

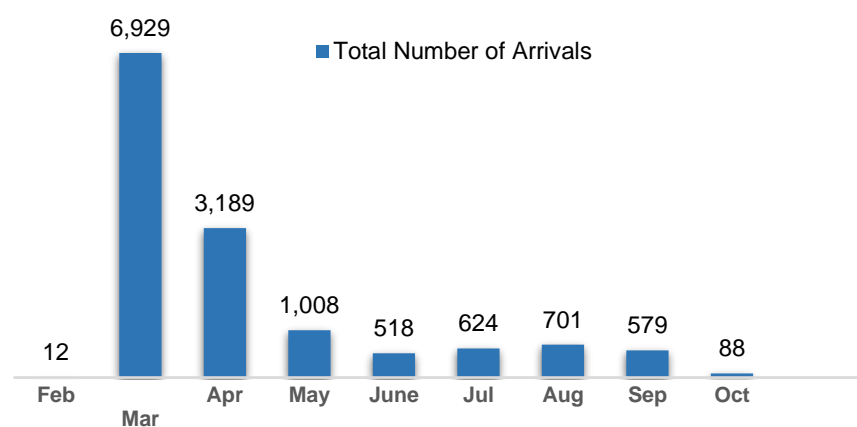
DRC NEW INFLUX TO TANZANIA: UPDATE #9

10 October 2023

KEY STATISTICS

- **13,648** new arrivals were received by Kigoma Regional Authorities from January to 19 September 2023.
- **12,326** asylum seekers were transferred to the Nyarugusu refugee camp.
- **233** asylum seekers accommodated at a transit center in Kigoma.
- **11,656** registered in Nyarugusu camp, of which **7,031** are children under 18 years.
- **56%** are female.

Number of New Arrivals from DRC to Tanzania.



OVERVIEW

Violent clashes in the Eastern DRC between non-state armed groups and government forces drive hundreds of thousands to flee their homes for safety. During the early days of the influx, asylum seekers used to travel from Masisi and Rutshuru territories in North Kivu, rest at Goma, and continue to Tanzania via Bukavu and Uvira. Currently, most asylum seekers come from Baraka, Uvira, Fizi, Goma, and Masisi.

In the initial interviews, asylum seekers have indicated fear of being targeted by all armed groups, forced recruitment of young men, and generalized violence, including gender-based, as reasons for fleeing. Since late last year, DRC citizens have sought asylum in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. However, Tanzania (**13,648**) now has the fastest-growing influx among other asylum countries.

Noteworthy is that among those who presented themselves as new arrivals are also Congolese living in Nyarugusu camp and Kigoma villages without a known legal status, mainly due to restricted access to Tanzanian territory and asylum procedures for Congolese and Burundians since 2017. Based on the recent and new events in Congo and UNHCR's Position on returns to North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, and adjacent areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo affected by ongoing conflict and violence, the *prima facie* refugee status ought to apply to all. The Government of Tanzania has positively decided to include every Congolese asylum seeker in the ongoing registration exercise by the regional authorities.

Humanitarian Response and Updates

UNHCR works in close coordination with the Government of Tanzania and other UN agencies and NGO partners to provide protection and lifesaving assistance, including food, medical care, water and sanitation, child protection, and gender-based violence prevention and response activities. UNHCR coordinates the overall response, while its partner,



Medical Teams International provides the necessary health services to asylum seekers and refers others to the town hospitals.



The Danish Refugee Council is responding to protection, including children, and is handling case management, which supports the identification of Gender Based Violence cases and the provision of psychosocial support.



The Norwegian Refugee Council erected temporary shelters and improved WASH facilities at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) office in Kigoma and the National Milling Centre (agreed UNHCR and MoHA transit center).



African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD) deploys buses and trucks for movement to the Nyarugusu refugee camp.



WFP provides food at the transit centre and in the camps.



UNFPA, UNICEF, and Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS) have supported Non-Food Items using their resources.



Water Mission has provided the water treatment plant and installed a water pump at the National Milling Centre (NMC) in Kigoma.

Currently, NMC hosts 233 asylum seekers and is the only transit center in Kigoma with an estimated capacity of 2,500 individuals. UNHCR provides Non-Food Items (NFIs), including soap, blankets, and sanitary pads for women and girls of reproductive age. They are also provided with mattresses and mosquito nets, which are retrieved during relocation for use by other asylum seekers. Sleeping mats are provided to the asylum seekers upon their arrival in Nyarugusu camp, and after registration and during relocation to the plots, they are provided with mosquito nets, buckets, and kitchen sets.

Asylum seekers' first point of contact remains the Ministry of Home Affairs offices in Kigoma. The government is carrying out preliminary manual registration and prescreening upon arrival. Once this is done, asylum seekers are transported to Nyarugusu refugee camp, where they are formally registered and can access assistance and support from MoHA, UNHCR, and partners.

Advocacy

Tanzania has welcomed refugees for decades and currently hosts more than 247,000 refugees, mostly from the DRC and Burundi. UNHCR is grateful to the government for continuing to open its doors to these individuals forced to flee.

Under the Refugees Act 1998, granting prima facie refugee status is possible. Even though the trend of arrivals remains unpredictable, UNHCR advocates for prima facie status to be granted.

The Government and the host communities have generously welcomed the new arrivals and are doing what they can to help them. However, lack of funding continues to hamper humanitarian assistance. More support is needed from the international community, the private sector, and the government to ensure that refugees have access to protection and assistance.

Contingency plan for refugees from the DRC

While assistance continues, jointly with the government of Tanzania, UNHCR developed a Contingency Plan to prepare and respond to this new influx of asylum seekers from the DRC in a coordinated manner should numbers continue to increase. After soliciting input from partners, the Contingency Plan is in its finalization stages of clearance jointly with the Government of Tanzania.

Resources

UNHCR and partners continue to respond to the situation, but support is needed. UNHCR is appealing for funding in line with the [Regional Refugee Response Plan for the DRC situation](#).

UNHCR has, so far, been able to provide the basic needs of those who continue to arrive. However, the UN Refugee Agency still hasn't received the financial support to respond to unexpected refugee situations.

Out of the USD 116 million needed, the agency has only received 37.2%.

Other information

Out of 247,532 refugees in Tanzania, more than 206,000 (83.5%) of the refugee population live in the Nyarugusu and Nduta refugee camps, representing 158,158 Burundians, 88,480 Congolese, and 534 of other nationalities.

Others mostly live in settlements and villages around the Kigoma region and other parts of the country.

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