

SAVE LIFE MAKE DIFFERENCE

Bujumbura Burundi

savelifemakedifference@gmail.com

Project report

Protecting people against lightning in Burundi involves installing lightning protection systems (earth electrodes/rods) on buildings, particularly schools, to reduce high casualty rates. Immediate safety measures include seeking sturdy shelter, avoiding tall trees and open fields, staying away from metal objects, and waiting 30 minutes after the last thunderclap.

Key Protection Measures

Structural Protection: Due to recent severe storms, installing lightning rods (capture devices) and grounding systems on schools and homes is crucial to protecting people.

Indoor Safety: During a storm, stay inside a fully enclosed building, close all doors/windows, and avoid using plumbing or corded electronics.

Outdoor Safety:

Do not stand under isolated trees, poles, or in open fields.

Do not hold metal objects (umbrellas, farm tools).

If caught in the open, crouch down low (feet together, head tucked) to minimize ground contact.

Vehicle Safety: Stay inside a hard-topped, closed-window vehicle.

If Someone is Struck: Call emergency help immediately, perform CPR, and know that it is safe to touch them.

Given the high incidence of lightning in Burundi, education on these precautions is essential for reducing fatalities.

Impact of Lightning on the human body

Severe electrical shocks, like lightning strikes to the body affect almost every organ and tissue, and may cause extensive damage.

Some of the after effects of a lightning strike includes, cardiac and pulmonary arrest (no pulse and no breathing), usually temporary paralysis, temporary deafness, and minor to severe burns.

Emergency Response if struck by lightning

- If you are near a person that has been struck by lightning, immediately activate the emergency services.
- If the person is unconscious and not breathing, start CPR, and an emergency call taker will talk you through the steps if you do not know how to do CPR.
- It is essential that CPR is started promptly, as the electrical shock may interfere with the electrical current of the heart, causing it to stop beating properly.
- The patient may appear to be deceased in many cases as the electrical current having gone through the body stops the heart, and it will need to be restarted again. CPR is performed in long duration on these patients, where immediate activation of emergency care and starting of CPR, has a very good prognosis for these patients.
- All patients that are affected by lightning strikes need to be further observed at an appropriate medical facility.



Be Prepared and ready to Respond

With our beautiful late afternoon thunderstorms, it is almost a guarantee that they will be accompanied by beautiful lightning. Thunder and lightning usually start some time before it starts to rain, so don't wait until the rain starts before you take action and get to an area of safety.

Golden Rule: When It Roars Get Indoors

When Outdoors:

- The first rule of keeping safe is to avoid being outside when there is lightning activity.

- It's also important to note that lightning often occurs around the edges of a thundercloud, so it doesn't have to be raining.
- At the first sign of lightning or thunder, it's best to head inside a proper building (rather than a boma or other partial protection).
- If you are unable to make it into a safe building, get into a vehicle, making sure the windows are shut.
- A car is a safe place to find shelter. Even though a car is made out of metal, it acts as a 'Faraday cage' which prevents current from flowing through the vehicle and its occupants.
- In the event that you are out in an open field and are unable to get to another area of safety, lie down or crouch on the ground until the storm has passed.
- Also, if you are playing any form of sport outdoors, insist that your friends accompany you indoors.
- Do not stand under canopy's, porches, picnic shelters or trees as they do not provide much protection from direct lightning strikes or an electrical "splash" that may come from another object that has been hit.
- At all times, indoors or out, avoid water (lakes, dams, river's, water facets, showers, baths) as water is a really good conductor of electricity!
- Stay away from trees, water, high ground or open fields.
- Canopy shelters, as well as metal objects such as flag poles and light poles should be avoided.
- Avoid using items such as umbrellas or golf clubs, or doing activities such as kite-flying.
- Avoid swimming or standing on a beach, as lightning may strike at the water's edge.
- To be safe, it's best to stay inside for 30 minutes after you heard the last clap of thunder.
- Don't forget to bring your pets inside. Doghouses and other pet shelters are not suitable protection against lightning strikes.

SAVE LIFE MAKE DIFFERENCE since we start our project **\$424** raised of \$50,500 goal

SAVE LIFE MAKE DIFFERENCE

Bujumbura Burundi 24/02/2026

savelifemakedifference@gmail.com