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Who reintegrates? The constituents of reintegration of displaced populations

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Abstract

The reintegration constituents of displaced populations are understudied, despite increased attention being paid to return and reintegration outcomes. In this paper, we explore how various factors related to the migration cycle, including returnees' displacement experiences and return conditions, are associated with reintegration outcomes. For this aim, we take a multidimensional approach to the measurement of reintegration. In addition to objective reintegration outcomes, measured by food security, we address subjective assessments such as feelings of reintegration. We focus on the unique case of returnees in Burundi and make use of a database consisting of a sample of 189 former internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 194 former refugees, which allows for a comparison of the reintegration of these two groups. The analyses highlight that objective and subjective reintegration do not necessarily align and that displacement experiences and return conditions relate to reintegration outcomes in different ways. Land and livestock ownership upon return are for example positively correlated with feelings of reintegration and subjective wealth, whereas community support is crucial to cope with food security. Moreover, we show considerable variation in reintegration outcomes between refugees and IDPs, with refugees showing more positive outcomes when individual characteristics are controlled for. This result calls for more in-depth research on the contextual and structural factors that elucidate the variation across groups going beyond individual level explanations. Overall, the findings emphasise the diversity in reintegration outcomes and identify the role of experiences during displacement and return conditions for the reintegration of refugees and IDPs.

KEYWORDS

Burundi, internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, reintegration, return migration

1 | INTRODUCTION

Conflict-affected countries frequently experience large population movements when formerly displaced populations—internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees—return home. Recent years have shown a growing number of such examples. More than 5.7 million Afghans, a quarter of Afghanistan's population, returned to Afghanistan after 2002 (UNHCR, 2014a. Likewise, Bosnia welcomed 1 million returnees after the 1992–1995 war, and more than 700,000 former refugees returned to Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. The voluntary return of displaced populations is often associated with a positive change towards "normality, peace, and stability" (Chimni, 2002, p. 163). The return of populations residing abroad also legitimises post-conflict states and enhances donor confidence (Black & Gent, 2006; Black & Koser, 1999).

Repatriation is consequently understood as a "central pillar of peace processes" in a post-conflict environment (Black & Gent, 2006: 17). At the same time, however, the return of formerly displaced persons to conflict-affected areas is considered a potential threat to peace, especially when return flows are large, and security challenges may arise if returnees do not sufficiently reintegrate (Crisp, 2000). It is therefore pivotal to understand how conflict-affected countries experience return movements and under what conditions both refugees and IDPs reintegrate successfully.

Because of the potential challenges associated with return movements in unstable contexts, the reintegration of displaced populations has become a priority for policymakers and receives increased academic interest. Despite this surge of interest, the reintegration of the formerly displaced populations remains an understudied phenomenon, with the exception of some qualitative studies (Arowolo, 2000; Ghanem, 2003;

Harild & Christensen, 2010; Omata, 2012; Vorrath, 2008). Moreover, there are particularly few quantitative studies that include both former IDPs and former refugees and none to our knowledge that has looked at both objective and subjective dimensions of reintegration. This cannot be fully explained by the idea that migration research in the Global North overshadows research conducted in the Global South. Practical matters, such as the difficulty of collecting large-scale data in conflict-affected countries, also play a significant role in the persistence of this gap. However, those who have fled from war or political unrest may face additional challenges after returning to their origin country. Their migration experiences, the return conditions in a post-war area, and the challenges of reclaiming belongings may make it more difficult to reintegrate (Ruiz & Vargas-Silva, 2013). The reintegration of IDPs and refugees therefore needs particular attention.

Despite data collection challenges, some studies have explored the reintegration of displaced populations using quantitative data. For example, Fransen, Vargas-Silva, and Ruiz (2017) studied the economic integration of returned refugees in Burundi and found that return households reported lower levels of livestock and lower subjective economic well-being. Similarly, Kondylis (2010) researched the labour market outcomes of displaced individuals (refugees and IDPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Other studies focused specifically on IDPs. O'Reilly (2015), for example, studied the consumption patterns of returned IDPs in Uganda, and Verwimp and Munoz-Mora (2017) looked at food security and nutritional status of IDPs in Burundi. Overall, most studies compare returnees to non-returnees and find that returnees (either former IDPs or former refugees) are worse off than those who did not move during the conflict, although outcomes seem to improve over time. Comparisons between returnees and non-returnees have however been criticised as a comprehensive measure of reintegration (see, e.g., Black & Gent, 2006) and do not reveal why some returnees reintegrate while others do not. The constituents that underlie the reintegration process have received less attention, and it is particularly unclear what factors account for a "successful" reintegration. Moreover, as suggested earlier, studies often focus on singular and objective reintegration indicators, such as consumption and asset ownership, thereby disregarding the complexity of the reintegration process and its various components.

Our objective in this paper is, therefore, to study both the objective and subjective reintegration of displaced populations as well as the constituents that underlie these reintegration outcomes. We simultaneously study the reintegration outcomes of former IDPs and former refugees in this research. Most studies in migration research focus on either internal or international migration, which leads to a fragmented understanding of the drivers and consequences of internal versus international migration and the linkages between both forms of migration (King & Skeldon, 2010). By concurrently studying the reintegration of those who were displaced internationally and those who were displaced within the borders of their nation state, we aim to overcome this dichotomy.

The country case study of this paper is Burundi, a small and conflict-affected country in the African Great Lakes region. Between 1993 and 2005, a civil war took place in Burundi, which resulted in more than 300,000 casualties and the displacement of an estimated 1.2 million people. After the end of conflict in the early 2000s, hundreds of thousands of refugees and IDPs returned home. Several studies have highlighted the reintegration challenges that returnees face, particularly in terms of restitution of land and other property such as housing (Fransen, 2017; Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012). Yet a comprehensive picture of how migration experiences and return conditions are associated with the reintegration of refugees and IDPs in Burundi is still missing. Burundi consistently scores low on the Human Development Index—184 out of 188 countries in 2015—(UNDP, 2011) and therefore offers a challenging environment for displaced populations to reintegrate into. Decades of conflict had left its marks on Burundi society. Per capita income had decreased by nearly 40% in the 1993–2007 period, and the percentage of individuals living below the poverty line of 1 dollar per day increased from 35% in 1993 to 67% in 2006 (World Bank, 2009). Business and employment opportunities were therefore few for all society members, including for the formerly displaced.

To study the reintegration of displaced populations in Burundi, we use recent survey data collected among 189 former IDPs and 194 former refugees across the country. The database is part of a nationally representative household and community survey conducted among 1,500 households. As part of this survey, one return migrant was randomly selected from each household and interviewed in-depth about his or her situation before migration, during migration and upon return. At the time of data collection (2015), the country had been in relative peace for approximately 10 years, and most refugees and IDPs had returned, the majority to their origin communities, making it a timely effort to assess their reintegration (Fransen, 2017). The analyses demonstrate that various factors regarding the migration cycle are related to reintegration outcomes and that there are significant differences in the reintegration experiences of the formerly displaced in Burundi. These findings sustain the claim that returnees are not a uniform group but rather individuals with varying experiences that ultimately affect their reintegration. The findings also confirm the need to study the constituents of the reintegration process in a multidimensional way as we found that subjective and objective reintegration outcomes differed. Differences between refugees and IDPs were apparent as well and became even more pronounced when individual characteristics were controlled for, suggesting that unobserved structural and contextual differences exist between both groups that need to be further explored in future research.

2 | CONSTITUENTS OF REINTEGRATION

There is little consensus among policymakers and academics on how reintegration is defined or operationalized. Multiple variations on the term have been used, including "sustainable reintegration," "effective reintegration," "successful reintegration," and "successful return." United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) defined reintegration as "a process that should result in the disappearance of differences in legal rights and duties between returnees and their compatriots and the equal access of returnees to services, productive assets and opportunities" (UNHCR, 2008, p. 7). Reintegration is thus achieved when all society members alike are able to exercise their rights as citizens and when returnees do not differ significantly from other society members.

The UNHCR definition of reintegration is most often used for research purposes, because it is relatively easy to operationalize and measure (Fransen, 2017). Comparing the situation of returnees with that of other society members also highlights the relative vulnerabilities of returnees and the areas in which they need support. However, this perspective does not reveal why some returnees reintegrate while others do not. A focus on comparing the reintegration outcomes of returnees and non-returnees obscures the view on the reintegration process itself and particularly the factors that contribute to it. Others have therefore stressed the importance of conducting pre- and post-displacement comparisons for return populations (Rogge, 1994) and the use of absolute measurements instead of relative to non-returned populations (Macrae, 1999) when assessing reintegration. For example, even though returnees may be on par with those who never moved, they may face worse living conditions as compared to before their migration or may be in a poor condition from an objective point of view.

Moreover, objective measurements of reintegration do not disclose the perceptions of returnees on their reintegration. The importance of subjective indicators was already recognised in the 1980s when Gmelch (1980, p. 142) distinguished two viewpoints from which reintegration or "readaptation" can be analysed. The first viewpoint is objective—etic—and focuses on whether or not the return migrant has met certain socio-economic criteria. The second viewpoint is subjective—or emic—and relates to the migrant's feelings of reintegration and belonging. Researchers have primarily focused on the first approach (see, e.g., Cassarino, 2004; Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012; Rogge, 1994), and few studies have used variables to measure subjective reintegration. It is however crucial to include subjective assessments in our conceptualization of reintegration that account for the individual perceptions of formerly displaced populations as these may not necessarily align with objective outcomes. Although returnees may have reintegrated from an objective point of view, feelings of reintegration or belonging may be low. Likewise, returnees may be economically worse off than non-return populations, but happy to have returned.

In this paper, we put forward a multidimensional approach to measuring reintegration and include contextually relevant objective and subjective measurements to understand the variation in the experiences of returnees. We particularly focus on conditions during displacement and return conditions as potential variables affecting reintegration. Due to data limitations, we cannot focus on the context of flight, which refers to the type, reasons, and scope of violence that individuals face and that may lead to displacement. As suggested by Lischer (2005), these origins of crisis can help us understand better the experiences of displaced populations and their willingness to return, and illustrate potential diversities within displaced populations. In this regard, understanding the specific context of flight from an individual perspective may be crucial. We address this shortcoming by providing a detailed context of war and insecurity in Burundi in a way that it has affected the communities in the section on displacement, return, and reintegration in Burundi below. Moreover, we argue that the issues we focus on this paper—conditions during displacement and return conditions—are particularly relevant from a policy perspective and can help improve the displaced populations' experiences. By studying the experiences of displaced populations after flight, we aim to put forward the conditions during displacement and upon return that require particular attention to improve the experiences of displaced populations.

2.1 | Conditions during displacement

Several studies have shown that experiences during displacement affect reintegration upon return. First, the duration of displacement can determine the ties of the refugee to their home community and the changes that may have occurred in the origin community (Rogge, 1994). Bascom (2005), for example, writes how Eritrea had changed during the period that refugees were abroad: "Major changes occurred in the relations of production and exchange as well as the means of production associated with land, labour, and capital" (p. 173). These changes affected the reintegration of former refugees into the labour market and their choices of employment. Although being abroad for longer may make it more difficult for returnees to readjust upon return, Cassarino (2004) argues that a sufficient duration abroad may enable returnees to mobilise resources to bring back home. Hence, the duration of displacement is not necessarily negatively correlated with reintegration, as the effect is most likely context specific.

Second, the integration of refugees or IDPs into their areas of settlement during displacement may not only affect the decision of whether to return or not but has been found to play an important role for reintegration as well. The access of displaced populations to legal rights regarding freedom of movement or employment however often differs substantially per country of asylum (see, e.g., Wirth, Defilippis, & Therkelsen, 2014). Betts, Bloom, Kaplan, and Omata (2014) found that in Uganda, where many refugees were given the right to work and relative freedom of movement, refugees became self-reliant and made a positive contribution to the economy of the area hosting the refugees. Harild, Christensen, and Zetter (2015) found that integration into the host country might be a vehicle for the decision to return and a successful reintegration of refugees upon return. In short, engagement in employment during displacement can help individuals save and maintain or even enhance knowledge, skills, and expertise, and consequently positively affect their reintegration (Boyd & Grieco, 2003; Cassarino, 2004).

2.2 | Return conditions

Return conditions play an important role for reintegration. The ability of former refugees or IDPs to acquire assets, to obtain financial resources, to find employment, and to being able to rely on social support are all factors that determine a successful reintegration. However, countries recovering from conflict are frequently politically unstable and impoverished, offering few opportunities for returnees to re-establish their livelihoods (Bascom, 2005; Chimni, 2002; Crisp, 2000). Particularly, the restitution of property in the form of housing and land has been identified as a crucial element of the reintegration process in several countries including Afghanistan (Mac Donald, 2011; Özerdem & Sofizada, 2006), Sudan (Pantuliano, Buchanan-Smith, Murphy, & Mosel, 2008), Uganda, Bosnia-Herzegovina (Williams, 2006), Angola

(Kaun, 2008), and Burundi (Fransen, 2017; Bunte & Monnier, 2011; Rema Ministries, 2012).

The importance of social support from the community and organisations in areas of return has been highlighted by authors as well (see, e.g., Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012; Hammond, 2004; Rogge, 1994). Hammond (2004), for example, describes the essential role of social networks for Ethiopian refugees who returned from Sudan: "The success with which a household was able to provide for its basic needs and to integrate with the community of return was determined by its relations to other households in the community and its ability to call on the resources of others (in food, cash or labor)" (p. 135). In some cases, returnees may be positively received by community members. In Eritrea, for example, experiences of conflict had created a shared identity, in addition to already existing ties of kinship and ethnicity, which facilitated the reintegration of returnees (Bascom, 2005). In other cases, tensions may arise due to grievance or competition over scarce resources (see, e.g., Musahara & Huggins, 2005, for a study on Rwanda). Perception of support among community members may therefore be imperative for reintegration to succeed, particularly in conflict settings such as Burundi, where resources are scarce and decades of conflict have led to weakened social ties.

The location of return in the country of origin plays a key role in the access to material resources and social networks. Many of the Burundian returnees moved back to their origin communities and were supported to do so by international organisations that facilitated transport. Based on eight country case studies, Harild et al. (2015) highlight, however, that many refugees do not return to their origin areas but instead move to urban areas in their origin country in the hope of finding employment, security, and access to services. According to the authors, urban returnees often reside in poor urban areas and struggle to achieve sustainable livelihoods. Urban returnees may face reintegration challenges due to the poor living conditions in urban slums, the lack of social networks, potential discrimination, and the lack of urban infrastructure. Therefore, it is essential to simultaneously study the location of return and its characteristics.

Finally, an important element regarding return and reintegration outcomes is the duration of time since return took place. The initial experiences upon return can be challenging, and returnees often go through an adjustment phase. In a survey of return migrants to a Barbadian village, 53% of respondents were so dissatisfied after their first year at home that they believed they would have been happier abroad. However, after 3 years in Barbados, the level of dissatisfaction dropped to 17% (Gmelch, 1980).

Overall, this discussion on the constituents of reintegration highlights a variety of factors that may affect reintegration outcomes. Most of the research however has focused on some of these dimensions rather than looking at them simultaneously, making it difficult to conclude which of these factors are the most relevant ones for particular displaced populations. In this paper, and building upon previous research, we analyse the associations between a set of factors in a stepwise manner leading to a complete model. This way, without undermining the potential role of each factor for reintegration outcomes, we are able to highlight what issues need the most urgent attention to improve the reintegration outcomes of displaced populations. Moreover, by controlling for the type of displaced population, we question whether differences are apparent between IDPs and refugees.

3 | DISPLACEMENT, RETURN, AND REINTEGRATION IN BURUNDI

Burundi has experienced war and forced migration since the early days of its independence in 1962. The country experienced various episodes of conflict, especially those in 1965, 1972, and 1993, the latter considered to be as one of the most violent civil wars in history (Lemarchand, 1996). Violence in Burundi also led to large-scale displacement. An estimated 1.2 million people were displaced as a result of the 1993 conflict. Neighbouring countries became a refuge for those who fled internationally (Ngaruko & Nkurunziza, 2005). Approximately 700,000 Burundians left the country and sought asylum in Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. Others were displaced within Burundi where they often took residence in IDP camps (Watt, 2008). It is estimated that the number of internally displaced individuals reached 800,000 in 1999 (UNOCHA, 1999). In August 2000, the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreements were signed, but violence continued incidentally until 2005, when new democratic elections took place. Figure 1 depicts the number of Burundian refugees residing in Tanzania, the number of IDPs, and the number of returnees (former refugees) per province in Burundi in May 2000, based on UNHCR data. The figure shows that all Burundian provinces were affected by forced displacement to a certain extent.

Refugees who fled during the 1993 civil war mainly took residence in one of the nine refugee camps in northwestern Tanzania, close to the Burundi border. Here, refugees received vast amounts of financial and material support, but many refugees also faced restrictions on mobility and economic activities (Fransen et al., 2017). Others did not settle in designated refugee areas but integrated into villages in northwestern Tanzania or urban areas and became largely self-sufficient (Hovil, 2009). The majority of IDPs were concentrated in the central provinces of Gitega, Muyinga, Ngozi, Kayanza, and Kirundo. Living conditions in the displacement camps within Burundi were generally poor. The majority of settlements lacked basic services such as clean drinking water and health care facilities (Zeender & McCallin, 2013). Reports suggest that at least 50% of school-aged internally displaced children did not go to school (IRIN, 2002), which was primarily due to a lack of resources as households prioritised basic needs over paying school fees.

Once the conflict ceased in the early 2000s, refugees and IDPs began to return. More than 550,000 formally registered former refugees returned to Burundi between 2000 and September 2014 (see Figure 2, UNHCR, 2014b). Almost half a million refugees were repatriated from Tanzania, another 15,000 came from DRC, and nearly 8,000 returned from Rwanda. Considering that these statistics reflect only registered returnees, the true figure of refugee returnees is probably higher. Few statistics exist on the return of IDPs in Burundi. Security concerns and limited access of international relief agencies during the war restricted data collection on IDPs (U.S. Committee for Refugees [USCR], 1998). Moreover, some groups, fearing violence, did not seek refuge in designated camps as they thought they were more

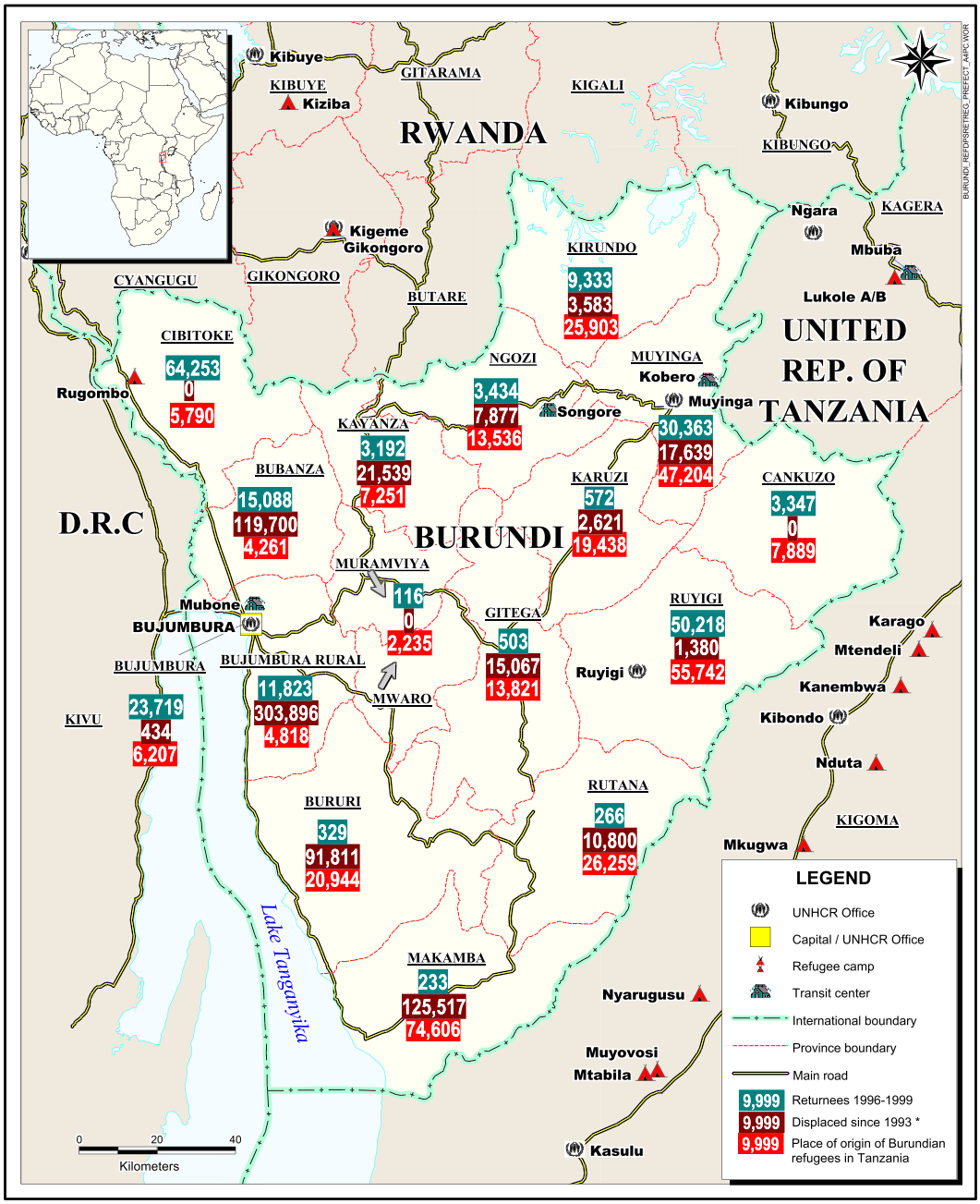

FIGURE 1 Burundian refugees in Tanzania, internally displaced and returnees in Burundi

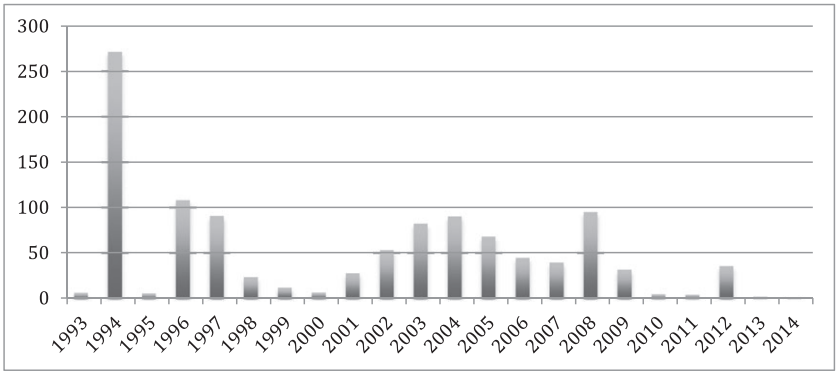

FIGURE 2 Return to Burundi: 1993–2014 (in thousands)

Source: UNHCR, 2002, 2014b.

vulnerable to attacks. Zeender and McCallin (2013) estimated that around 90% of 800,000 IDPs returned to their communities between 1999 and 2005. In 2005, approximately 117,000 were still residing in IDP camps, yet many unrecorded returns took place thereafter. An estimated 157,000 people were internally displaced in Burundi in 2010, and there were approximately 79,200 IDPs in 2015 (IDMC, 2015).

3.1 | Reintegration in Burundi

Burundi offered a challenging environment for those who returned after the war. Four decades of political unrest had left its marks on society. Per capita income decreased by nearly 40% in the 1993–2007 period, and the percentage of individuals living below the poverty line of 1 dollar per day increased from 35% in 1993 to 67% in 2006 (World Bank, 2009). The conflict had also affected social ties, reportedly leading to low levels of interpersonal trust, solidarity, and reciprocity (Brachet & Wolpe, 2005; Uvin, 2009; Vervisch, Vlassenroot, & Braeckman, 2013).

The international community considered the return movement in Burundi a success as the majority of returnees were safely repatriated to their origin communities (Rema Ministries, 2012). Yet returning refugees and IDPs faced several difficulties. Verwimp and Munoz-Mora (2017) found that former IDPs had lower food security than households who had not been displaced. The authors also found that the duration of displacement negatively affected food security but that it improved over time after return. Fransen (2017) found that former refugee households were less likely to own agricultural land and that households with second-generation returnees—the children of former refugees who were born abroad—faced worse living conditions. Likewise, Fransen et al. (2017) illustrated that former refugees owned less livestock and attributed this finding to refugees' high level of inactivity while in displacement. Some particularly vulnerable groups were identified among formerly displaced individuals. Refugees who spent long periods abroad as well as second-generation returnees experienced language barriers, cultural differences, discrimination, and unemployment (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012).

Property restitution posed the largest challenge for reintegration in Burundi, particularly for refugees. According to the 1986 Burundi Land Code, individuals who had been abroad for at least 30 years could no longer claim the rights to their ancestral land (Bunte & Monnier, 2011). Many returnees consequently struggled to reclaim their land, despite the promises regarding property restitution that were stated in the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreements. Women in particular faced problems regaining access to land, as land is inherited from father to son in Burundi (Rema Ministries, 2012). Emotional attachments to family land are strong in Burundi, and land issues consequently sparked disputes (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012; Hovil, 2009; Rema Ministries, 2012). IDPs, on the other hand, were displaced relatively close to their origin communities and therefore often maintained ownership of their land (Zeender & McCallin, 2013).

The Burundian government and international community took various measures to offer protection and support property restitution and integration of refugees and IDPs (Zeender & McCallin, 2013). These measures included the design of new policies, the founding of relevant institutions, and cooperation with international partners. By the early 2000s, the government had acknowledged that durable solutions were needed for the country's recovery through three main channels: return, local integration, and relocation. In the initial phase of return governance, more attention was paid to refugees. Former refugees received food rations, educational items, non-food items such as mosquito nets, cooking materials, and other resources, and cash grants from 2007 onwards (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012). Over time, however, attention shifted towards the needs of IDPs through the adoption of a national strategy for tackling the needs of all vulnerable groups affected by conflict.

Given the country's complex displacement history and the challenges that it poses to returnees, Burundi provides an important context to study how displacement experiences and return conditions impact the reintegration of formerly displaced populations. For those who were displaced during the war, reintegration into Burundian society is challenged by low access to resources that are pivotal to build sustainable livelihoods. It is therefore imperative to understand the factors that contribute to a successful reintegration in such a context.

4 | DATA AND METHODS

We use data collected for the Labour Market Impacts of Forced Migration (LAMFOR) project in Burundi in 2015.[1] For this project, a nationally representative multitopic household and community survey were conducted, for which 1,500 households located in 100 communities across all 17 Burundian provinces were interviewed. The international research team worked with a local research institute to collect the data. Local interviewers were trained and conducted the data during a 3-month period between January and March 2015, while being supervised by one of the project researchers. Data were collected electronically using computer assisted personal interviewing. This data collection method allowed for a close monitoring of the quality of the data during data collection and quick analysis of the data. Data collection permits were derived from each administrative level (national, provincial, communal) in Burundi before starting data collection, and the universities of the international research team provided ethical clearances.

Sampling of households for the interviews was done using a stepwise approach. The primary sampling unit was the *colline* (literally: "hill"), which is the smallest administrative unit in Burundi. One hundred *collines* were selected for enumeration, which were distributed over the 17 provinces of the country according to the demographic weight of each province in the 2008 Burundi Census. Within each *colline*, one *sous-colline* (literally: "sub-hill" or community) was randomly chosen. Finally, within each community, 15 households were randomly selected to conduct the interviews with. A household representative—aged 18 and over—was the main respondent for the interviews, which was in most cases the (self-reported) household head.

Household heads were interviewed on the characteristics and migration histories of household members and the socio-economic conditions of the household. For the purpose of this paper, we use a

[1]The project was funded by UK Department for International Development and the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA). See www.econforced.com for more information.

subsample of the data, which consisted of former IDPs and refugees who were interviewed in-depth about their migration experiences. Per household, one former IDP and one former refugee—if there were any in the household—were randomly selected for the interview. To make sure that the person had recollections of their displacement, individuals were selected that were at least 18 years of age in 1993, when the civil war erupted in Burundi. Respondents were consequently at least 40 years of age in 2015. Displacement—internal or international—was defined in the survey as lasting at least 3 months to limit the sample to those who had significant and relatively longer-term displacement experiences. We use the term "refugee" in a rather broad sense in this paper, as opposed to adhering to the formal definition of a refugee as defined in international law. Former refugees are defined here as individuals who reported to have migrated abroad due to fears for their safety during the conflict and who returned afterwards. Approximately 50% of the respondents indicated that they had obtained formal refugee status in the country of destination. The interview questions mainly concerned the latest migration episode, although information on previous displacements was collected as well. After data cleaning, the sample consisted of 189 former IDPs and 194 former refugees.

The respondents in the sample were on average 49 years old, and the sample consisted of an equal amount of men and women (see Table 1). The majority—72%—was married, approximately 50% was literate, and respondents had received an average of 1.6 years of schooling before displacement. Ninety-two percent of the formerly displaced were the head of their household. Some interesting differences appear between former refugees and former IDPs. IDPs were generally older, more likely to be female and less likely to be married. Literacy rates and years of education before displacement did not differ between IDPs and refugees.

The majority of former refugees in our sample (56%) resided in Tanzania during displacement, followed by Rwanda (21%) and the DRC (19%). Five percent of the respondents did not disclose this information. Most of the former refugees who had fled to Tanzania originated from Burundi's eastern and southern provinces, which border Tanzania. The majority of former refugees who had sought refuge in Rwanda and the DRC came from the northern Burundian provinces. Most former IDPs resided in the interior of the country or in the areas surrounding the capital Bujumbura at the time the interviews took place. These statistics align with nationally representative data provided by UNHCR such as those depicted in Figure 1. Overall, these figures indicate that most of the displaced in our sample travelled relatively short distances. Many of those who resided close to a border when conflict erupted crossed the border, whereas those who resided in the interior of the country became internally displaced.

The vast majority of former IDPs and former refugees in our sample returned to their origin communities. Eighty percent of the former refugees in our sample returned to their origin community, and of those who returned to a different community, 57% returned to a community in a neighbouring village or another village in the same province. Almost all former refugee respondents (96%) reported to have returned to Burundi voluntarily. In the former IDP sample, 90% had returned to their origin communities. Those who had returned to a different village had returned to either a neighbouring village or another village in the same province in 79% of the cases. These findings are in line with those of previous studies who found that most formerly displaced returned to their origin communities in Burundi (Fransen, 2017; Fransen & Kuschminder, 2012; Hovil, 2009). According to these authors, most individuals returned to their origin communities because of their attachment to and reliance on agricultural family land.

4.1 | Measuring reintegration and its constituents

Our subjective indicators include feelings of reintegration and subjective wealth. Feelings of reintegration were measured with the question "Now that you have returned, do you feel a part of your community?" with answer categories ranging from one (*not at all*) to five (*completely*). Few respondents indicated not feeling part of the community, and so we recoded the answer categories into a 3-point scale, with Category 1 grouping the categories "not at all" and "somewhat," Category 2 indicating that the respondent felt mostly part of the community, and Category 3 indicating that the respondent felt completely part of the community. Second, subjective wealth was measured with the question "Which description is closest to how you see this household's current economic situation?" Because few respondents opted for the extreme categories, we recoded this variable into a dummy variable, with zero indicating that the household found it very difficult or difficult and one indicating that the household was coping, living comfortably, or living very comfortably. Food security was measured by asking about the frequency with which the household experienced difficulties in meeting food needs. We recoded this variable into a dummy variable, with zero indicating that the household experienced difficulties once every few months or never and one indicating that the household experienced difficulties on daily, weekly, or monthly basis.

For the reintegration constituents, we make a distinction between displacement experiences and return conditions. First, we include the

TABLE 1 Individual characteristics

	All formerly displaced		Former IDPs		Former refugees		*t* test
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Age	48.99	13.63	53.56	11.45	44.55	14.14	−6.84***
Male	0.50	0.50	0.44	0.50	0.56	0.50	2.41**
Married	0.72	0.45	0.65	0.48	0.78	0.41	2.91***
Literate	0.51	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.52	0.50	0.25
Years of education prior to displacement	1.68	2.53	1.67	2.48	1.69	2.58	0.09

Note. Based on 383 observations. IDPs = internally displaced persons.

years that individuals spent in displacement, either in Burundi or abroad, the type of residence they resided in during displacement—camp based or not—and whether or not the individual was allowed to work during displacement. Second, return conditions comprise whether the individual returned to an urban or rural area, whether the individual returned to the community he or she left during the war, and the number of years that passed since return. Furthermore, we include land and livestock ownership and whether the household received any organisational support. We also include a measurement of perception of support among villagers or neighbours that referred to the extent that the formerly displaced respondents felt that individuals helped each other out in the community or neighbourhood. This item was measured with the question "How well do people in your village/neighbourhood help each other out?" with response categories ranging from 1 (*never helping*) to 5 (*always helping*).

4.2 | Analysis

The analysis is conducted in two parts. We first explore the displacement and return experiences of the formerly displaced in our sample using descriptive statistics. These statistics will provide detailed insights into displacement experiences and will highlight the differences therein across and between former IDPs and refugees. Second, we show the results of stepwise regression analyses in which we study the constituents of the reintegration process separately. In these analyses, we control for individual variables such as age, gender, marital status, and literacy of the former IDP or refugee. The years of education obtained before migration is used as a proxy for predisplacement variations in economic well-being. In all tables, the results can be interpreted by "*" for significance at the 10% level, "**" for significance at the 5% level, and "***" at significance at the 1% level. In the regression analyses, we cluster standard errors at the community level, and we control for province dummies.

5 | RESULTS

5.1 | Descriptive analysis: Reintegration outcomes

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics on the subjective and objective variables, both for the entire sample of those formerly displaced and for former refugees and IDPs separately. First, we look at food security and employment to have an objective view on the reintegration of the formerly displaced. The statistics show that 44% of the formerly displaced were food secure. Former IDPs were less likely to be food secure than refugees, although the difference is not statistically significant. The majority of respondents in our sample was employed in agriculture when the data were collected. Seventy-eight and 73% of former IDPs and former refugees were engaged in agriculture, respectively. Employment patterns also vary between former refugees and IDPs. Seventeen percent of former refugees was in paid employment or owned a business, compared to 14% among former IDPs. Overall, although employment is a commonly used indicator to assess objective reintegration (Alquezar Sabadie, Avato, Bardak, Panzica, & Popova, 2010; Kırdar, 2009; Kilic, Carletto, Davis, & Zezza, 2009), we do not focus on employment in this paper considering the low share of employed individuals and households' reliance on land rather than paid employment in Burundi.

Second, in terms of subjective integration, the descriptive statistics show that feelings of reintegration, measured on a scale from one to three, are high and do not differ between former IDPs and former refugees. However, the relatively high standard deviations in both groups suggest that there are considerable within-group differences. The scores on the second subjective variable—subjective wealth—also show a varied response. Fifty percent of the respondents reported feeling positively about their wealth. Again, refugees and IDPs did not score differently.

Overall, these descriptive comparisons show that subjective and objective reintegration are not necessarily congruent among the respondents in our sample. Those formerly displaced felt part of their community but scored worse on subjective wealth, and despite feeling reintegrated, the majority of the sample suffered from food insecurity. Furthermore, former IDPs and refugees did not have different reintegration outcomes suggesting they can be further treated as a single group of returnees.

5.2 | Descriptive analysis: Constituents of reintegration

Table 3 shows an overview of the displacement experiences and return conditions of the formerly displaced in our sample. First, the descriptive statistics on displacement experiences show that the formerly displaced spent an average of 4 years abroad. The majority did not reside in a camp during displacement, and approximately half of the formerly displaced—55%—worked while being displaced.

TABLE 2 Reintegration outcomes of IDPs and refugees

Reintegration variables	All formerly displaced		Former IDPs		Former refugees		
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t* test
Objective reintegration							
Food security	0.45	0.50	0.42	0.49	0.48	0.50	1.10
Self-employed in agriculture	0.76	0.43	0.79	0.41	0.73	0.45	−1.40
In paid employment or own business	0.15	0.36	0.14	0.34	0.17	0.38	0.88
Subjective reintegration							
Feelings of reintegration	2.34	0.71	2.32	0.67	2.35	0.74	0.39
Positive subjective wealth	0.50	0.50	0.52	0.50	0.48	0.50	−0.76

Note. Based on 383 observations. IDPs = internally displaced persons.

TABLE 3 The constituents of the reintegration outcomes

	All formerly displaced		Former IDPs		Former refugees		*t* test
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	
Displacement experiences							
Years of displacement	3.30	5.46	1.40	1.83	5.16	6.97	7.19***
Camp during	0.26	0.44	0.46	0.50	0.07	0.25	−9.65***
Work during	0.55	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.49	1.98**
Return conditions							
Urban residence	0.04	0.21	0.04	0.19	0.05	0.22	0.69
Returned to the same community	0.89	0.31	0.93	0.26	0.86	0.35	−2.07**
Years since return	16.98	5.04	17.67	3.56	16.31	6.09	−2.66***
Land ownership	0.96	0.19	0.98	0.14	0.94	0.23	−1.80*
Large livestock ownership	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.50	0.45	0.50	−2.00**
Organisational support	0.44	0.50	0.37	0.48	0.51	0.50	2.68***
Perception of support among community members	3.10	1.112	3.16	1.15	3.05	1.10	−0.98

Note. Based on 383 observations. IDPs = internally displaced persons.

Displacement experiences differ significantly across groups. Former IDPs experienced significantly shorter displacement periods were more likely to reside in a camp and were less likely to work during displacement.

Second, return conditions also differ significantly across groups. Most returnees returned to their origin communities, which corroborates findings from previous studies conducted in Burundi (see, e.g., Fransen, 2017). However, return to the origin community was more common for IDPs than for refugees. Ninety-three percent of IDPs returned to their origin communities, whereas 86% of refugees did so. The individuals returned on average 17 years ago, but IDPs returned slightly earlier. This is most likely due to the distance associated with migration—IDPs were generally closer to home than refugees—and the fact that refugees needed to cross an international border to return.

Land ownership was common for all respondents but slightly more common for IDPs. This difference may also be due to the shorter average displacement period of IDPs. As described earlier, refugees who spent long periods abroad often encountered problems regaining access to their land (Fransen, 2017; Rema Ministries, 2012). Ownership of livestock was common for approximately half of the sample and slightly more common for former IDPs. Combined with the findings on agricultural land, and based on the findings on employment (Table 2—previous section), this indicates that the livelihoods of former IDPs are based on agriculture and herding to a larger extent than those of former refugees. Former refugees were more likely to receive organisational support after return than IDPs. Former IDPs and former refugees reported equal amounts of support from village members. The average score on this variable was three, which corresponds to the answer category "villagers sometimes helped."

5.3 | Main analysis: Reintegration constituents

Table 4 shows the results for the subjective and objective reintegration outcomes for the full sample of those formerly displaced. First, looking at the results on food security, we observe that return conditions are more strongly associated with food security than displacement experiences, which lose their significance in the final model. Particularly, livestock ownership, organisational support, and the years since return are all positively related to food security. Moreover, those who have returned to urban areas struggle less with food security compared to returnees in rural areas. In the final model, we also observe that former refugees are significantly more likely to be food secure compared to former IDPs.

Regarding feelings of reintegration, Model 7 suggests that return conditions are particularly important, but the effect of many variables diminish when control variables are included in the final model. Surprisingly, in the full model, organisational support from non-governmental organization (NGO) or international organisations is negatively related to feelings of reintegration. It is not clear what mechanism is driving this relationship. It could be a matter of reversed causality in the sense that those who are, or feel, less reintegrated receive more organisational support. Another explanation could be that NGO support may lead to stigmatisation for returnees or to tensions between returnees and non-returnees in the community. Fransen and Kuschminder (2012), for example, reported of cases where non-returnees felt resentful when returnees received new houses as part of UNHCR's house-building program, because the new houses were better than existing houses in the community. Unfortunately, the limitations of our data do not allow us to disentangle the relationship between NGO support and subjective reintegration in more detail.

The years that the person spent in displacement is positively related to feelings of reintegration. This is an interesting finding that most likely reflects the positive attitude of the formerly displaced who spent a long time away from their origin communities. It is also important to note that former refugees and males experience higher feelings of reintegration.

In terms of subjective wealth, displacement conditions are particularly important compared to results in other models. The length of displacement is negatively related to subjective wealth, suggesting that those who spent longer periods abroad experience more economic difficulties. However, the quality of time spent displaced matters. Namely, those who have worked while displaced are significantly more

TABLE 4 Constituents of reintegration

	Food security (logit)				Feelings of reintegration (OLS)				Subjective wealth (logit)			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Former refugee (ref. = IDP)	0.26			0.31***	0.18*			0.08*	−0.39			0.50***
	(0.28)			(0.10)	(0.10)			(0.04)	(0.28)			(0.14)
Displacement experiences												
Years of displacement		0.20*		−0.01		0.03		0.01**		0.10		−0.03**
		(0.11)		(0.01)		(0.03)		(0.00)		(0.11)		(0.01)
Camp during		0.14		0.14		−0.01		0.09		0.13		−0.05
		(0.26)		(0.27)		(0.09)		(0.11)		(0.28)		(0.26)
Work during		0.42**		0.17		0.12		−0.03		0.32		0.85***
		(0.20)		(0.33)		(0.07)		(0.11)		(0.23)		(0.31)
Return conditions												
Urban residence			0.98*	0.19			−0.33***	0.01			−0.11	0.21
			(0.58)	(0.29)			(0.11)	(0.11)			(0.75)	(0.31)
Return to the same community			−0.19	0.28			−0.25**	0.17			−0.32	−0.47
			(0.38)	(0.34)			(0.11)	(0.12)			(0.38)	(0.33)
Years since return			−0.20	0.24*			0.09	0.02			0.28	0.30*
			(0.30)	(0.13)			(0.10)	(0.04)			(0.29)	(0.15)
Land ownership			1.01	0.23			0.65***	0.01			0.63	−0.13
			(0.72)	(0.31)			(0.17)	(0.12)			(0.69)	(0.33)
Livestock ownership			0.53**	0.43**			−0.15	0.13			1.28***	0.24
			(0.25)	(0.21)			(0.09)	(0.09)			(0.27)	(0.27)
Organisational support			−0.28	1.36**			−0.05	−0.43***			−0.28	0.64
			(0.25)	(0.62)			(0.08)	(0.16)			(0.25)	(0.77)
Perception of support among community members			0.32***	−0.02			0.08**	−0.22			0.51***	−0.18
			(0.10)	(0.40)			(0.03)	(0.15)			(0.13)	(0.42)
Control variables												
Age	−0.01			0.22	0.01**			0.12	−0.02			0.95**
	(0.01)			(0.34)	(0.00)			(0.12)	(0.01)			(0.43)
Male	0.30			1.03	0.12			0.83***	0.25			0.60
	(0.25)			(0.66)	(0.09)			(0.24)	(0.24)			(0.67)
Married	0.30			0.52*	−0.04			−0.20*	0.82***			1.30***
	(0.33)			(0.28)	(0.10)			(0.11)	(0.26)			(0.30)
Literate	0.33			−0.40	0.04			−0.08	0.43*			−0.26
	(0.26)			(0.26)	(0.09)			(0.10)	(0.26)			(0.29)
Prior education (in years)	0.09	0.14***	0.13***	0.09	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03*	0.05	0.13***	0.13**	0.08
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Observations		381	381	381	381	383	383	383	383	383	383	383
R-squared		0.09	0.10	0.09	0.14	0.09	0.15	0.11	0.17	0.06	0.15	0.09

Note. Standard errors are clustered at the community level, and we control for province dummies. IDPs = internally displaced persons; OLS = ordinary least squares.

likely to feel better about their wealth. This finding is in line with previous studies that stressed the importance of access to income-generating activities during displacement (Betts et al., 2014; Fransen et al., 2017; Wirth et al., 2014). Moreover, controlling for all other variables, the years since return seems to be the most important return condition. The longer ago a person has returned, the higher their subjective wealth is, indicating that most probably subjective wealth improves over time. This result is also confirmed by previous studies conducted in Burundi (Fransen et al., 2017; Verwimp & Munoz-Mora, 2017). Moreover, former refugees and married returnees seem to have a more positive subjective wealth.

6 | CONCLUSION

Despite the scale of return and the importance of the reintegration of formerly displaced populations in conflict-affected areas, reintegration experiences remain poorly understood. The factors that constitute a successful return are particularly understudied, and it is therefore unclear who reintegrates and why. In this paper, we aimed to disentangle the constituents of the reintegration of formerly displaced populations—both IDPs and refugees—in Burundi. Earlier studies conducted in Burundi highlighted that both types of returnees fare worse than populations that did not move during conflict (Fransen, 2017;Fransen

et al., 2017 ; Verwimp & Munoz-Mora, 2017). These findings are important, particularly from a policy perspective, but do not give insights into the factors that contribute to reintegration. In this study, we made a distinction between displacement experiences and return conditions as factors potentially impacting reintegration. We studied both subjective and objective reintegration outcomes to highlight the multidimensionality of the reintegration concept and compared the reintegration outcomes of former IDPs and former refugees to give insights into how their different migration trajectories may have affected their reintegration.

Our findings reveal substantial reintegration differences within the sample of the formerly displaced. For example, 55% of respondents experienced problems feeding their households whereas 45% of respondents reported to be relatively food secure. Likewise, half of the sample was positive about their economic situation, whereas the other half was not. These findings confirm the need to study the factors associated with a successful reintegration and to go beyond simple comparisons of returnees and non-returnees. Furthermore, the analyses showed that subjective and objective reintegration do not necessarily go hand in hand. Whereas the majority of respondents felt very much part of their community, they nevertheless experienced severe challenges such as food insecurity. This observation endorses the use of both subjective and objective measurements of reintegration. Reintegration should be measured using a range of objective and subjective indicators that are appropriate for the local context to fully account for the experiences and perceptions of formerly displaced populations.

Several factors related to the migration cycle were found to play a significant role in the reintegration of the formerly displaced. For example, we illustrated that being able to work during displacement is positively associated with subjective wealth upon return. Allowing the displaced to work and providing freedom of movement are thus important reintegration determinants after return. Furthermore, livestock ownership after return was particularly important for food security, whereas land ownership was strongly related to feelings of reintegration. These findings endorse the importance of property restitution in a conflict-affected setting and illustrate the emotional attachment to land in the Burundi context. Reintegration outcomes, and particularly subjective wealth, did seem to improve over time, which supports previous studies conducted in Burundi (Fransen et al., 2017; Verwimp & Munoz-Mora, 2017) and shows that reintegration is a long-term process.

Perception of support among community members was important for reintegration as well, but we found contradicting results regarding the role of organisational support. The extent to which displaced populations reintegrate is affected by the assistance they receive upon return, but responses to large-scale return of displaced populations vary across regions and countries (Harild & Christensen, 2010). Particularly, issues of land rights and property restitution have challenged the assistance for returnees, as has been the case in Burundi. Such variations may explain why organisational support seems to support food security but not subjective integration. Further research should analyse the dynamics of organisational support and how this affects objective as well as subjective outcomes of reintegration with more scrutiny.

Finally, some individuals had worse reintegration outcomes than others. Particularly female respondents felt less reintegrated, which is most likely a result of lower access to land for female returnees in Burundi. The land inheritance system in Burundi is based on father-son lineages, which makes it particularly difficult for female returnees to retrieve family land (Rema Ministries, 2012). Former IDPs and former refugees also had different reintegration outcomes. When controlling for all other factors, including individual characteristics and experiences during and after displacement, former refugees were more likely to be food secure, felt more reintegrated, and reported higher subjective wealth than former IDPs. This finding highlights the importance of studying internal and international migration experiences simultaneously (cf. King & Skeldon, 2010), in order to highlight potential differences and similarities in the experiences of different migrant groups. Due to the small sample sizes in each group, we were not able to study the constituents of the reintegration of former IDPs and former refugees in Burundi separately. However, an important contribution of our study is that it highlights that reintegration outcomes differ significantly between both groups, which provides an incentive for future studies to explore the factors underlying the reintegration processes of IDPs and refugees. This implies that data collection efforts should collect information on both groups simultaneously so that their reintegration experiences can be compared.

Burundi provided an important context to study reintegration outcomes among formerly displaced populations because of the country's complex displacement history and challenging “post-war” environment. The recent political crisis in Burundi also elucidates the necessity to study the role of reintegration of displaced populations for sustainable peace. Our study highlights the heterogeneity of formerly displaced populations and demonstrates that the full migration cycle should be considered when assessing reintegration. Moreover, the differences found between former refugees and former IDPs indicate that researchers, policymakers, and practitioners should not be misled by descriptive results. Returnees may have similar outcomes at a first glance, but we find large between-group differences when individual characteristics are controlled for. Hence, an important conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that individual-level experiences need to be contextualised and situated within a wider context of return and reintegration processes.

Several policy recommendations can be derived from this study. In line with Vorrath's (2008) proposal, it is important that political actors have a good understanding of the background of the individuals who were displaced to prevent the long-term reintegration of displaced populations from turning into a socio-political crisis. Our analysis highlights particularly that more attention needs to be paid to the reintegration process of IDPs who may receive significantly less support than refugees (Harild & Christensen, 2010). Moreover, the issue of property restitution came forward as a key strategy to support the reintegration of formerly displaced individuals. At the same time, support should be provided with scrutiny. As our research highlighted, receiving organisational support was associated with lower levels of subjective reintegration, potentially due to issues of stigmatisation of formerly displaced individuals. Considering that those who fled during war are a distinct group within society, it is important to avoid social exclusion while providing financial and material support (Vorrath, 2008).

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