

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF

BURUNDI

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In recent years, Burundi, which is a small Central African country, has been known to produce columbium (niobium)-tantalum ore, gold, kaolin, tin, and tungsten ore, most of which has been designated for export. Additionally, the country has been known to produce limestone, peat, sand, and gravel for domestic consumption.

Burundi also has notable resources of nickel and vanadium. Musongati, which was the largest deposit, was reported to have a nickel laterite resource of about 185 million metric tons (Mt) at a grade of 1.31% nickel, 0.08% cobalt, and 0.17% copper (0.8% nickel cut-off grade). The Nyabikere deposit has a laterite resource of 46 Mt at a grade of 1.45% nickel. The Waga deposit has resources estimated to be 35 Mt at a grade of 1.38% nickel. The deposit of vanadiferous titanio-magnetite in the Mukanda-Buhoro region has resources of nearly 10 Mt at a grade of 0.63% vanadium. A phosphate deposit in the region of Matongo was estimated to have resources of 17 Mt at a grade of 11% phosphorous pentoxide (African Mining, 1998). Deposits of uranium have also been discovered (Worldinformation.com, 2000, Burundi country profile, accessed March 1, 2001 at URL <http://www.worldinformation.com/World/Africa/Burundi/profile.asp?country=257>).

Primary source production data for these commodities has been largely unavailable in recent years, owing mainly to the civil unrest and social strife from 1993 to 1999. These conditions and economic sanctions imposed on Burundi by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia have negatively affected the country's

economy and hindered foreign investment (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, p. 83).

In 1999, Burundi's gross domestic product (GDP) amounted to about \$4.2 billion at purchasing power parity; this was a decrease of about 1% compared with that of 1998. Industry accounted for about 17% of the GDP (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, p. 83). In 1998, Burundi reportedly produced about 1.5 metric tons (t) of gold and about 10 t of tungsten contained in ore (British Geological Survey, 2000, p. 95, 271).

The country's energy base comprised hydroelectric power (98.43%) and fossil fuels (1.57%). Burundi's transportation network comprised about 15,000 kilometers (km), of which slightly more than 1,000 km was paved. Waterways were Lake Tanganyika with a major port at Bujumbura (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, p. 83).

The outlook for the country's minerals industry and economy appeared static, pending resolution of the country's political and social issues.

References Cited

- African Mining, 1998, Burundi's minerals get a second look: African Mining, v. 3, no. 5, September-October, p. 89-92.
- British Geological Survey, 2000, World mineral statistics 1994-98: Keyworth, Nottingham, British Geological Survey, 297 p.
- U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, Burundi: World Factbook 2000, p. 82-83.

TABLE 1
BURUNDI: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/

Commodity		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000 e/
Clays, kaolin	metric tons	1,000 e/	1,000 e/	1,000 e/	1,000 e/	1,000
Columbite-tantalum, mine output, ore (30% Ta ₂ O ₅):						
Gross weight	kilograms	60,000	--	36,000	7,000	7,000
Ta ₂ O ₅ content	do.	18,000	--	10,800	2,100	2,100
Gold, mine output, Au content	do.	2,200 e/	1,500 e/	1,500 e/	1,500 e/	1,500
Lime		50 e/	50 e/	50 e/	50 e/	50
Peat		10	10	5	5	5
Tin, mine output, Sn content	metric tons	25 2/	(3/)	23	10	10
Tungsten, mine output, W content	do.	16 e/	16 e/	10 e/	10 e/	10

e/ Estimated.

1/ Includes data available through September 2000.

2/ Reported figure.

3/ Less than 1/2 unit.