsidiary of Econet Wireless South Africa). There were about 2.24 million cell phone subscribers at the end of 2012, and LEO alone controls approximately 64% of the market. The sector continues to enjoy steady growth. The landline phone system had 80 000 subscribers in 2012. The government agency with oversight of the telecommunications industry is "Agence de Régulation et de Contrôle des Télécommunications (ARCT)." The Burundi Backbone Network is a consortium which includes the government and private telecommunications companies and is financed in part by the World Bank. It is creating a fiber optic network which will allow Burundi to establish high speed connectivity to neighboring countries and the Internet backbone. The network is expected to be completed in 2013.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

[Return to top](#)

All equipment for telecommunication is imported and U.S. businesses may find commercial opportunities in the following areas:

- Equipment for radio broadcasting stations
- Equipment for mobile cellular operators
- Internet services and equipment

Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

The telecommunications sector in Burundi is still in its early stages and will continue to grow. Liberalization of the sector has opened opportunities for foreign businesses seeking to enter the market.

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

Burundi Investment Promotion Authority <http://www.burundi-investment.com>
contact@investburundi.com

Energy

Overview

[Return to top](#)

Unit: USD thousands

	2011	2012	2013 (estimated)	2014 (estimated)
Total Market Size	N/A*	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Local Production	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Exports	-	-	-	-
Total Imports	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Imports from the U.S.	-	-	-	-
Exchange Rate: 1 USD				

*This data is not available from the government or private sources.

Total Market Size = (Total Local Production + Total Imports) – (Total Exports)

Data Sources:

Total Local Production:

Total Exports:

Total Imports:

Imports from U.S.:

Burundi's outmoded, unreliable system of electricity production and distribution poses a major impediment to economic development. The country's sole source of electrical generation is hydropower supplied by six dams. Electrical output does not exceed 30 megawatts while another 15.5 megawatts is imported from the Democratic Republic of Congo. With less than 3% of households having access to electricity and an increase in economic activity, the energy deficit continues to grow. In 2008, Burundi signed an agreement with the World Bank for a five-year, \$50 million project to expand electrical capacity through the rehabilitation of existing hydropower and the construction of a new hydroelectric dam. In December 2010, the government received a grant to extend the thermal power station, to pay arrears accumulated by Regideso – the state run utility company and increase Regideso's capacity.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

[Return to top](#)

Burundi needs to make important investments in the energy sector. Existing hydropower stations will have to be refurbished and new ones developed, and equipment and machinery will have to be imported. Geothermal, solar, wind and biofuel are also potential energy sources ripe for exploitation. The energy grid also needs to be updated and expanded creating opportunities to sell transmission equipment.

Opportunities

[Return to top](#)

Sales, installation and maintenance related to:

- Hydropower turbines
- Rural energy projects
- Solar energy for rural and urban use

- Electricity transmission equipment

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

Ministry of Energy and Mines
P.O. Box 1860 Bujumbura, Burundi
Telephone: (257) 22-225909

Burundi Electric Supply Company (REGIDESO) dgregie@cbinf.com
P.O. Box 660 Bujumbura, Burundi
Telephone: (257) 22-223412

Burundi Investment Promotion Authority <http://www.burundi-investment.com>
contact@investburundi.com

Burundi's economy is agriculture-based. Its principal export products are coffee, tea and cotton. Although the climate is good for these crops, high population density and small plot sizes limit prospects for expanding the amount of land now under cultivation. There is potential in the production of subtropical fruits and dairy products, though local food processors may not meet international health and packaging standards.

Best Prospects/Services

There is a potential market for expertise and technology throughout the agribusiness sector, particularly as the privatization of coffee-related enterprises continues and Burundi's access to regional markets expands through membership in the EAC. Relatively small investments in food processing infrastructure have the potential to provide an enormous stimulus to the local economy, and a number of fledgling local businesses could benefit from joint ventures.

Opportunities:

- Specialty coffee processing
- Production of fruit concentrates and juices
- Tea processing
- Cut flowers and essential oils
- Canning vegetables
- Production of dried herbs and spices

Resources:

Burundi Chamber of Commerce: ccib@cbinf.com

P.O Box 313 Bujumbura, Burundi

Telephone: (257) 22222280

Burundi Enterprises Network: Ben2006burundi@yahoo.fr

Burundian Investment Promotion Authority: <http://investburundi.com/>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 5: Trade Regulations, Customs and Standards

- [Import Tariffs](#)
- [Trade Barriers](#)
- [Import Requirements and Documentation](#)
- [U.S. Export Controls](#)
- [Temporary Entry](#)
- [Labeling and Marking Requirements](#)
- [Prohibited and Restricted Imports](#)
- [Customs Regulations and Contact Information](#)
- [Standards](#)
- [Trade Agreements](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

Import Tariffs

[Return to top](#)

Burundi applies two import tariff regimes depending on the origin of the merchandise:

Preferential Trade Area: All commodities imported from COMESA countries (the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, which includes Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) are exempt from custom duties.

Other countries: Since Burundi harmonized its tariff regime with those of other EAC countries in July 2009, import tariffs on raw industrial materials for capital goods and pharmaceutical products have been virtually eliminated. Commodities deemed essential, such as industrial and building materials, have tariffs of 5% to 10%, while non-essential products, such as alcoholic beverages and imported food items, have a tariff of 25%.

Trade Barriers

[Return to top](#)

Aside from the import tariffs described above, there are no trade barriers for U.S. companies exporting to Burundi.

Import Requirements and Documentation

[Return to top](#)

- A Certificate of Incorporation issued by the Bujumbura-based Commercial Court.
- An Importation Identification Certificate issued by the Department of External Commerce within the Ministry of Commerce.

- A Tax Identification Number (TIN), issued by the Burundian Revenue Authority (OBR).
- A Certificate of Intention to Import, issued by the General Oversight Company (Société Générale de Surveillance, or SGS). A pre-shipment physical inspection certificate is required for goods valued at more than \$3,000 for pharmaceutical products and more than \$5,000 for other items. (Note: The SGS is a Swiss-based private inspection and verification company established in 1878.)

U.S. Export Controls

[Return to top](#)

Aside from the normal regulations restricting the export of items listed on the U.S. Government's Commerce Control List (CCL) – which apply mainly to sensitive information and defense technologies – there are no specific export controls for U.S. firms exporting to Burundi.

The CCL may be accessed via the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) database at http://www.access.gpo.gov/bis/ear/ear_data.html#ccl.

Temporary Entry

[Return to top](#)

Temporary importation is authorized for all commodities entering Burundi. The importer must deposit an amount equivalent to the value of the merchandise. Reimbursement of the deposit is made upon presentation of documentation proving that the merchandise has exited the country.

Labeling and Marking Requirements

[Return to top](#)

The National Standards Bureau has adopted standards on food labeling, chemicals, environmental impacts and electronics that comply with the UN's Codex Alimentarius (Codex Stan 1-1985 rev. 1-1994).

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

[Return to top](#)

Arms, munitions, drugs, toxic waste, pornographic products, ivory, and any other product listed under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna) are prohibited.

Customs Regulations and Contact Information

[Return to top](#)

For merchandise classification and codification, Burundi uses the standardized system of the World Organization of Customs. For customs evaluations, Burundi relies on World Trade Organization guidelines. Customs data are managed by the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) devised by the UN Conference On Trade and

Development (UNCTAD). Burundi's Bureau of Customs can be reached at: bdicustoms@cni.cbinf.com.

Standards

[Return to top](#)

- [Overview](#)
- [Standards Organizations](#)
- [Conformity Assessment](#)
- [Product Certification](#)
- [Accreditation](#)
- [Publication of Technical Regulations](#)
- [Labeling and Marking](#)
- [Contacts](#)

Overview

[Return to top](#)

The Burundian Bureau of Standards (Bureau Burundais de Normalisation et Contrôle de la Qualité, or BBN) was established in 1992. The BBN exercises oversight of pre-shipment inspection certificates concerning the importation of goods. Its primary functions are:

- Formulation of national standards;
- Promotion of management and quality assurance;
- Promotion of training for technical staff;
- Participation in appropriate technology research;
- Creation of, and assistance to, committees and commissions involved in standardization activities;
- Representation of the national interest regarding international institutions involved in standardization and quality management;
- Establishing, via its Metrology Center, the appropriate unit of measurement for all goods imported into Burundi.

Due to a lack of expertise and appropriate equipment, the BBN does not operate efficiently.

Standards Organizations

[Return to top](#)

The BBN has four divisions:

- Standardization and Metrics.
- Training and Technical Assistance to Companies.
- Certification, Accreditation, and Surveillance of Laboratories
- Documentation on Standards

The BBN does not routinely develop annual plans, but it does conduct a series of conformity assessments; please see following section.

NIST Notify U.S. Service

Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are required under the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement) to report to the WTO all proposed technical regulations that could affect trade with other Member countries.

Notify U.S. is a free, web-based e-mail subscription service that offers an opportunity to review and comment on proposed foreign technical regulations that can affect your access to international markets. Register online at Internet URL:

<http://www.nist.gov/notifyus/>

Conformity Assessment

[Return to top](#)

The BBN conducts quality audits in the following sequence:

- Preliminary assessment
- Documentation audit
- On-site assessment
- Conformity audit
- Overall audit
- After-registration surveillance

Product Certification

[Return to top](#)

Certification begins with an inspection of products. Samples are analyzed in a laboratory appointed by the Certification, Accreditation and Surveillance of Laboratories Division of BBN. If laboratory results conform to standards requirements, the laboratory results and a certificate are provided to the owner of the product. The appropriate division will conduct follow-up investigations to ensure that the products are in the same condition upon delivery to consumers. A copy of the certificate is registered with the BBN.

Burundi has no Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) with U.S. organizations.

Accreditation

[Return to top](#)

The Certification and Accreditation Division appoints laboratories to perform product sampling tests, and also performs regular oversight visits to ensure tests are carried out according to the criteria established by the Government of Burundi. All laboratories operating in the health and food processing sectors should be certified, but the government lacks the resources to ensure complete compliance.

Publication of Technical Regulations

[Return to top](#)

The law on standards was approved by Parliament on December 10, 2010 and promulgated in January 2011.

Labeling and Marking

[Return to top](#)

The National Standards Bureau has adopted standards on food labeling which comply with the UN's Codex Alimentarius (Codex Stan 1-1985 rev. 1-1994). At this time there are no other types of products covered under Burundian law.

Contacts

[Return to top](#)

- Burundian Bureau of Standards (Bureau Burundais de Normalisation et Contrôle de la Qualité, or BBN)

21 Boulevard de l'Indépendance
B.P 3535 – Bujumbura – Burundi
Tel: (257) 22 1815
E-mail: bbn@onatel.bi

- Federal Chamber of Commerce (Chambre Fédérale de Commerce, d'Industrie et de l'Artisanat, or CFCIB)

Avenue du 18 Septembre
BP 313
Tel: (257)22-2280
Fax: (257)22-7895
E-mail: info@cfcib.org

- Burundi Enterprises Network (BEN)

BP.6819
Bujumbura-Burundi
Tel : (257) 25-0403
E-mail: Ben2006burundi@yahoo.fr

- INTERCONTACT Services

19, Avenue de l'Industrie
B.P 982 , Bujumbura-Burundi
Tel (257) 22-6666/18
Fax (257) 22-6603
Website: <http://www.intercontactservices.com/en/>

- General Oversight Society (Société Générale de Surveillance, or SGS)

Burundi Liaison Office
19 bis, Avenue de l'Industrie
BP 75 Bujumbura-Burundi

Website: www.sgs.com

Trade Agreements

[Return to top](#)

- East African Community (EAC): Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi; <http://www.eac.int>
- Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA): www.comesa.int Note: COMESA countries include: Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Economic Community for the Great Lakes Region (CEPGL): Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo
- African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA): <http://www.agoa.gov>
- US-East African Community Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA): <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/trade-investment-framework-agreements>

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

- Burundian Bureau of Standards (Bureau Burundais de Normalisation et Contrôle de la Qualité, or BBN) : bn@onatel.bi or mivubazacharie2000@yahoo.fr
- Burundi Chamber of Commerce: ccib@cbinf.com
- Burundi Enterprises Network: Ben2006burundi@yahoo.com
- Intercontact (Burundian company assisting foreign investors): <http://www.intercontactservices.com/en/>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 6: Investment Climate

- [Openness to Foreign Investment](#)
- [Conversion and Transfer Policies](#)
- [Expropriation and Compensation](#)
- [Dispute Settlement](#)
- [Performance Requirements and Incentives](#)
- [Right to Private Ownership and Establishment](#)
- [Protection of Property Rights](#)
- [Transparency of Regulatory System](#)
- [Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment](#)
- [Competition from State Owned Enterprises](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
- [Political Violence](#)
- [Corruption](#)
- [Bilateral Investment Agreements](#)
- [OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs](#)
- [Labor](#)
- [Foreign-Trade Zones/Free Ports](#)
- [Foreign Direct Investment Statistics](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

Openness to Foreign Investment

[Return to top](#)

The Government of Burundi's (GOB) official attitude toward foreign direct investment is reflected by the Investment Code adopted in September 2008, which aims to attract and reassure foreign investors. The Code encourages and promises to facilitate acquisitions, as well as the production, transformation, and distribution of goods and services. In August 2009, a series of amendments designed to clarify the somewhat vague provisions of the new Code came into effect. These amendments spell out substantial tax exemptions for real estate purchases related to new investments, tax reductions for goods used to establish new businesses and profit-tax breaks for investors employing more than 50 Burundian workers. The paperwork for creating a business has been made easier and most proposals receive a response within three to four days after the application is submitted. Along with the new code, the government has created the Burundian Investment and Promotion Authority (known by its French acronym API). The Authority is professionally and financially independent and is in charge of the development and promotion of investment in Burundi. Currently, its main objectives are not only to inform and assist potential investors, but also ensure that new laws and regulations that benefit investors are being upheld as well as promote reforms aimed at improving the business climate. In 2012, API set up a "one-stop" investment center to help facilitate and simplify business registration in Burundi. In the 2013 World Bank Doing Business Report, Burundi had one of the largest improvements in Sub-Saharan Africa advancing its ranking ten positions over the previous year.

However, Burundi is still recovering from a civil war, is resource poor, its population suffers from extreme poverty, and the effects of many recent economic reforms have not been fully realized. Burundi's landlocked location and infrastructure constraints limit transportation of goods and services. Energy demand significantly exceeds capacity and rolling blackouts are common. Scarcity of skilled labor limits growth in manufacturing and industry. Additionally, corruption is pervasive.

Burundi's legal code recognizes the sanctity of contracts. In case of a dispute involving foreign interests, the plaintiff has the option of referring its complaint to either the national courts or an international arbiter. In 2007, the GOB created a Center for Arbitration and Mediation to handle such disputes; to date; no disputes have been submitted to the Center.

The GOB has no overall economic or industrial strategies that discriminate against foreign investors, nor are there any general limits on foreign ownership or control of enterprises. There are no established processes or criteria for the screening or review of foreign investments. Foreign investments concerning weapons, munitions, and any sort of military or paramilitary enterprises are forbidden. Private investments in this sector are rare, and most military enterprises are conducted on a government-to-government basis. No other investment sectors are restricted, nor are there any sectors where foreign investors are denied the same treatment as domestic firms.

The investment code does not distinguish between domestic and foreign investment except in the defense sector. API is responsible for approving investment projects. The new Investment Code sets forth no specific bidding criteria for the acquisition of GOB interests by private firms. Burundi's coffee industry – the largest source of foreign exports – was recently privatized giving rise to a specialty coffee sector which was internationally recognized during Burundi's first Cup of Excellence competition in 2012. More State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) may be privatized in 2013. The government is currently in the process of approving the privatization of the following SOEs: ONATEL (telecommunications), ONATOUR (peat), SOSUMO (sugar), SIP (real estate) and OTB (tea).

There is no explicit discrimination against foreign investors at any stage of the investment process, nor are there any laws or regulations specifically authorizing private firms to adopt articles of incorporation or association which limit or prohibit foreign investment, participation, or control.

On paper, Burundi's economy has been liberalized and is open to foreign investors. In practice, corruption hampers many business activities; domestic and foreign. The government continues to work hard to address corruption issues; however it is too early to tell how successful it will be.

Investment has risen in Burundi. In API's three years of operation, 193 investment projects have been approved, worth 824 billion Burundian Francs (BIF) (about \$588 million USD), and a large percentage of the projects have already been launched. The most targeted sectors are tourism, energy, agribusiness, transportation and some light assembly plants. Foreign investors are mostly from the East African Community, India and China. In the past, there has been no American investment but now one American investor has now won the concession of the Port of Bujumbura and another has

launched construction of a shopping center. Other American firms are exploring investment opportunities.

Measure	Year	Index/Ranking
TI Corruption Index	2012	165 out of 176
Heritage Economic Freedom	2012	157 out of 179
World Bank Doing Business	2013	159 out of 185
MCC Gov't Effectiveness	2013	-0.19 (36%)
MCC Rule of Law	2013	-0.25 (36%)
MCC Control of Corruption	2013	-0.25 (29%)
MCC Fiscal Policy	2013	-4.3 (34%)
MCC Trade Policy	2013	79.8 (92%)
MCC Regulatory Quality	2013	-0.24 (33%)
MCC Business Start Up	2013	0.963 (90%)
MCC Land Rights Access	2013	0.63 (65%)
MCC Natural Resource Protection	2013	30.3 (33%)
MCC Access to Credit	2013	14 (16%)
MCC Inflation	2013	14.9 (19%)

Conversion and Transfer Policies

[Return to top](#)

There are no restrictions on converting or transferring funds associated with an investment into a freely usable currency at a legal market rate. The new Investment Code allows completely free access to foreign exchange for investment remittances. There are no regulatory barriers to obtaining foreign exchange, but availability of foreign currency is limited because the Central Bank's limited supply of foreign currency.

The average delay for remitting investment returns, once all taxes have been paid, is three months. The reasons for such delays are attributable to general inefficiency in the banking sector and the rarity of such transactions in an environment with very little foreign direct investment. There is no mechanism allowing investors to remit funds through a legal parallel market using convertible negotiable instruments. There is no stated legal limit on the inflow or outflow of funds for remittances of profits, debt service, capital, capital gains, returns on intellectual property, or imported inputs.

Expropriation and Compensation

[Return to top](#)

Burundian law permits the GOB to expropriate property for "exceptional and state-approved reasons" but stipulates that "a just and prior compensatory allowance is required." In practice, there are no recent cases involving expropriation of foreign investments, nor do any foreign firms have pending complaints about compensation. In case such disputes did arise, the Investment Code offers plaintiffs recourse to the national court system or international arbitration.

There have been no expropriatory actions in the past or policy shifts which would lead one to believe that there may be expropriatory actions in the near future. The current government has no tendencies towards discrimination against U.S. investments, companies, or representatives with regard to expropriation.

Dispute Settlement

[Return to top](#)

In recent years, there has only been one investment dispute involving U.S. or other foreign investors or contractors in Burundi, but this dispute was resolved relatively quickly. Moreover, in 2010, four cell phone companies brought a complaint in the Burundian Commercial Court after the government announced it was reassigning part of the bandwidth for which each company held a license to two other companies. At the hearing, the regulatory body that had made the decision announced that it would no longer seek to reassign the bandwidth that had already been licensed.

Burundi's legal system contains standard provisions guaranteeing the right to private property and the enforcement of contracts. While the GOB has been known to impede judicial procedures in cases with political or human rights overtones, it generally does not interfere in business matters. Burundi has a written and consistently applied commercial law which allows for the judgments of foreign courts to be accepted and enforced by local courts. Monetary judgments are usually made in the investor's currency. A bankruptcy law granting equal rights to foreign and domestic creditors exists, but has not been widely utilized or applied.

In rare cases involving international elements the GOB accepts binding international arbitration, and recognizes and enforces foreign arbitral awards. In investment disputes between private parties, international arbitration is accepted as a means of settlement provided one of the parties is an extra-national. In 2007, the GOB created a Center for Arbitration and Mediation to handle such disputes, but to date, the Center has heard no cases. Although the GOB has enacted no specific legislation for the enforcement of the World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) decisions, it is a member of the ICSID and enforces its awards.

Performance Requirements and Incentives

[Return to top](#)

The GOB has not notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of any measures that are inconsistent with the WTO's Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs), nor have there been any independent allegations that the GOB maintains any such measures.

There are no established performance requirements for foreign investors, and tax incentives apply uniformly to both domestic and foreign firms. In theory, all new investors qualify for tax deferral based on the rate, duration, and nature of their investments. The standard enticement offered to potential large investors, foreign or domestic, is one or more years of tax-free operation. Amendments adopted in August 2009 to the Investment Code include exemption of charges for real estate purchases related to new investments, tax exemptions for goods used to establish new businesses, and profit-tax breaks for investors employing more than 50 Burundian workers. Furthermore, the new investment code provides free transfer of foreign assets and income after payment of taxes due, as well as the protection of private property from nationalization or expropriation of investments made within the country's territory. API and the Burundian Revenue Authority (known by its French acronym OBR) are working together to review existing exemptions to ensure they are consistent with excise law, the investment code, and make sure that the tax exemptions are in harmony with those of the East African Community of which it is a member.

The GOB imposes no performance requirements on investors as a condition for establishing, maintaining, or expanding their investments, or for access to tax and investment incentives. There are no requirements that investors purchase from local sources or export a certain percentage of their output, or only have access to foreign exchange in relation to their exports. There is no requirement that nationals own shares in foreign investments, that the share of foreign equity be reduced over time, or that technology be transferred on certain terms.

The GOB imposes no “offset” requirements linking major procurements to investments in specified sectors of the national economy. There are also no government-imposed conditions on permission to invest related to geographic location, percentage of local content, local equity, employment of nationals, use of domestic employment agencies, import substitution, export targets, technology transfer, or local funding sources. There are no specified performance requirements and therefore no enforcement procedures for same.

There is no foreign direct investment in the research sector. The only known scientific research being conducted in Burundi concerns agricultural production and is largely funded by foreign donors.

No discriminatory or excessively onerous visa, residence, or work permit requirements inhibit foreign investors’ mobility, nor does the GOB have any discriminatory or preferential export-import policies affecting foreign investors.

Right to Private Ownership and Establishment

[Return to top](#)

Foreign and domestic private entities have the right to establish and own business enterprises and to engage in all forms of remunerative activity permitted by Burundian law. Private entities may freely establish, acquire and dispose of interests in business enterprises. Private enterprises enjoy competitive equality in competition with public enterprises with respect to access to markets, credit and other business operations.

Protection of Property Rights

[Return to top](#)

Secured interests in both real and movable property are nominally recognized under Burundian law. The legal system in general and the new Investment Code in particular claim to protect and facilitate the acquisition and disposition of all property rights. The law also guarantees adequate protection for such intellectual property as patents, copyrights and trademarks but contains no provisions about trade secrets or semiconductor chips. However, in 2012 there have been a number of cases arbitrated by the National Commission for Land and Other Possessions (known as its French acronym CNTB) which have resulted in restoration of property to returning refugees reportedly without compensation being granted to the current property owner. So far, this situation has not affected foreign investors.

Like most WTO members, Burundi has adopted the 1995 agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of International Property Rights (TRIPS), which introduced global minimum standards for the protection and enforcement of virtually all intellectual property rights (IPR). In practice, a subsistence-level economy like Burundi’s has little to do with IPR

issues. The only relevant area where TRIPS applies is the protection of pharmaceutical products, most of which are imported and distributed under the auspices of international donors in full compliance with WTO regulations. Burundi is also a signatory to the 1997 and 2000 UN World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) treaties governing industrial property and patent law.

Transparency of Regulatory System

[Return to top](#)

While the GOB's general attitude toward investment is welcoming, the government has no stated, transparent policies for fostering competition or establishing a regulatory framework. There are no explicit tax, labor, environment, or health and safety policies that would discourage investors nor is there any bureaucratic procedure -- beyond registering with Burundi's Revenue Authority (OBR) -- required to launch or invest in a new enterprise. There are no informal regulatory processes managed by NGOs or private sector associations.

Before the government enacts laws and regulations concerning investment policy, private consultants generally publish a study on the draft legislation for review and comment by the private sector. The consultants then submit comments to the government for consideration before the legislation is voted upon. This procedure was followed during the drafting of the most recent Investment Code.

The government's overall legal system is not transparent and is often subject to judicial roadblocks in cases pertaining to politics and human rights. With regard to trade and investment, however, Burundi's regulatory and accounting systems are generally transparent and consistent with international norms. There is no evidence of government or private sector efforts to restrict foreign participation in consortia for setting industry standards.

Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment

[Return to top](#)

Government policies facilitate the free flow of financial resources in the product and factor markets. In theory, foreign investors have access to all existing credit instruments. There are no explicit restrictions on foreign investors' access to local credit, but the local market's own resources are extremely limited. Given this lack of resources, there is no regulatory system to encourage and facilitate portfolio investment. Foreign technical experts including U.S. Treasury are assisting Burundi's Central Bank (known by its French acronym BRB) in developing such a regulatory system and establishing a more active bond market.

According to their 2011 annual reports, the total assets of Burundi's three largest commercial banks are: Interbank Burundi (IBB), USD 228.7 million; Burundi Credit Bank (BCB), USD 194 million; and Burundi Commercial Bank (BANCOBU), USD 107.6 million.

(Note: The formal banking sector mainly serves Burundi's small elite of wealthy business people and government officials, as well as its miniscule middle class, composed mostly of civil servants. Most Burundians have no access to formal credit and rely on informal credit markets or on micro-finance institutions that dispense commercially-negligible

amounts.) At this point, hedging against currency risk using Burundi's commercial banking system is not possible.

There are no arrangements by private firms that restrict foreign investment through mergers and acquisitions. Private firms also have no specific mechanisms or written strategies to prevent hostile takeovers, since these would only be relevant in a more developed economy. The private sector has limited access to credit locally as the credit market is not developed.

Competition from State Owned Enterprises

[Return to top](#)

Private enterprises are allowed to compete with public enterprises under the same terms and conditions with respect to access to markets, credit, and other business operations, such as licenses and supplies. SOEs in Burundi are mainly active in the agricultural sector: coffee, tea, sugar, cotton, and palm oil.

Corporate governance of SOEs is structured from the top down, with a government minister in charge, a Board of Directors, and a General Manager. The management reports directly to the Board of Directors, whose decisions must be approved by the minister within 15 days to be valid. The minister may overrule any decision made by the Board if the minister considers it to be "against the general interest" – a catch-all phrase that allows the minister to have the last word in any dispute. SOEs are required to prepare annual reports but do not routinely submit to independent audits.

There are no sovereign wealth funds (SWF) in Burundi.

Corporate Social Responsibility

[Return to top](#)

There is no general awareness of corporate social responsibility among producers or consumers. The national brewery, Brarudi, which is managed and predominantly owned by the Dutch company Heineken, follows such principles as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Since 2002, Brarudi has introduced programs to conserve water and electricity usage while reducing industrial waste; the company has also donated construction materials for schools and equipment for local NGOs.

Additionally, Econet, Burundi's second largest telecommunications provider has set up a scholarship program to send gifted orphans to study at international universities.

Aside from these efforts, CSR is almost unknown in Burundi.

Political Violence

[Return to top](#)

There have been no incidents in recent memory involving politically-motivated damage to foreign investors' projects or installations. Even before the outbreak of ethnic violence in 1993, there was no significant foreign direct investment in Burundi. Though there were democratic elections in 2005 and the last rebel group demobilized in 2009, the security situation remains tenuous throughout Burundi. Banditry and extortion by armed criminals, some of whom are rumored to have links to the security forces or demobilized former rebels -- as well as a general climate of lawlessness and impunity -- continue to discourage foreign investment. All visitors to Burundi -- and all U.S. Mission employees -

- are urged to exercise extreme caution and avoid nighttime travel outside the capital. Nonetheless, there is no reliable evidence of anti-foreign sentiment or threats toward foreign investors.

The security situation throughout the region is volatile, particularly in neighboring eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and northwestern Uganda. While these conflicts currently pose little direct threat to Burundi's security, they increase instability and tension in the region. Additionally, the recent influx of refugees from eastern DRC, and returning refugees from Tanzania may strain Burundi's limited resources.

Corruption

[Return to top](#)

Corruption, including bribery, raises the costs and risks of doing business. Corruption has a corrosive impact on both market opportunities overseas for U.S. companies and the broader business climate. It also deters international investment, stifles economic growth and development, distorts prices, and undermines the rule of law.

It is important for U.S. companies, irrespective of their size, to assess the business climate in the relevant market in which they will be operating or investing, and to have an effective compliance program or measures to prevent and detect corruption, including foreign bribery. U.S. individuals and firms operating or investing in foreign markets should take the time to become familiar with the relevant anticorruption laws of both the foreign country and the United States in order to properly comply with them, and where appropriate, they should seek the advice of legal counsel.

The U.S. Government seeks to level the global playing field for U.S. businesses by encouraging other countries to take steps to criminalize their own companies' acts of corruption, including bribery of foreign public officials, by requiring them to uphold their obligations under relevant international conventions. A U. S. firm that believes a competitor is seeking to use bribery of a foreign public official to secure a contract should bring this to the attention of appropriate U.S. agencies, as noted below.

U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act: In 1977, the United States enacted the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), which makes it unlawful for a U.S. person, and certain foreign issuers of securities, to make a corrupt payment to foreign public officials for the purpose of obtaining or retaining business for or with, or directing business to, any person. The FCPA also applies to foreign firms and persons who take any act in furtherance of such a corrupt payment while in the United States. For more detailed information on the FCPA, see the FCPA Lay-Person's Guide at: <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/>

Other Instruments: It is U.S. Government policy to promote good governance, including host country implementation and enforcement of anti-corruption laws and policies pursuant to their obligations under international agreements. Since enactment of the FCPA, the United States has been instrumental to the expansion of the international framework to fight corruption. Several significant components of this framework are the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (OECD Antibribery Convention), the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UN Convention), the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (OAS Convention), the Council of Europe Criminal and Civil Law Conventions, and a growing list of U.S. free trade agreements.

OECD Antibribery Convention: The OECD Antibribery Convention entered into force in February 1999. As of March 2009, there are 38 parties to the Convention including the United States (see <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/13/40272933.pdf>). Major exporters China, India, and Russia are not parties, although the U.S. Government strongly endorses their eventual accession to the Convention. The Convention obligates the Parties to criminalize bribery of foreign public officials in the conduct of international business. The United States meets its international obligations under the OECD Antibribery Convention through the U.S. FCPA. Burundi is a party to the OECD convention.

UN Convention: The UN Anticorruption Convention entered into force on December 14, 2005, and there are 158 parties to it as of November 2011 (see <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/signatories.html>). The UN Convention is the first global comprehensive international anticorruption agreement. The UN Convention requires countries to establish criminal and other offences to cover a wide range of acts of corruption. The UN Convention goes beyond previous anticorruption instruments, covering a broad range of issues ranging from basic forms of corruption such as bribery and solicitation, embezzlement, trading in influence to the concealment and laundering of the proceeds of corruption. The Convention contains transnational business bribery provisions that are functionally similar to those in the OECD Antibribery Convention and contains provisions on private sector auditing and books and records requirements. Other provisions address matters such as prevention, international cooperation, and asset recovery. Burundi is a party to the UN convention.

OAS Convention: In 1996, the Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) adopted the first international anticorruption legal instrument, the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (OAS Convention), which entered into force in March 1997. The OAS Convention, among other things, establishes a set of preventive measures against corruption, provides for the criminalization of certain acts of corruption, including transnational bribery and illicit enrichment, and contains a series of provisions to strengthen the cooperation between its States Parties in areas such as mutual legal assistance and technical cooperation. As of December 2009, the OAS Convention has 34 parties (see <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/Sigs/b-58.html>) Burundi is not a party to the OAS convention.

Council of Europe Criminal Law and Civil Law Conventions: Many European countries are parties to either the Council of Europe (CoE) Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, the Civil Law Convention, or both. The Criminal Law Convention requires criminalization of a wide range of national and transnational conduct, including bribery, money-laundering, and account offenses. It also incorporates provisions on liability of legal persons and witness protection. The Civil Law Convention includes provisions on compensation for damage relating to corrupt acts, whistleblower protection, and validity of contracts, inter alia. The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) was established in 1999 by the CoE to monitor compliance with these and related anti-corruption standards. Currently, GRECO comprises 49 member States (48 European countries and the United States). As of December 2011, the Criminal Law Convention has 43 parties and the Civil Law Convention has 34 (see www.coe.int/greco.) Burundi is not a party to the CoE convention.

Free Trade Agreements: While it is U.S. Government policy to include anticorruption provisions in free trade agreements (FTAs) that it negotiates with its trading partners, the anticorruption provisions have evolved over time. The most recent FTAs negotiated now require trading partners to criminalize “active bribery” of public officials (offering bribes to any public official must be made a criminal offense, both domestically and trans-nationally) as well as domestic “passive bribery” (solicitation of a bribe by a domestic official). All U.S. FTAs may be found at the U.S. Trade Representative Website: <http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements>. Burundi does not have an FTA with the United States.

Local Laws: U.S. firms should familiarize themselves with local anticorruption laws, and, where appropriate, seek legal counsel. While the U.S. Department of Commerce cannot provide legal advice on local laws, the Department’s U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service can provide assistance with navigating the host country’s legal system and obtaining a list of local legal counsel.

Assistance for U.S. Businesses: The U.S. Department of Commerce offers several services to aid U.S. businesses seeking to address business-related corruption issues. For example, the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service can provide services that may assist U.S. companies in conducting their due diligence as part of the company’s overarching compliance program when choosing business partners or agents overseas. The U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service can be reached directly through its offices in every major U.S. and foreign city, or through its Website at www.trade.gov/cs.

The Departments of Commerce and State provide worldwide support for qualified U.S. companies bidding on foreign government contracts through the Commerce Department’s Advocacy Center and State’s Office of Commercial and Business Affairs. Problems, including alleged corruption by foreign governments or competitors, encountered by U.S. companies in seeking such foreign business opportunities can be brought to the attention of appropriate U.S. government officials, including local embassy personnel and through the Department of Commerce Trade Compliance Center “Report A Trade Barrier” Website at tcc.export.gov/Report_a_Barrier/index.asp.

Guidance on the U.S. FCPA: The Department of Justice’s (DOJ) FCPA Opinion Procedure enables U.S. firms and individuals to request a statement of the Justice Department’s present enforcement intentions under the anti-bribery provisions of the FCPA regarding any proposed business conduct. The details of the opinion procedure are available on DOJ’s Fraud Section Website at www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa. Although the Department of Commerce has no enforcement role with respect to the FCPA, it supplies general guidance to U.S. exporters who have questions about the FCPA and about international developments concerning the FCPA. For further information, see the Office of the Chief Counsel for International Counsel, U.S. Department of Commerce, Website, at http://www.ogc.doc.gov/trans_anti_bribery.html. More general information on the FCPA is available at the Websites listed below.

Exporters and investors should be aware that generally all countries prohibit the bribery of their public officials, and prohibit their officials from soliciting bribes under domestic laws. Most countries are required to criminalize such bribery and other acts of corruption by virtue of being parties to various international conventions discussed above.

Officially, Burundi has a number of laws and regulations prohibiting corrupt practices such as bribery, nepotism, preferential hiring and promotion and embezzlement. In practice, these measures are rarely enforced. This is largely a result of an under-resourced and poorly trained police force and civil service; there is no evidence of any particular bias for or against foreign investors in the enforcement of these statutes.

Burundi is a signatory to the UN Anti-Corruption Convention and the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery. Burundi has also been a member of the East African Anti-Corruption Authority since joining the East African Community in 2007. To date, no foreign firms have lodged complaints against the GOB under any of these agreements. No major U.S. firms have specifically noted corruption as an obstacle to direct investment in Burundi, although corruption is seen as one of the typical hurdles to be overcome when doing business in the region. Corruption is most pervasive in Burundi in the government procurement sector; the purchase and sale of government property takes place in a non-transparent environment with frequent allegations of bribery and cronyism. Until recent reforms, customs officials were also reportedly very corrupt, regularly extorting bribes from exporters and importers.

Giving or receiving bribes, including a bribe by a local company to a foreign official, is technically a criminal act punishable by six months to ten years in prison depending on the scale of the financial interests involved. As such, bribes are not tax-deductible. The GOB's Anti-Corruption Brigade is charged with enforcing this legislation, but has very limited jurisdiction. Cabinet members, parliamentarians, and anyone appointed by presidential decree have immunity from prosecution on corruption charges, insulating them from accountability and feeding a culture of impunity.

The most outspoken critic of corruption is a Burundian NGO, the Organization for the Struggle Against Corruption and Public Funds Embezzlement (known by its French acronym OLUCOME), which frequently decries abuses in the public sector.

Anti-Corruption Resources

Some useful resources for individuals and companies regarding combating corruption in global markets include the following:

- Information about the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), including a "Lay-Person's Guide to the FCPA" is available at the U.S. Department of Justice's Website at: <http://www.justice.gov/criminal/fraud/fcpa>.
- Information about the OECD Antibribery Convention including links to national implementing legislation and country monitoring reports is available at: http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,3355,en_2649_34859_1_1_1_1_1,00.html. See also new Antibribery Recommendation and Good Practice Guidance Annex for companies: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/40/44176910.pdf>.
- General information about anticorruption initiatives, such as the OECD Convention and the FCPA, including translations of the statute into several languages, is available at the Department of Commerce Office of the Chief Counsel for International Commerce Website: http://www.ogc.doc.gov/trans_anti_bribery.html.

- Transparency International (TI) publishes an annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The CPI measures the perceived level of public-sector corruption in 180 countries and territories around the world. The CPI is available at: http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009. TI also publishes an annual *Global Corruption Report* which provides a systematic evaluation of the state of corruption around the world. It includes an in-depth analysis of a focal theme, a series of country reports that document major corruption related events and developments from all continents and an overview of the latest research findings on anti-corruption diagnostics and tools. See <http://www.transparency.org/publications/gcr>.
- The World Bank Institute publishes Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI). These indicators assess six dimensions of governance in 213 countries, including Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law and Control of Corruption. See <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>. The World Bank Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Surveys may also be of interest and are available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/BEEPS>.
- The World Economic Forum publishes the *Global Enabling Trade Report*, which presents the rankings of the Enabling Trade Index, and includes an assessment of the transparency of border administration (focused on bribe payments and corruption) and a separate segment on corruption and the regulatory environment. See <http://www.weforum.org/s?s=global+enabling+trade+report>.
- Additional country information related to corruption can be found in the U.S. State Department's annual *Human Rights Report* available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/>.
- Global Integrity, a nonprofit organization, publishes its annual *Global Integrity Report*, which provides indicators for 106 countries with respect to governance and anti-corruption. The report highlights the strengths and weaknesses of national level anti-corruption systems. The report is available at: <http://report.globalintegrity.org/>.

Bilateral Investment Agreements

[Return to top](#)

Burundi has a long-standing mutual investment agreement with the BENELUX nations. Although Burundi is technically eligible to take part in the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA), there has been no significant activity in this area, nor does the GOB have any bilateral investment or taxation treaties with the U.S. However, in November 2012 the United States signed a Commercial Dialogue with the EAC with the goals of promoting more trade and investment in key sectors, building a more open and predictable business climate, and strengthening ties between businesses in the EAC and the United States.

OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs

[Return to top](#)

Burundi is a member of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and signed an agreement with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) in 2006. To date, there are no OPIC-affiliated enterprises now known to be in operation. In the unlikely event that OPIC would need to pay an inconvertibility claim, it would use Burundian Francs, which, as of May 2013, U.S. Embassy Bujumbura purchased at an official rate of 1560 BIF to one USD. Given the overall weakness of Burundi's economy, there is significant risk that the value of the Burundian franc will continue to depreciate against major market currencies.

Labor

[Return to top](#)

Unskilled local labor is widely available. Workers from neighboring DRC and Rwanda often supplement a local economy generally lacking skilled labor. Burundi has signed the International Labor Organization (ILO) convention protecting workers' rights. In the private sector, labor-management relations are generally conducted according to international standards that allow for collective bargaining and freedom from reprisal against employees who engage in union activities. Labor leaders in the public sector have occasionally been subjected to harassment and arbitrary detention. There are no stated policies that would allow differential treatment of labor or require the hiring of host country nationals for certain positions. A largely uneducated workforce cannot be said to impede the use of advanced technologies, given that the level of development in most sectors is already hampered by extreme poverty and lack of access to basic utilities.

Foreign-Trade Zones/Free Ports

[Return to top](#)

Burundi now has no designated foreign trade zones or free ports. In theory the new Investment Code makes the entire country a de facto foreign trade zone, but the language of the Code itself has few details concerning specific policies and procedures.

Foreign Direct Investment Statistics

[Return to top](#)

Prior to 2009, it was difficult to get reliable figures on FDI. However, with the establishment of the API and the 2010 elections, there is now data. The following data from API show a gradual increase. However, these data reflected signed agreements that are still being implemented,

Year	Foreign Direct Investment
2009	< \$20 million USD
2010	\$80 million USD
2011	\$104 million USD
2012	\$ 255 million USD

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Country Limitation Schedule: http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country_limits.html

OPIC: <http://www.opic.gov>

Trade and Development Agency: <http://www.tda.gov/>

SBA's Office of International Trade: <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc/default.htm>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

USTR US-EAC Trade and Investment Framework Agreement:
<http://www.ustr.gov/trade-agreements/trade-investment-framework-agreements>

Burundian Investment Promotion Authority:
<http://investburundi.com/>
[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 7: Trade and Project Financing

- [How Do I Get Paid \(Methods of Payment\)](#)
- [How Does the Banking System Operate](#)
- [Foreign-Exchange Controls](#)
- [U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks](#)
- [Project Financing](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

How Do I Get Paid (Methods of Payment)

[Return to top](#)

For international trade, Burundi uses irrevocable letters of credit. For domestic business, payment in cash is commonly used. For larger transactions, certified bank checks are preferred. There are no credit rating companies or collection agencies in the country.

How Does the Banking System Operate

[Return to top](#)

The Central Bank (Bank de la Republique du Burundi, or BRB) exercises oversight over the commercial banks, all of which have financial connections to one or more international banks.

The banking sector is largely under private ownership, although the government maintains controlling shares in two of the seven commercial banks operating in Burundi. See “Efficient Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment” in Chapter 6 for further information on Burundi’s major banks.

Foreign-Exchange Controls

[Return to top](#)

Burundian law allows citizens to hold bank accounts in foreign currency. Foreign exchange is regulated by the market and -- when available -- is not an impediment for U.S. businesses.

U.S. Banks and Local Correspondent Banks

[Return to top](#)

There are no U.S. banks operating in Burundi. Two local banks have direct connections with Citibank and others have connections with U.S. banks through their European correspondents.

Project Financing

[Return to top](#)

Most development projects are funded by multilateral banks. Some donor countries have injected funds into the National Bank for Economic Development to lend to local

entrepreneurs in specific sectors. Local commercial banks fund commercial and industrial projects, however capital is limited.

The World Bank and IMF are funding projects aimed at institutional reform, largely in the financial sector; the World Bank is also supporting rehabilitation and expansion of Burundi's hydro-electric system. The African Development Bank funds projects in road infrastructure, hydroelectric power, watershed management and rural water infrastructure. USAID has its main focus on health and governance, but has funded small- and medium-scale agribusiness projects. In recent years, the African Development Foundation has also provided a number of grants to help entrepreneurs expand their businesses.

Outside the multilateral sphere, Burundi receives funds from numerous bilateral donors including the Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States. Additionally, funds have been provided by the Chinese, Libyans and Sudanese, for the construction of schools and public buildings. The details of these bilateral agreements are not available to the public.

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

Export-Import Bank of the United States: <http://www.exim.gov>

Country Limitation Schedule: http://www.exim.gov/tools/country/country_limits.html

OPIC: <http://www.opic.gov>

Trade and Development Agency: <http://www.tda.gov/>

SBA's Office of International Trade: <http://www.sba.gov/oit/>

USDA Commodity Credit Corporation: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/cc/default.htm>

U.S. Agency for International Development: <http://www.usaid.gov>

The African Development Bank: <http://www.afdb.org>

The African Development Foundation: <http://www.adf.gov>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 8: Business Travel

- [Business Customs](#)
- [Travel Advisory](#)
- [Visa Requirements](#)
- [Telecommunications](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Language](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays](#)
- [Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings](#)
- [Web Resources](#)

Business Customs

[Return to top](#)

Burundi's business community is comfortable working with foreign investors, but the professional environment is often more formal than in the U.S. A coat and tie (or safari suit) for men and a business suit for women is standard attire at most business gatherings. Burundian businesses generally prefer direct contact with prospective partners. The telephone is used to initiate appointments, but business is most often conducted on a more personal level. It is helpful for the business traveler to have pre-printed business cards to distribute to contacts. Gifts, especially in the early phases of a business relationship, are not commonly expected or given.

Travel Advisory

[Return to top](#)

The U.S. State Department provides detailed information for travelers to Burundi at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1078.html

Visa Requirements

[Return to top](#)

A valid U.S. passport with an expiry date of at least six months after the date of travel is mandatory for entry. The type of passport and the reason for stay determines the type of visa.

A visa for Burundi should be obtained at a Burundian Embassy abroad before departure. In January 2010, Burundi's Ministry of External Relations issued an official notice stating that visas would no longer be issued at the airport in Bujumbura. While American Citizens have recently been able to obtain visas at the airport, the new policy could be enforced at any time. All U.S. citizens planning travel to Burundi are strongly encouraged to contact the nearest Burundian Embassy beforehand. Consular Information for the Burundian Embassy in Washington, DC can be found online at <http://www.burundiembassy-usa.org/Consularinfo.html>.

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links.

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/>

All U.S. citizens visiting Burundi are advised to register online beforehand at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/> with the U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura. The U.S. Embassy is located on Avenue des Etats-Unis: telephone (257) 22-207000; fax (257) 22-222926; email BujumburaC@state.gov.

Telecommunications

[Return to top](#)

Cell phone network coverage in Burundi is sporadic, and networks are often not available due to heavy usage. SIM cards can be purchased from the main offices of most of Burundi's cell phone companies in Bujumbura, including:

- ONAMOB – provided by the government-owned network ONATEL.
- LEO (formerly known as U-COM)
- Africell / Tempo
- Econet

Ownership of personal computers is rare except among the wealthy elite and expatriate community.

Internet service providers include:

- OSA
- USAN
- ONATEL
- LEO
- ECONET
- CBINET
- SPIDERNET

Computer centers and cyber cafés are available in larger towns. Most internet connections are slow by Western standards.

Transportation

[Return to top](#)

For international travel to and from Bujumbura, connections on international carriers are available through Addis Ababa via Ethiopian Airlines, Nairobi via Kenya Airways, and Kigali via Rwanda Air Express and Johannesburg via South African Airways. Brussels Airlines operates two flights per week with a direct connection to Brussels. All international flights arrive at Bujumbura airport, ten miles from the center of town.

Local connections between the major towns of the country are facilitated by public and private buses on a daily basis. There are also regular bus connections between Burundi and other countries in the region. Travelers should note that public transportation is unreliable and often dangerous due to poor vehicle maintenance and bad road conditions. Private vehicles are also available for hire with or without drivers. There are no passenger railroads or ferries.

Language

[Return to top](#)

The indigenous language is Kirundi, which is spoken throughout the country. French is the administrative and official language. Kiswahili is widely spoken in the capital and in the eastern region of the country near the border with Tanzania. In response to Burundi's 2007 entry into the East African Community, the government added English and Swahili instruction, beginning in first grade, to public school curricula.

While a number of government officials and business people are making an effort to speak English, it is absolutely essential for the business traveler to speak French or have access to a reliable interpreter. The U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura can provide names of local interpreters upon request.

Health

[Return to top](#)

A certificate of yellow-fever vaccination is technically required for entry into Burundi. While immigration officials rarely examine a traveler's vaccination record, it is strongly recommended that visitors keep their inoculations up-to-date. Bujumbura is a malarial area and malaria prophylaxis is recommended. Travelers should consult a licensed physician in the U.S. before departure to determine which form of prophylaxis is most appropriate. In addition, travelers are encouraged to use insect repellent and proper clothing (i.e., long sleeves and slacks in the evening) to prevent mosquito bites.

Local tap water is not potable. Bottled water is safe to drink and can be purchased locally. Food prepared in local restaurants is generally safe if served hot, but visitors should avoid eating in establishments without running water. Uncooked greens should also be avoided, and travelers requesting ice in their beverages should ensure that the ice has been made from purified water.

Medical facilities are limited in Burundi. Emergency medical services and ambulances are virtually non-existent. Medicines and prescription drugs are in short supply, and occasionally unavailable. Sterility of equipment can be questionable and treatment is often unreliable. Travelers are encouraged to carry a sufficient supply of properly-labeled prescription drugs and other medications to cover their stay in Burundi.

Local Time, Business Hours, and Holidays

[Return to top](#)

Local Time: GMT+2

Business Hours:

Hours of operation for the Government of Burundi are 07:00 to 15:00. Working hours for the private sector, international agencies, NGOs and embassies are generally 08:00 to 17:00.

Public holidays:

Jan 1	New Year's Day
Feb 5	Unity Day
Apr 6	Remembrance of President Ntaryamira Day
May 1	Labor Day
May**	Ascension Day
July 1	Independence Day
Aug*	Eid-El-Fitr
Aug 15	Assumption Day
Oct 13	Assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore
Oct 21	Assassination of President Ndadaye
Oct*	Eid-El-Qurban
Nov 1	All Saints Day
Dec. 25	Christmas Day

* Eid-el-Qurban and Eid-el-Fitr are Islamic holidays and the dates change according to the lunar calendar.

** Ascension Day is a Christian holiday and the date changes according to the Christian calendar.

Temporary Entry of Materials and Personal Belongings

[Return to top](#)

Burundi authorizes temporary entry of business-related materials such as building supplies and equipment, and personal items such as furniture and household belongings. A request for temporary entry must be addressed to the Ministry of Finance. Authorization is granted for one year, renewable annually.

Web Resources

[Return to top](#)

The U.S. State Department provides detailed information for travelers to Burundi at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1078.html

State Department Visa Website: <http://travel.state.gov/visa/index.html>

United States Visas.gov: <http://www.unitedstatesvisas.gov/>

U.S. Embassy Bujumbura Consular Section: <http://burundi.usembassy.gov/visas.html>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 9: Contacts, Market Research and Trade Events

- [Contacts](#)
- [Market Research](#)
- [Trade Events](#)

Contacts

[Return to top](#)

Before visiting, travelers and business people seeking contacts in specific sectors may wish to communicate directly with the U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura for assistance in reaching potential contacts, due to unreliable e-mail and telephone coverage within much of the country. Business people should also contact the Burundi Enterprise Network and the Burundi Chamber of Commerce.

- U.S. Embassy Bujumbura website: www.bujumbura.usembassy.gov
- Burundi Enterprise Network (BEN): Ben2006burundi@yahoo.fr
- Burundi Federal Chamber of Commerce: ccib@cbinf.com
- Burundi Investment Promotion Authority: <http://investburundi.com/>

Market Research

[Return to top](#)

To view market research reports produced by the U.S. Commercial Service please go to the following website: <http://www.export.gov/mrktresearch/index.asp> and click on Country and Industry Market Reports.

Please note that these reports are only available to U.S. citizens and U.S. companies. Registration to the site is required, and is free.

Trade Events

[Return to top](#)

Please click on the link below for information on upcoming trade events.

<http://www.export.gov/tradeevents/index.asp>

U.S. Commercial Service link for East Africa (based in Nairobi, Kenya):

<http://www.buyusa.gov/eastafrica/en/>

[Return to table of contents](#)

[Return to table of contents](#)

Chapter 10: Guide to Our Services

The President's National Export Initiative aims to double exports over five years by marshaling Federal agencies to **prepare U.S. companies to export successfully, connect them with trade opportunities and support them once they do have exporting opportunities.**

The U.S. Commercial Service offers customized solutions to help U.S. exporters, particularly small and medium sized businesses, successfully expand exports to new markets. Our global network of trade specialists will work one-on-one with you through every step of the exporting process, helping you to:

- Target the best markets with our world-class research
- Promote your products and services to qualified buyers
- Meet the best distributors and agents for your products and services
- Overcome potential challenges or trade barriers
- Gain access to the full range of U.S. government trade promotion agencies and their services, including export training and potential trade financing sources

To learn more about the Federal Government's trade promotion resources for new and experienced exporters, please click on the following link: www.export.gov

For more information on the services the U.S. Commercial Service offers to U.S. exporters, please click on the following link: <http://www.buyusa.gov/>

U.S. exporters seeking general export information/assistance or country-specific commercial information can also contact the **U.S. Department of Commerce's Trade Information Center at (800) USA-TRAD(E).**

To the best of our knowledge, the information contained in this report is accurate as of the date published. However, **The Department of Commerce** does not take responsibility for actions readers may take based on the information contained herein. Readers should always conduct their own due diligence before entering into business ventures or other commercial arrangements. **The Department of Commerce** can assist companies in these endeavors.

[Return to table of contents](#)