• What is the long-term sustainability of return migration?
• How can we measure this?
• Waves of civil conflict
• 1993 – 2000 civil war: 300,000 casualties and 1 million displaced
• 600,000 returnees in a ten-year period since early 2000s
• Many second-generation returnees
• Context of poverty, population pressure, land scarcity and damaged social ties
Aims of this paper

• A study into the wider economic sustainability of international refugee return in Burundi

• Different levels of analysis and using a multidimensional approach
  • Measured at the household and community level simultaneously
  • Objective and subjective indicators
Data (2011 & 2015)

- Nationally representative household and community panel data
- 1,500 households, 7,986 household members, in 100 communities

(funder: Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Data (2011)

- 447 (5.99%) were first-generation returnees
- 188 (2.52%) were second-generation returnees
- More than 90% returned to their origin communities
Return migration in Burundi (2011)
## Results: Comparing households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>First-generation return households (n = 244)</th>
<th>Second-generation return households (n = 75)</th>
<th>Non-return households (n = 1148)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land ownership (1 = yes)</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living conditions (index)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food security(^1)</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective wealth</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective change in wealth</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Effects on communities

• Communities with higher proportions of returnees had lower food security

• Communities with more second-generation returnees had lower living conditions and scored lower on subjective wealth and changes in subjective wealth over the past years
Main findings

• At both the household and community level, the sustainability of return in Burundi can be questioned.

• Households: lower land ownership, food security, and subjective wealth
• Communities: higher food insecurity, lower living conditions, lower subjective wealth

• Reintegration of second-generation returnees is especially challenging

> Most households are in very vulnerable positions
Conclusion

• Support for taking a wider view on measuring sustainability of return
  – Focus on households and communities
  – Objective and subjective views
  – Focus on different groups

• Returnees are not a homogeneous group > tailored policies

• Need for policies that simultaneously address humanitarian needs and economic and social development

• Community based support
Thank you

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Further reading:
