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DISASTER



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INTRA-ACP DISASTER RISK REDUCTION PROGRAMME

Implemented with UNDP



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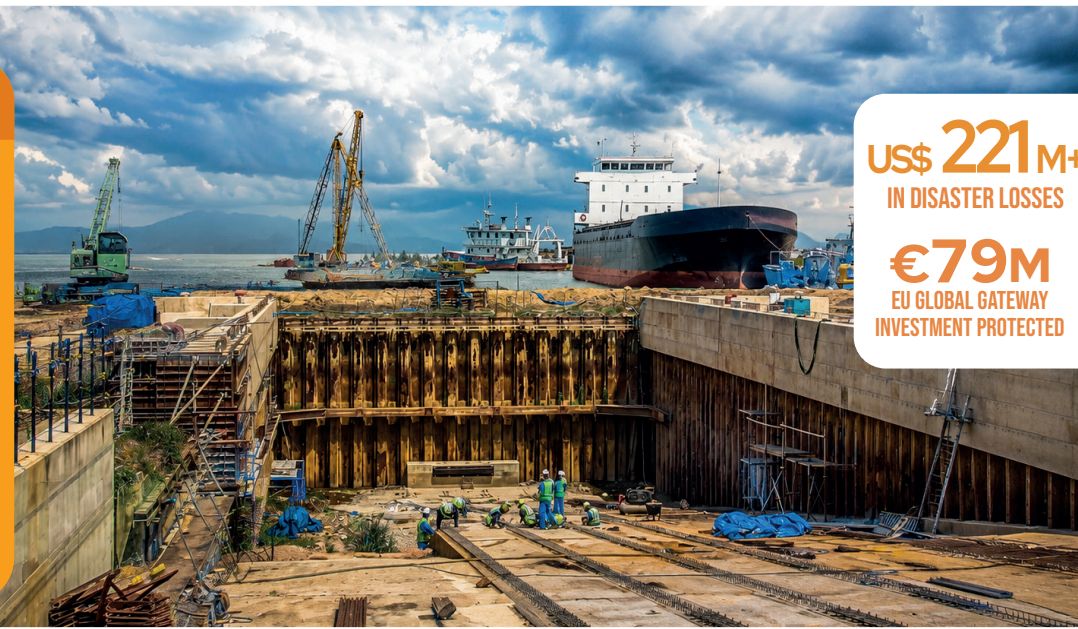
## CASE STUDY

POST-DISASTER

# From crisis to resilience: how disaster risk evidence protects Burundi's EU Global Gateway investment

When the 2023–2024 El Niño floods inundated the Port of Bujumbura – a vital hub for the EU's €79 million Global Gateway Lake Tanganyika Transport Corridor – the stakes became clear. This project supported the Government of Burundi in conducting a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment and a detailed climate engineering study of the port, directly protecting and informing the GG investment. The result: the first-ever climate-resilient design for Burundi's most critical infrastructure, under construction and on track for delivery in 2026.

US\$ 221 M+  
IN DISASTER LOSSES  
€79 M  
EU GLOBAL GATEWAY  
INVESTMENT PROTECTED



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**01 COUNTRY/REGION/LOCATION**  
Burundi – Bujumbura and surrounding provinces; focus on flood-affected communities and the Port of Bujumbura

**02 RISK ADRESSED**  
Floods, droughts, landslides; El Niño-amplified climate shocks; infrastructure vulnerability; community displacement

**03 IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD/TIMEFRAME**  
January 2022 – December 2027 with PDNA conducted February–March 2025 and the detailed engineering study on the Port of Bujumbura completed by March 2026.

**04 ACTORS/IMPLEMENTING AND LOCAL PARTNERS**  
UNDP, EU, World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), UN agencies, Government of Burundi (Ministry of Interior and Public Security, National Statistics Institute, DRR National Platform)

**05 KEY BENEFICIARIES**  
Burundi population (estimated 13 million people), National institutions, port infrastructure systems.

### CONTEXT AND CHALLENGE

Burundi faces some of the most severe climate risks in sub-Saharan Africa. Floods, droughts and landslides strike repeatedly, disrupting livelihoods, damaging infrastructure and displacing communities. The 2023–2024 El Niño shocks caused Lake Tanganyika's water levels to rise sharply. Floodwaters spread across Bujumbura and surrounding areas, submerging homes, roads and critical infrastructure. Along the lakeshore, entire sections of the port of Bujumbura – a vital trade hub – and adjacent facilities were inundated.

Transport systems were hit hard, accruing over \$18 million in losses, with the Port of Bujumbura – the lynchpin of the EU's €79 million Global Gateway Lake Tanganyika Transport Corridor investment – among the most affected. Structural vulnerabilities, limited data systems and weak risk governance prevent recovery from translating into lasting resilience, and risk rendering large-scale infrastructure investments obsolete before their lifecycle is complete.

### WHY THIS ACTION MATTERS?

- Recent floods exposed the vulnerability of Burundi's critical infrastructure and the **strategic importance of the Port of Bujumbura** for national stability, regional trade and supply chains.
- **The PDNA and recovery programme established the evidence base for climate-resilient "build back better" investments**, including the €79 million EU Global Gateway Lake Tanganyika Transport Corridor project co-financed by the EU and AfDB.
- **Strengthening climate risk data and recovery planning is essential** to ensure that major infrastructure investments are designed for future climate realities rather than outdated climate.

See the intervention and results on page 2 →



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## INTERVENTION AND APPROACH

UNDP supported Burundi through an integrated approach combining post-disaster assessment, institutional strengthening and recovery planning. **A comprehensive PDNA** (February–March 2025), led by the Ministry of Interior with **UNDP facilitation and support from the EU, World Bank and AfDB**, evaluated damage and losses across social, productive and infrastructure sectors – including DRR, gender and livelihoods. Findings guided the design of a National Recovery and Resilience Programme aligned with ‘build back better’ principles. Institutional capacity was strengthened through training of senior officials on loss and damage methodologies. In parallel, and in direct

response to the threat posed to **the EU’s €79 million Global Gateway Lake Tanganyika Transport Corridor**, UNDP carried out a detailed engineering study on the Port of Bujumbura. Over six months, a multidisciplinary team of civil engineers, hydraulic specialists and climate modellers used drone surveys, flood modelling and scenario analysis to assess how the port would respond to rising lake levels and extreme weather under different climate futures. The study delivers practical, costed interventions – from drainage redesign and dike reinforcement to future expansion plans – that embed resilience into the GG investment, ensuring it serves Burundi’s economy for decades to come.

## PROGRAMME OUTPUT ALIGNMENT



### OUTPUT 1.2:

Risk-informed development planning and budgeting (DRR enabling environment)

**OUTPUT 2.2:** Strengthened post-disaster recovery capacities – post-disaster (PDNA, recovery planning, Port of Bujumbura resilience study)



*I am pleased that this study offers innovative, context appropriate solutions and outlines concrete actions to reduce the port’s vulnerability, strengthen its adaptive capacity, and protect people and assets.*

**COLONEL OF POLICE RICHARD KARORERO**

Director of Planning and Studies

Ministry of the Interior, Community Development and Public Security

## RESULTS AND CHANGE

- 1 PDNA estimated over USD 221M in disaster losses through the first comprehensive multi-sector assessment led nationally.
- 2 A National Recovery and Resilience Programme was developed based on PDNA evidence.
- 3 A climate-risk engineering study for the Port of Bujumbura informed the resilient design of the €79M EU-AfDB Global Gateway Lake Tanganyika Corridor project, now integrating flood protection and drainage adaptation measures.
- 4 Climate scenario planning was integrated into infrastructure design to ensure long-term resilience even under uncertain conditions.
- 5 The first-ever climate resilience standards for the Port of Bujumbura were established and integrated into ongoing construction specifications.
- 6 The initiative provides a replicable model to link DRR governance with Global Gateway infrastructure investments across the region.

### EARLY CONCRETE UPTAKE IN ONGOING INVESTMENTS:

#### 1. EU GLOBAL GATEWAY - LAKE TANGANYIKA CORRIDOR

PDNA and port engineering findings were integrated into the climate-resilient rehabilitation of the Port of Bujumbura, including flood protection, quay rehabilitation and drainage adaptation. The project, co-financed by the EU, AfDB and Burundi, strengthens 3 strategic trade routes linking Burundi, DRC, Tanzania and Zambia.

#### 2. NATIONAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PROGRAMME

PDNA findings now guide national recovery priorities, resource mobilisation and discussions with the EU, World Bank and AfDB on future Global Gateway investments in the Lake Tanganyika corridor.



## KEY ENABLERS OF SUCCESS

 **Government ownership and national leadership of PDNA process**

 **Strong multi-partner coordination (EU, World Bank, AfDB, UN)**

 **DRR evidence directly protecting EU Global Gateway investment (€79M Lake Tanganyika Corridor)**

 **Integrated risk governance + recovery programming approach**



SOURCES

Progress Report, FED2021/429-594 (2025) | UNDP story: “Turning the tide: Building a resilient port for Burundi” (May 2026) <https://www.undp.org/european-union/stories/turning-tide-building-resilient-port-burundi>

Detailed engineering study on the Port of Bujumbura

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