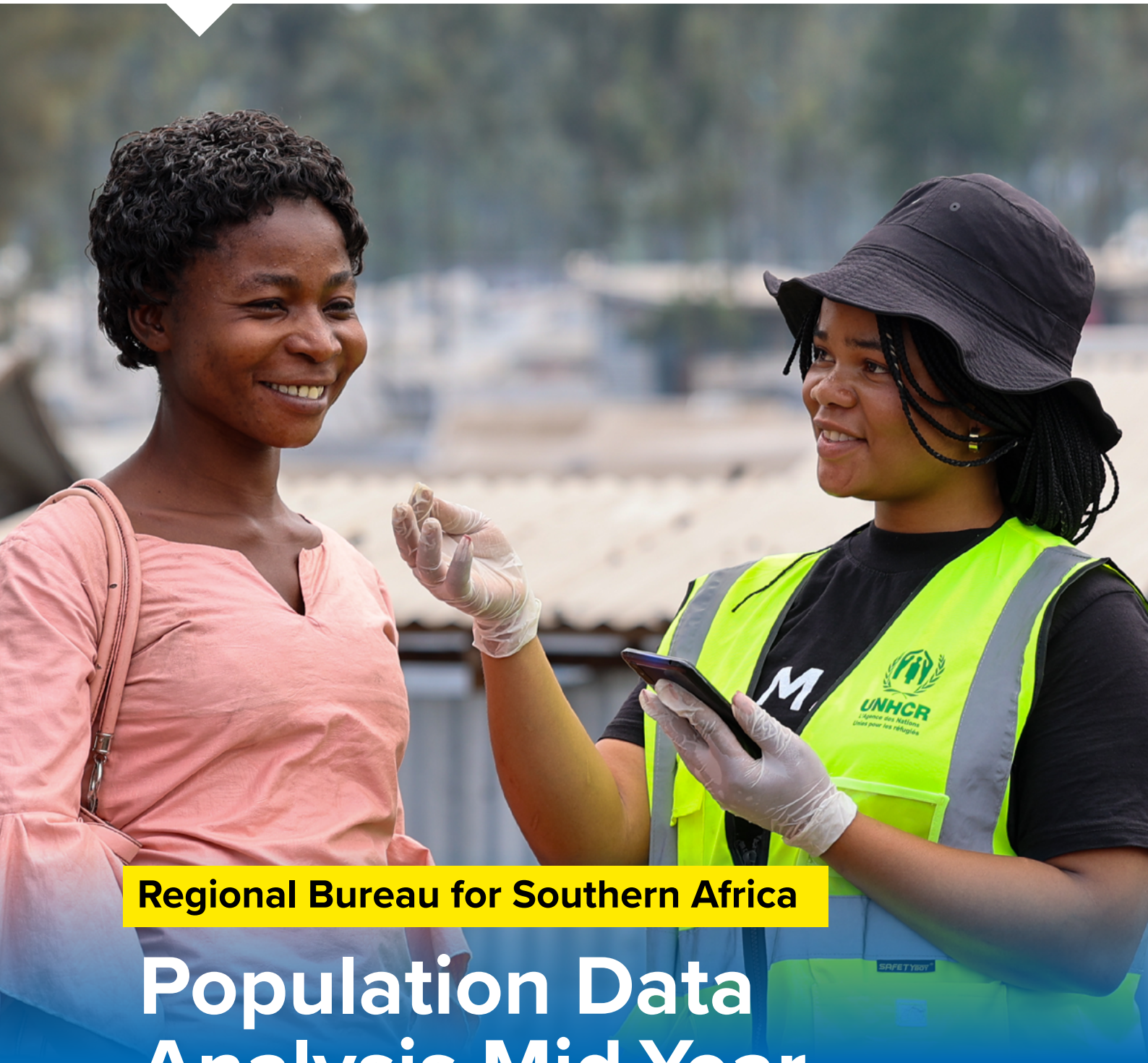
UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



Regional Bureau for Southern Africa

Population Data Analysis Mid-Year Review

June 2024

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCR, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa

Front Cover Photo: © UNHCR / Blaise Sanyila

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A word from the Director

Dear colleagues and partners,

In today's global environment, the ability of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in the Southern Africa region to generate, analyse and utilize data on forcibly displaced and stateless populations is more crucial than ever. This capability strengthens our efforts to ensure protection and to find solutions for these vulnerable groups. It also drives action by others, aligning with the Global Compact on Refugees.

In line with the UNHCR Data Transformation Strategy 2020-2025, I am pleased to share the regional data overview for the Southern Africa region for the first half of 2024.

The report provides a comprehensive data overview of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in the region. It clearly demonstrates UNHCR's commitment to becoming a trusted leader in data and information related to these populations. This data overview can be used to:

- Inform, design and prioritize programming.
- Support advocacy and advance partnerships, especially with development institutions.
- Enhance external reporting.
- Strengthen fundraising.
- Provide key indicators for internal and international results frameworks and global commitments, such as the Global Compact on Refugees, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Grand Bargain.

UNHCR Southern Africa is committed to advancing projects, policies and priorities to assist governments in establishing robust State-run asylum and protection institutions and processes. This will empower country operations to develop pragmatic and progressive solutions for the inclusion and resilience of forcibly displaced and stateless persons. The responsible use of timely, quality data and information is key to reinforcing UNHCR's role as a data-driven organization and a centre of excellence for refugee, statelessness and forced displacement data.

This report, developed for external use, is accessible to partners, donors and other stakeholders through the UNHCR data portal (https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/rbsa).

Your support in utilizing the data and analysis outlined in this report is invaluable as we continue to strengthen our collective impact.

Thank you for your partnership and cooperation.

Chansa Kapaya
Director of the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa

Regional dashboard for populations that UNHCR is mandated to protect in Southern Africa (as of 30 June 2024)

KEY FIGURES

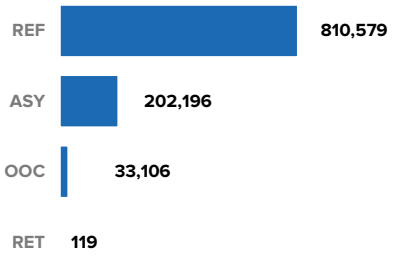
9,157,486

FORCIBLY DISPLACED PEOPLE & RETURNEES[1]

As a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, or events seriously disturbing public order.

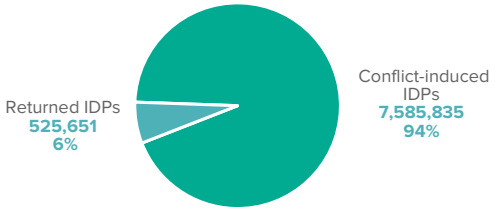
1,046,000

Refugees, asylum-seekers, others of concern & returnees (11% of the overall forcibly displaced people and returnees population)*



8,111,486

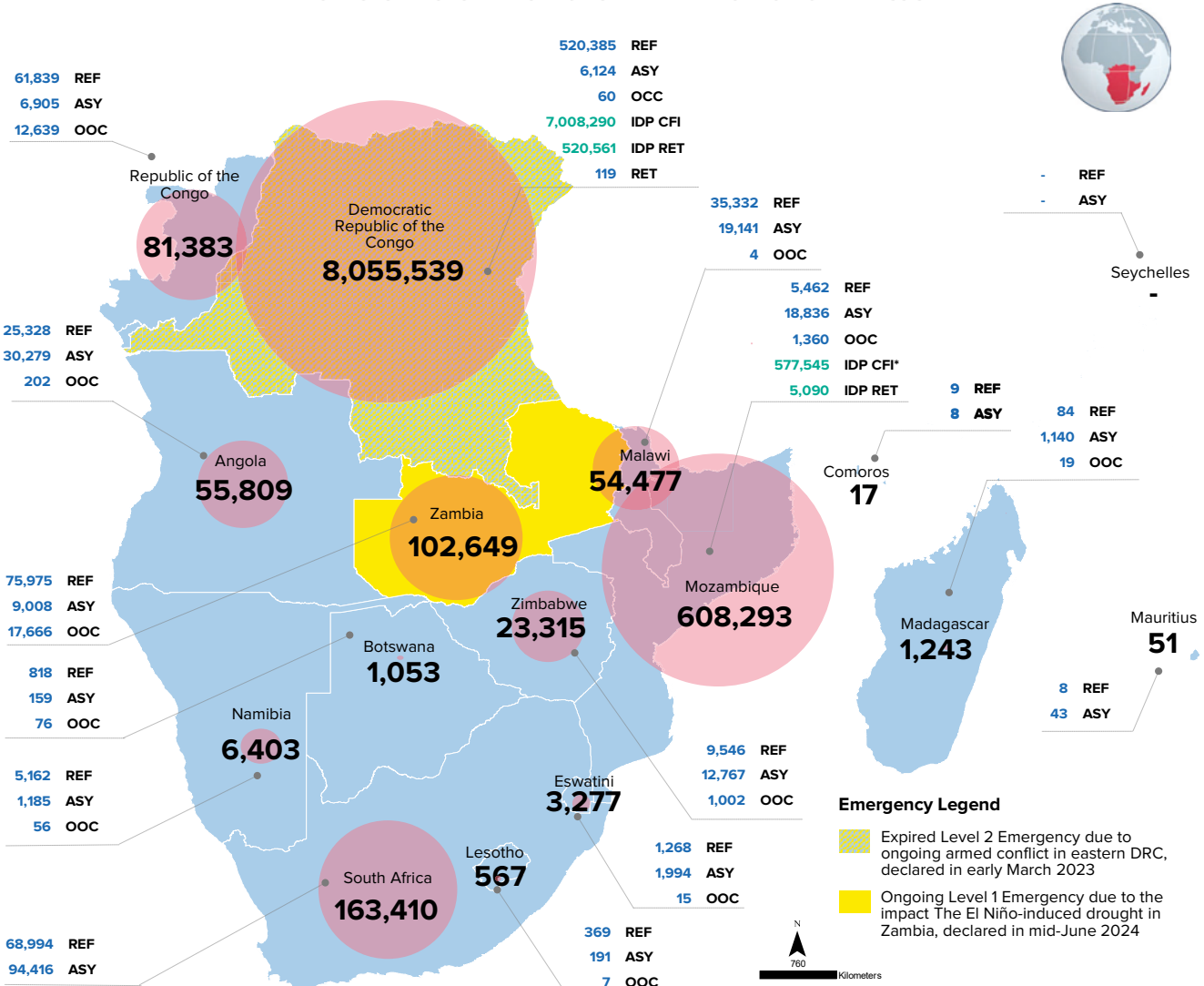
Conflict-induced IDPs and returned IDPs (89% of the overall forcibly displaced people and returnees population)*



1 In addition, there are 1,134,993 people displaced internally in the context of disasters and climate change. The displacement occurred in the following countries:

Malawi (659,278), The Democratic Republic of the Congo (294,847), Mozambique (139,333) and Zimbabwe (41,535).

MAP OF POPULATIONS THAT UNHCR IS MANDATED TO PROTECT AND ASSIST



Author: UNHCR DIMA - RSA Contact : rsarbdima@unhcr.org

Source: REF, ASY, OOC, RET (UNHCR PRIMES, Government); IDP DRC (OCHA); IDP Zimbabwe & Mozambique (IOM); IDP ROC (Government, Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action (MASAH).

Date of creation : As of 30 June 2024

For more information visit: UNHCR Data Portal

* REF = Refugee; ASY = Asylum-seeker; OOC = Others of concern; RET = Returnee IDP = Internal Displaced Person IDP CFI = Conflic-induced IDPs IDP RET = Returned IDPs DRC = Democratic Republic of the Congo ROC = Repulic of the Congo

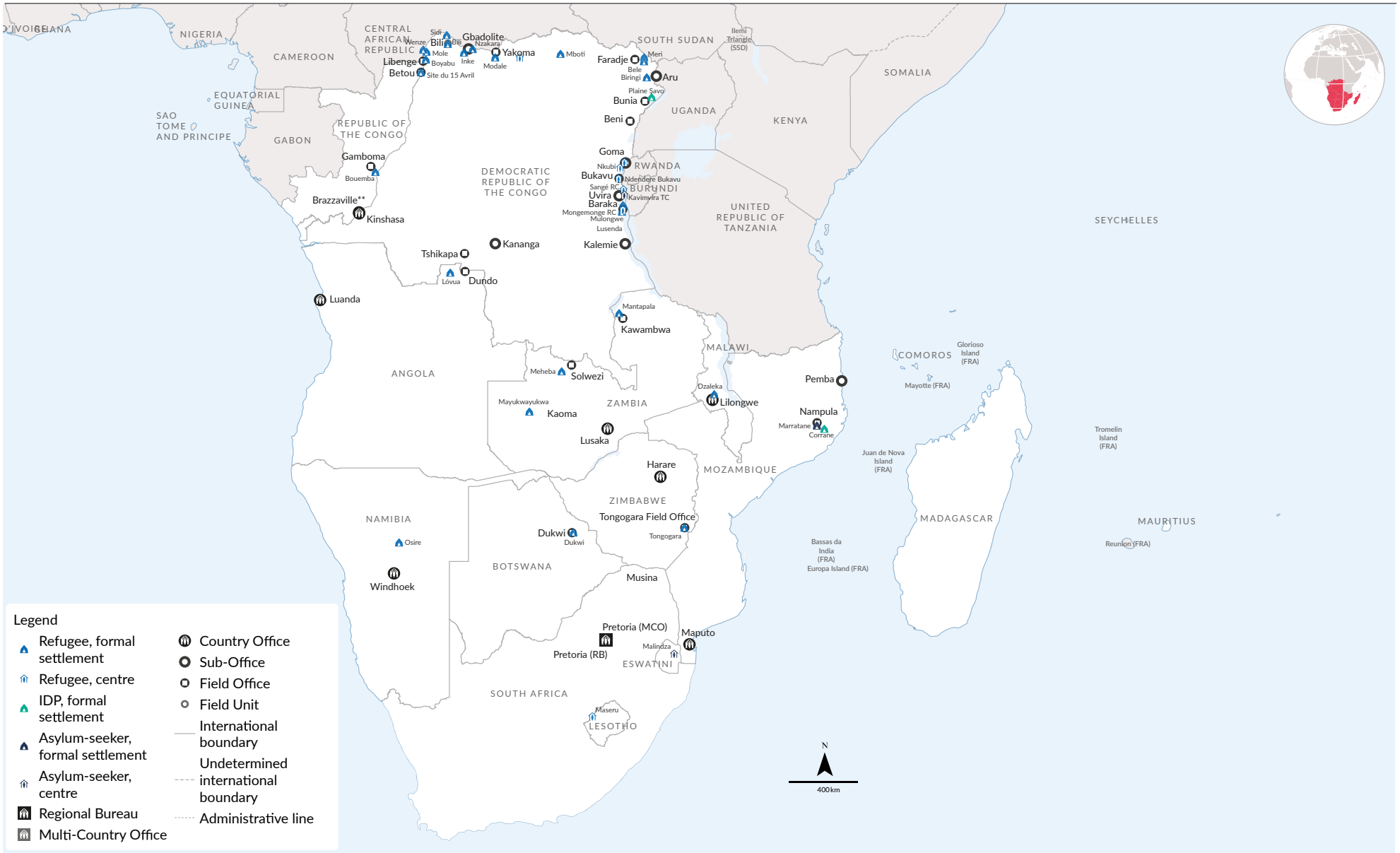
Regional population figures

Country of Asylum	Refugee	Asylum-seeker	Other of Concern	IDP by Conflict	Returned IDP	Refugee Returnee	Total
Democratic Republic of the Congo	**520,385**	**6,124**	**60**	**7,008,290**	**520,561**	**119**	**8,055,539**
Other	376,621	5,822	60	6,038,567	520,561	119	6,941,750
IDP Camp				969,723			969,723
Lusenda	26,445						26,445
Meri	25,635	27					25,662
Inke	18,778	2					18,780
Mulongwe	12,254						12,254
Mole	11,084						11,084
Bili	10,622						10,622
Boyabu	8,966						8,966
Nzakara	8,746						8,746
Wenze	6,693						6,693
Biringi	6,567						6,567
Sidi	4,172						4,172
Bele	3,172	273					3,445
Mboti	630						630
Mozambique	**5,462**	**18,836**	**1,360**	**577,545**	**5,090**		**608,293**
Other	2,669	14,120	916	577,545	5,090		600,340
Maratane Camp	2,793	4,716	444				7,953
South Africa	**68,994**	**94,416**					**163,410**
Unknown	68,994	94,416					163,410
Zambia	**75,975**	**9,008**	**17,666**				**102,649**
Meheba	31,578	582	9,760				41,920
Mayukwayukwa	18,906	124	7,140				26,170
Other	17,804	7,156	766				25,726
Mantapala	7,687	1,146					8,833
Congo	**61,839**	**6,905**	**12,639**				**81,383**
Other	49,746	5,950	12,428				68,124
Site du 15 Avril	6,177	955	184				7,316
Site de Bouemba	5,916		27				5,943
Angola	**25,328**	**30,279**	**202**				**55,809**
Unknown	17,365	30,023	141				47,529
Lovua Settlement	6,268						6,268
Other	1,695	256	61				2,012
Malawi	**35,332**	**19,141**	**4**				**54,477**
Dzaleka	33,917	17,512	4				51,433
Other	1,415	1,629	0				3,044
Zimbabwe	**9,546**	**12,767**	**1,002**				**23,315**
Tongogara	8,726	6,182	913				15,821
Other	615	6,565	57				7,237
Unknown	205	20	32				257
Namibia	**5,162**	**1,185**	**56**				**6,403**
Osire	4,686	1,082	17				5,785
Other	476	103	39				618
Eswatini	**1,268**	**1,994**	**15**				**3,277**
Other	1,268	1,994	15				3,277
Madagascar	**84**	**1,140**	**19**				**1,243**
Other	84	1,140	19				1,243
Botswana	**818**	**159**	**76**				**1,053**
Dukwe	655	10	42				707
Other	163	149	34				346
Lesotho	**369**	**191**	**7**				**567**
Other	369	191	7				567
Mauritius	**8**	**43**					**51**
Other	8	43					51
Comoros	**9**	**8**					**17**
Other	9	8					17
Seychelles							**0**
Other							0
Total	**810,579**	**202,196**	**33,106**	**7,585,835**	**525,651**	**119**	**9,157,486**

Notes: The figures are subject to change; *IDPs by disaster are not included; **'Other' in the location refers to any known location other than camp or settlement sites, covering both urban and rural areas; ***self-settled refers to the individuals without available information such as their names and locations, and their locations are categorized to be 'unknown'; those by location in Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zimbabwe could be different from the numbers operation report due to inconsistency in proGres.

contact : UNHCR RBSA/DIMA, rsarbdima@unhcr.org

UNHCR presence map in Southern Africa (as of 30 June 2024)



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Printing date: 04 Dec 2024 **Sources:** UNCS, UNHCR **Author:** UNHCR - HQ Copenhagen **Feedback:** mapping@unhcr.org **Filename:** A2L_RBSA REF MAP

Overview

Southern Africa is a dynamic and complex region, marked by ongoing emergencies, protracted humanitarian situations, and continuous forced displacements and mixed movements. These challenges are driven by conflicts, political dynamics, climate change, human rights violations, and other events that seriously disrupt public order. Consequently, the scope, scale and complexity of forced displacement are increasing. This is compounded by an already fragile environment affecting all countries in the region, where economic crises, food shortages, disease outbreaks and extreme weather events are common. Declining resources further exacerbate the deteriorating protection environment, increasing pressure on host governments and communities.

UNHCR's vision is to advance projects, policies and priorities to assist governments in creating robust State-run asylum and protection institutions and processes. The goal is to enable country operations to develop pragmatic and progressive solutions for the inclusion and resilience of forcibly displaced and stateless populations. For the period until 2027, the Regional Bureau of Southern Africa's priorities will align with the renewed commitments outlined in the High Commissioner's Strategic Directions 2022-2026:

- strengthening refugee protection and asylum systems.
- promoting durable solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless persons.
- fostering inclusion and self-reliance.
- empowering communities to achieve gender equality.

Since 2020, the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, particularly its Data Identity Management and Analysis (DIMA) Unit, has enhanced collaboration with States to include forcibly displaced and stateless persons in the national statistical system. Guided by UNHCR's Data Transformation Strategy 2020-2025, these efforts also aim to enable comparative socioeconomic data analysis between host communities and forcibly displaced persons. Significant work has been done in collaboration with National Statistical Offices (NSOs). This includes raising awareness of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS), participation in EGRISS workshops and collaboration between UNHCR and the NSOs in preparing UNHCR Result Monitoring Surveys in the region. Four out of the 16 countries in the region - the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, South Africa and Zimbabwe – are members of EGRISS. In other countries, efforts are ongoing to raise awareness of EGRISS and its international recommendations. Additionally, UNHCR acknowledges and underscores the effectiveness of EGRISS in providing training, both virtually and in person.

Population trends in Southern Africa indicate a steady increase in refugees and internally displaced populations due to ongoing forced displacements. As of the end of June 2024, the region hosts approximately 9.2 million people under UNHCR's mandate and responsibility. This figure represents 73 per cent of the total planning figures for UNHCR in the Southern Africa region for 2024. The population includes 810,579 refugees, 202,196 asylum-seekers, 33,106 others of concern, 7.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to conflicts, around 119 returned refugees, and 525,651 returned IDPs. Additionally, 1.1 million IDPs are displaced by climate change and disasters. The population trend shows a 9.63 per cent decrease from the previous year, primarily due to the UNHCR's procedure of resetting the number of returned IDPs to zero at the beginning of each year.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) hosts 87.9 per cent of the region's population, while South Africa hosts 46.7 per cent of the asylum-seekers.

The region also completed 101 surveys, assessments and other data collection initiatives focusing on social protection, education, health, shelter and non-food items (NFI), and self-reliance and inclusion.

This half-year regional data analysis establishes a systematic connection between data gathered from various operational sources and the core output indicators in the region. UNHCR's results-based management approach is used for strategic planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting. It enables multi-year planning to develop strategies that address the long-term needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons. Data collected in this report pertain to the operational context, forcibly displaced and stateless persons, and operational activities, including responses in the Southern Africa region. The DIMA unit plays a crucial role in aligning the organization's operational data work with the needs of forcibly displaced and stateless persons. It uses data to support the effective deployment of UNHCR's mandate through evidence-informed actions, and to create an enabling environment for these populations to exercise their rights.

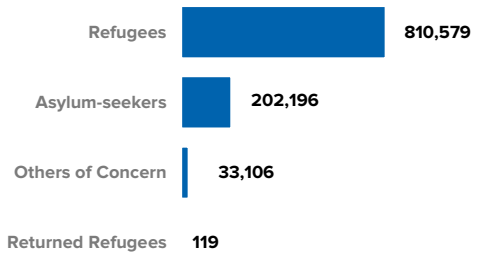
Regional dashboard for refugees, asylum-seekers and others of concern in Southern Africa (as of June 2024)

KEY FIGURES

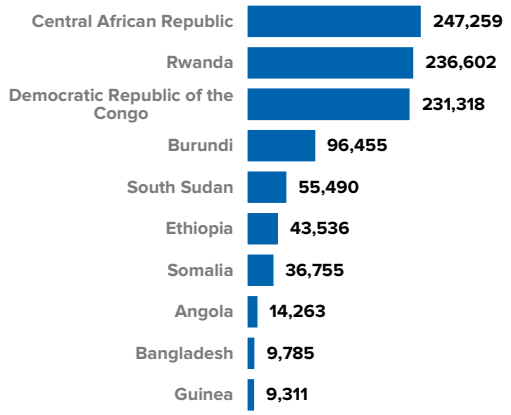
1,046,000

REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, OTHERS OF CONCERN & RETURNEES

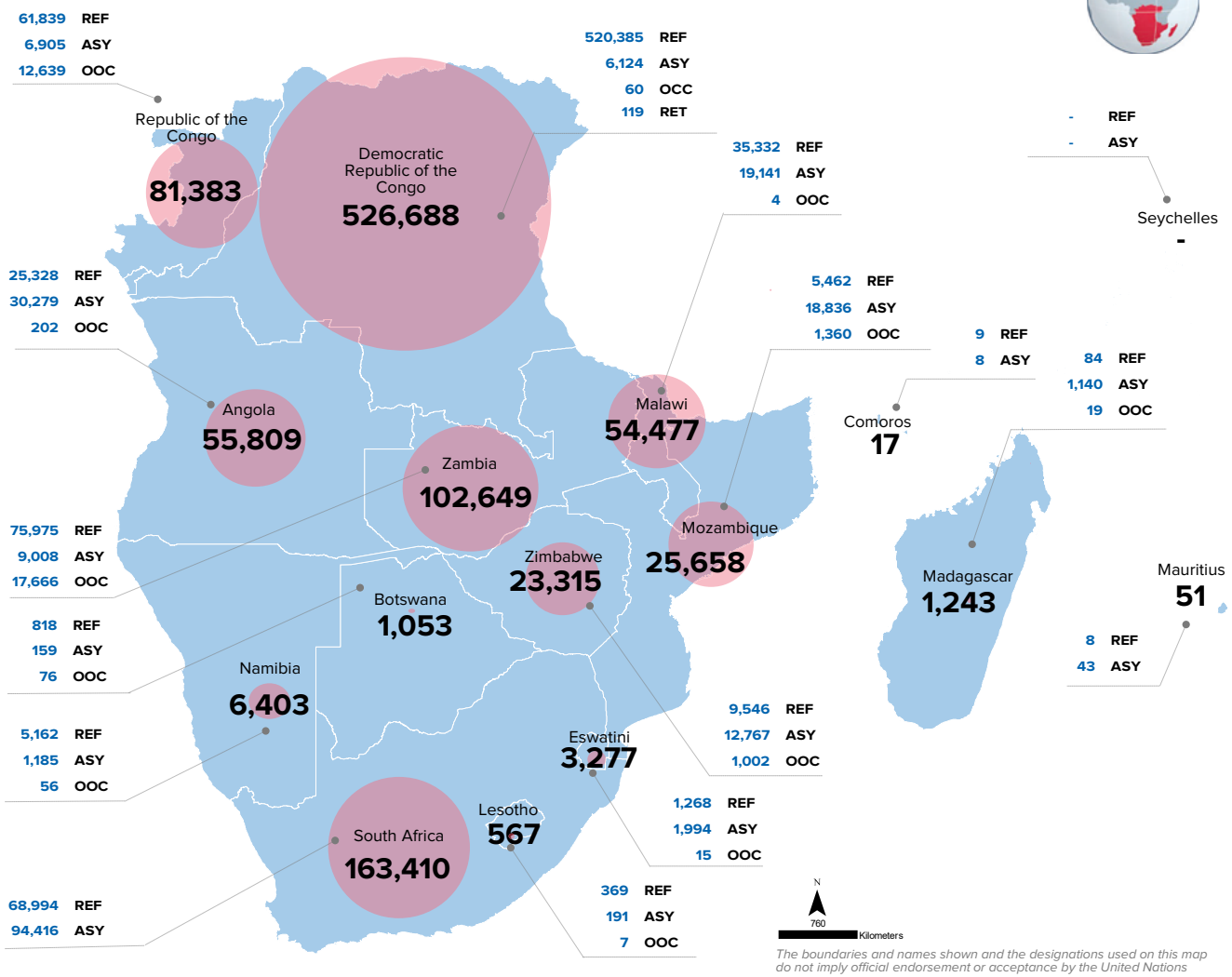
Refugees by legal status



Top 10 countries of origin



MAP OF REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, OTHERS OF CONCERN & RETURNEES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA*



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Author: UNHCR DIMA - RSA Contact: rsarbdima@unhcr.org

Source: REF, ASY, OOC, RET (UNHCR PRIMES, Government); **IDP DRC** (OCHA); IDP Zimbabwe & Mozambique (IOM); **IDP ROC** (Government, Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action (MASAH).

Date of creation: As of 30 June 2024

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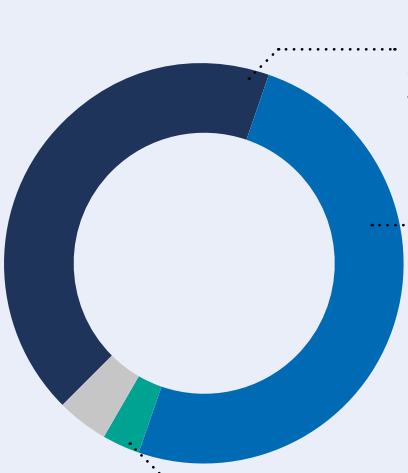
Key Figures

51% are male

44% are female



43% **are under 18 years old;** of this group 50% are male.

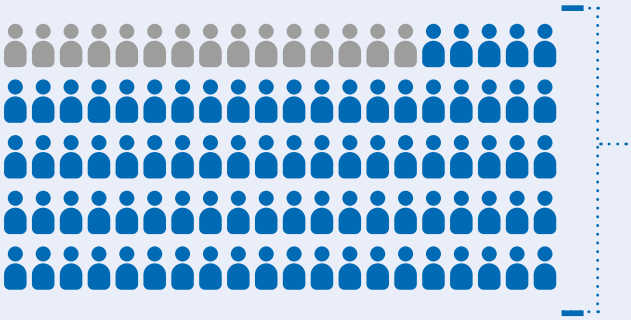
50% **are aged between 18 and 59 years old;** of this group 57% are male.

3% **are aged 60 years old and over;** of this group 51 % are male.

30% **of the refugees and asylum-seekers live in settlements**

70% **live in urban and rural areas.**

Socioeconomic profiles and needs



85% of the refugees and asylum-seekers **have records of their education**

33% of refugee and asylum-seeker households are updated with phone numbers into proGres*

38% attended primary school

19% attended secondary school

1% attended high school

2% attended university

40% took part in other education (for example Kindergarten, informal education, technical or vocational)

* https://www.unhcr.org/blogs/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2018/03/2018-03-16-PRIMES-Flyer.pdf

29% of the refugees and asylum-seekers have records of their working experience. **The top 10 working experiences are:**

- Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers (**38%**)
- Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers (**14%**)
- Sales workers (**12%**)
- Business and administration associate professionals (**4%**)
- Market-oriented skilled forestry, fishery and hunting workers (4%)
- Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers (**3%**)
- Business and administration professionals (**3%**)
- Personal services workers (**3%**)
- Drivers and mobile plant operators (**2%**)
- Teaching professionals (**2%**).

26% of the refugees and asylum-seekers have recorded the languages they speak. **The top 10 languages spoken are:**

- Swahili (**21%**)
- French (**11%**)
- Lingala (**10%**)
- English (**9%**)
- Rundi, Kirundi (**9%**)
- Sango (**9%**)
- Portuguese (**4%**)
- Chichewa (**4%**)
- Rwanda, Kinyarwanda (**4%**)
- Nyanja (**2%**)

24% of the refugees and asylum-seekers possess **valid legal identity documents.**

21% of the refugees and asylum-seekers have records of their skills. **The top 10 skills are:**

- Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers (**25%**)
- Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers (**14%**)
- Sales workers (**8%**)
- Personal services workers (**7 %**)
- Business and administration associate professionals (**4%**)
- Drivers and mobile plant operators (**3%**)
- Food processing, woodworking, garment and other craft and related trades workers (**3 %**)
- Building and related trades workers (excluding electricians) (**3%**)
- Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers (**3%**)
- Teaching professionals (**3%**).

11% of refugee households, including asylum-seekers, **have data on incomes.**

Among the households with available income data, 50% report earning less than 1 US$ per day, indicating that extreme poverty is present within this group. Conversely, there are households (50%) with incomes exceeding 1 US$ per day, reflecting some variability in economic conditions.

Refugees, asylum-seekers and others of concern

The region continues to face significant ongoing emergencies and struggles with protracted displacement and mixed movements in several countries. This is due to various drivers, including conflict, insecurity and climate change. Consequently, the challenges of forced displacement are increasing in scope, scale and complexity.

There are 1 million refugees, asylum-seekers and others of concern hosted in the region. By mid-2024, the number of refugees and asylum-seekers in Southern Africa had increased by 2.91 per cent compared to 2023. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Zambia, the Republic of Congo, Angola and Malawi continue to be the main countries of asylum. Together they host 94 per cent of refugees and asylum-seekers forced to flee due to persecution, conflict and human rights violations.

74 per cent of the refugees and asylum-seekers originated from countries outside Southern Africa region. The top five countries of origin are the Central African Republic (24 per cent), Rwanda (23 per cent), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (22 per cent), Burundi (9 per cent) and South Sudan (5 per cent). Additionally, 119 refugee returnees have been identified.

Others of concern refers to individuals who do not necessarily fall directly into any of the groups above but to whom UNHCR has been mandated to provide protection and/or assistance (e.g., based on regional documents, peace agreements, General Assembly resolutions). Persons with whom UNHCR is engaged purely on a humanitarian basis, such as rejected asylum-seekers, are not included. The region hosts 33,106 others of concern, of which 92 per cent are in Zambia and the Republic of Congo.

A protracted refugee situation refers to circumstances where at least 25,000 refugees from the same country have been living in exile for more than five consecutive years. Regional data analysis highlighted five cases of prolonged refugee situations; four were identified in the DRC as the country of asylum and one in Zambia.

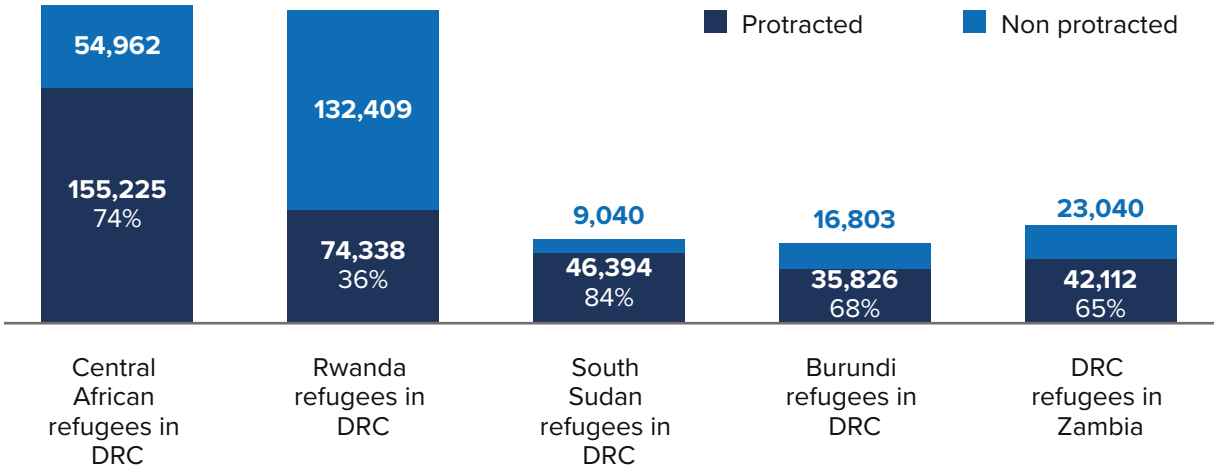


FIGURE 1: Protracted refugee situation in Southern Africa region

In the DRC, the four protracted refugee situations involve Central African refugees (155,225), Rwandan refugees (74,338), South Sudanese refugees (46,394), and Burundian refugees (35,826). 38 per cent of the refugee population have been in asylum in the DRC for over ten years, while 41 per cent have been in asylum for between six and ten years. Among the refugees and asylum-

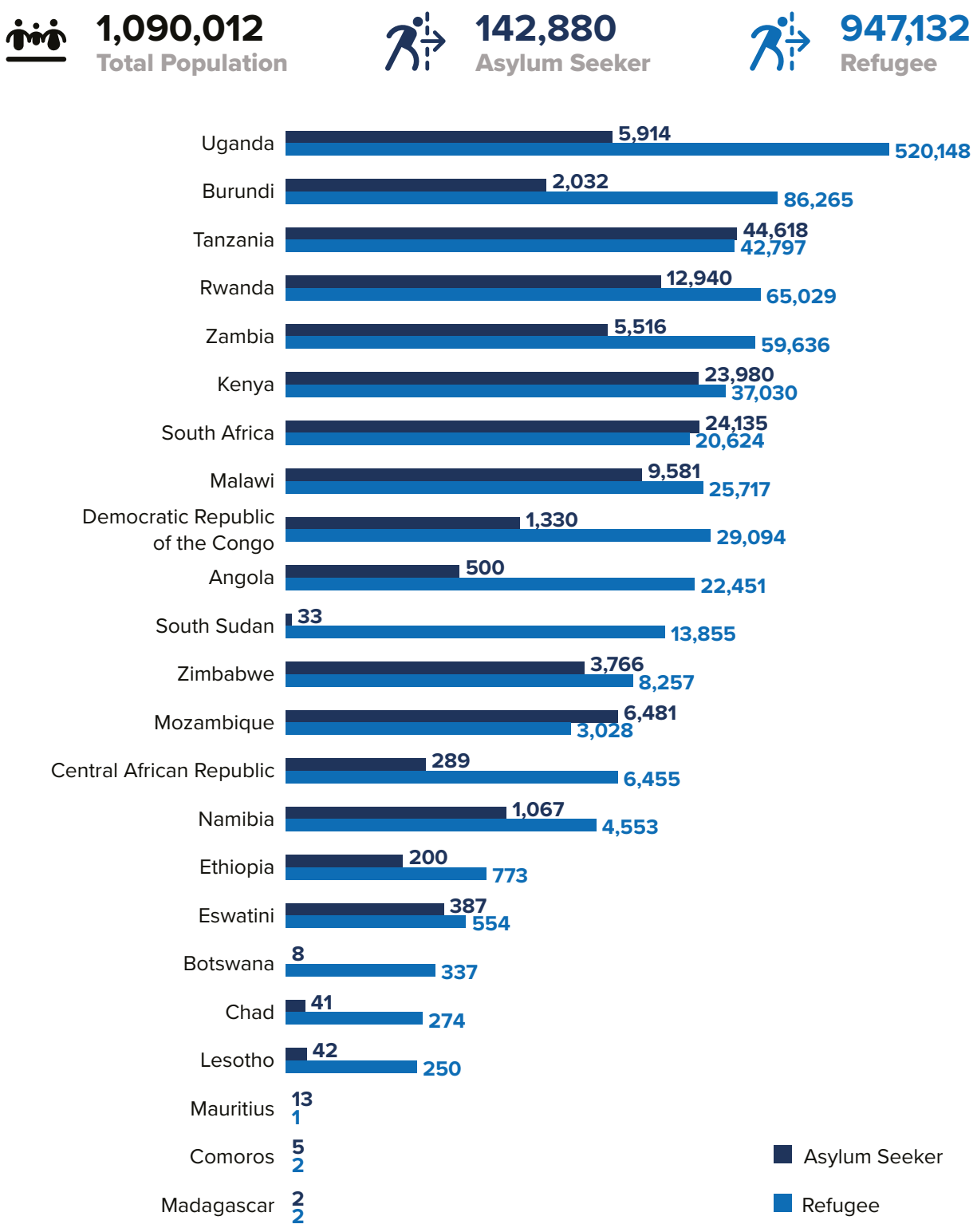


FIGURE 2: Numbers of DRC refugees and asylum-seekers in neighbouring countries

seekers, 97,483 (19 per cent) were born in the DRC, including approximately 19,702 adults and 17,597 young people aged between 12 and 17 years. The protracted refugee situation identified in Zambia is related to the refugees (42,112) from the DRC.

From January to June 2024, the region supported a voluntary repatriation of 6,117 refugees, with 469 returning to Rwanda, 5,434 to the Central African Republic, 97 to Burundi and 117 to the DRC. Most repatriation departures occurred in the DRC, accounting for 96 per cent, followed by South Africa with 2 per cent. The DRC has been a pivotal country in managing refugees and asylum-seekers in the region due to its prolonged humanitarian crisis. This has resulted in one of the most complex and protracted situations in the world. Over a million people have crossed borders to seek asylum in neighbouring countries. The drivers of displacement in the DRC are expected to persist in 2024. The fragile socioeconomic context, severe food insecurity, instability due to threats from armed groups and intercommunal violence, human rights violations, development challenges and tensions will continue to cause refugee flows into neighbouring countries.

DETENTION, REFOULEMENT AND ACCESS TO ASYLUM

The detention of asylum-seekers and refugees, along with refoulement incidents, remains a major concern in the region. Increasing cases affect the lives, freedom of movement and safety of people in need of international protection. As of June 2024, nearly 500 detention cases and over 30 refoulement incidents were reported across most Southern African countries. Despite constructive dialogue with States and key stakeholders, progressive legislative reforms and the piloting of alternatives to detention in various countries, UNHCR and its partners continue to face challenges in advancing the goals of UNHCR's Global Strategy "Beyond Detention". The lack of comprehensive and up-to-date data on detention and refoulement, as well as the limited implementation of alternatives to detention, remain significant challenges.

REGISTRATION, IDENTITY MANAGEMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

The second quarter review of 2024 showed a decrease in overall registration data quality in the region, dropping from 54.5 per cent in March 2024 to 45.8 per cent in June 2024. This assessment of registration data quality encompasses several aspects, including individual registration status, Biometric Identity Management System (BIMS) registration, updates to administrative locations for the country of origin or asylum, socioeconomic profiles, legal identity documents or credentials (such as birth registrations), resolution of any inconsistencies and referrals. Significant progress has been made in individual registration for refugees and asylum-seekers in the Southern Africa region, with 99 per cent of the population registered individually. Of these, 67 per cent are registered in the proGres database, while the remaining registrations are stored in government-owned databases. Among eligible individuals aged five and above, 71 per cent are enrolled in BIMS. However, a backlog of 13,597 adjudication cases remains unresolved. To address these cases, all the operations in the region are following UNHCR corporate guidance and Zambia has formed a task force specifically to resolve its 1,448 unresolved cases.

The region has improved its socioeconomic data collection on forcibly displaced persons, particularly refugees and asylum-seekers. As of June 2024, 29.4 per cent of this data has been collected into the proGres database. This is up from 28.4 per cent in March 2024, with a target of reaching 50 per cent. The socioeconomic profile includes information on households with income (11 per cent), languages spoken (26 per cent), work experience (29 per cent), skills (21 per cent) and education (85 per cent). Additionally, 33 per cent of individual profiles are updated with phone numbers in proGres. This

data was collected as part of the focus on digital inclusion, one of the priority outcomes of UNHCR's global Data Transformation Strategy (2020-25), aimed at fostering a digital gateway project for the Southern Africa region.

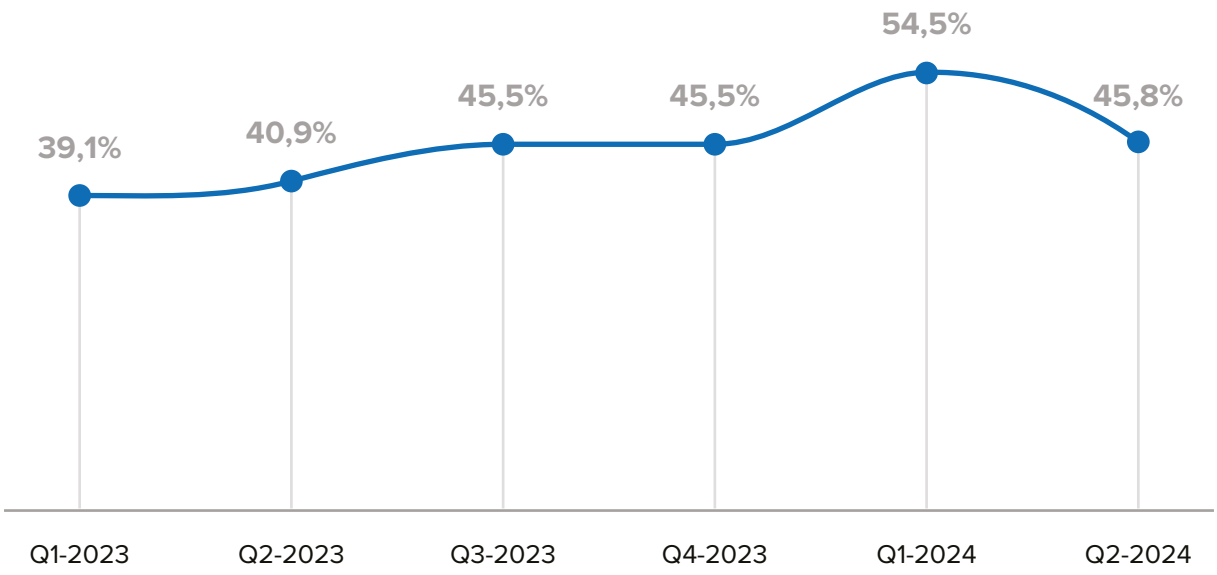


FIGURE 3: Regional progress on Registration Data Quality

In the Southern Africa region, as of June 2024, the registration data for refugees and asylum-seekers reveals that only 24 per cent of individuals possess valid legal identity documents, which are crucial for ensuring their protection and access to services. Civil registration, particularly for births, remains limited, with only 35 per cent of children under five years of age being registered. Efforts to improve legal identity documentation and civil registration are essential to enhance the legal status and protection of refugees and asylum-seekers in the region. For details on the actual progress and targets set for the period from January to June 2024, refer to the core output indicators overview section.[1] This section provides information on the progress and targets related to civil status documentation (including births), as well as identity or legal status documents, for these two quarters.

In the Southern Africa region, countries such as Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, the Republic of Congo (ROC), Zambia, Zimbabwe and others have begun issuing passports to refugees. This significant step enhances refugees' mobility and access to international opportunities. These passports or travel documents adhere to the biometric standards regulated by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). They not only facilitate safer and more efficient border crossings but also empower refugees by providing them with a globally recognized form of identification. This improves their opportunities for resettlement, integration into new communities and family reunification. Additionally, these documents serve as an accepted form of identification for financial and other institutions. Figure 4 shows a regional overview of all countries issuing biometric passports or travel documents to refugees in the region.

1 Cumulative figures as of June 2024 (which are stock figures) differ from the core output indicators overview, which highlights the actual progress and targets set for the six months from January to June 2024 (which are flow figures).

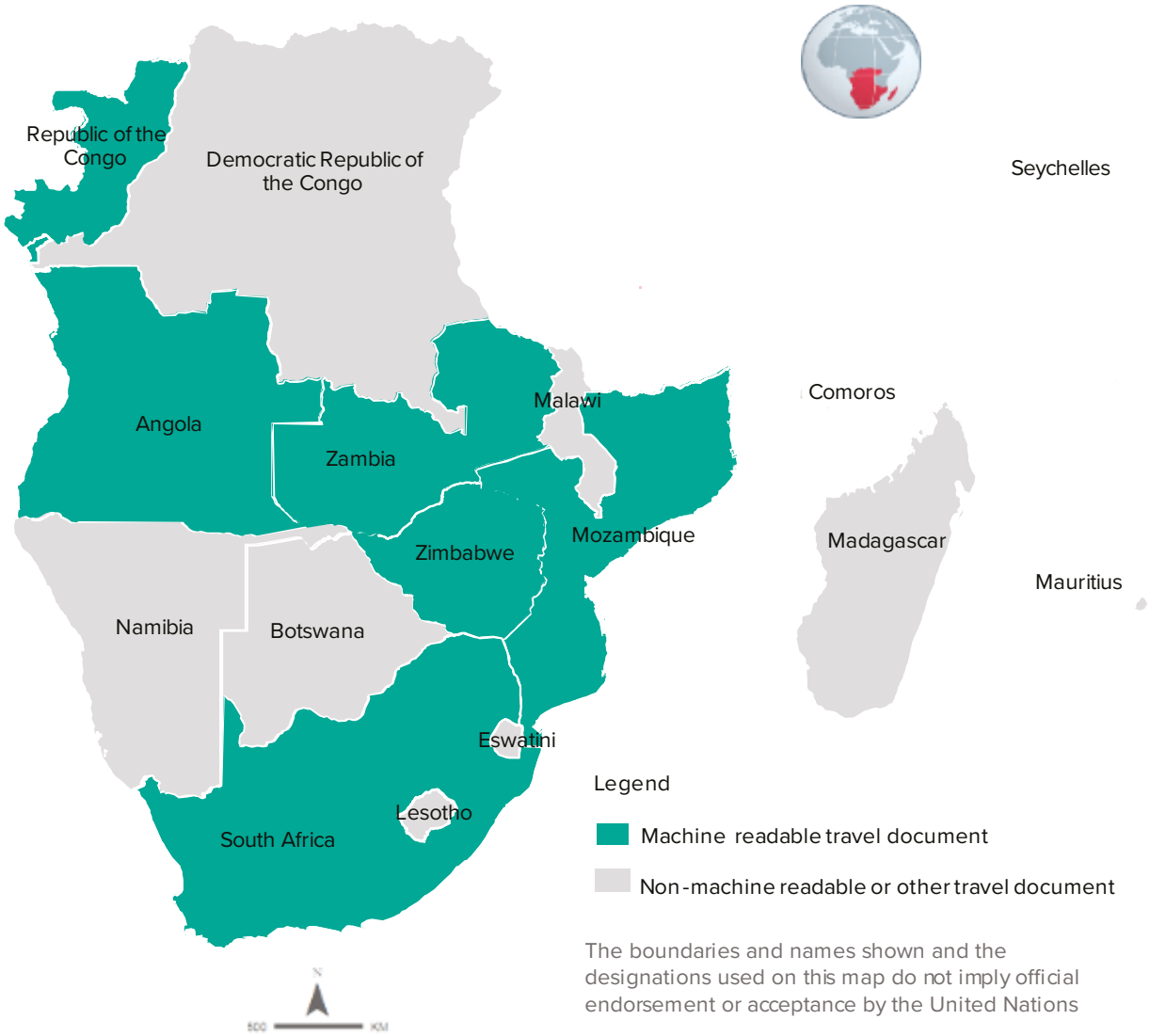


FIGURE 4: Extent of machine readable travel documents in Southern Africa region

REGIONAL RETURN INTENTIONS

To assess the willingness and readiness of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons in the region to return home voluntarily, the Regional Bureau developed a return intentions questionnaire for use by all 16 countries in the region.

The data, collected primarily through a secure UNHCR platform, enhanced data analysis and appropriate disaggregation to help to achieve regional harmonization and behavioural monitoring over time.

The return intentions questionnaire targets all forcibly displaced persons at the household level, rather than selecting a sample population from specific camps. Data can also be collected at the individual level within a household if the return intention of one person differs from that of other family members. Only family members aged 18 and above are interviewed. If there are concerns related to a child, they are referred to a Child Protection Officer for further assessment and recommendations.

Half-yearly data capture is highly recommended during food or assistance distribution, continuous registration or verification exercises, depending on the operational context. If this is not feasible, it is recommended to conduct return intentions data collection annually using dedicated resources.

The questionnaire is adaptable, allowing operations to include additional questions without altering the core regional framework. This questionnaire is not used with new arrivals or during emergency registration, as return intentions are not a priority during an influx. Malawi recently piloted the regional return intentions questionnaire, and Zambia and Angola have implementation plans in place.

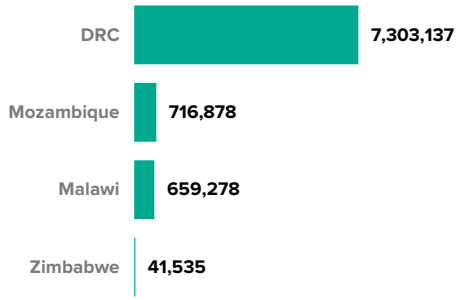
Regional dashboard for internally displaced persons in Southern Africa (as of June 2024)

KEY FIGURES

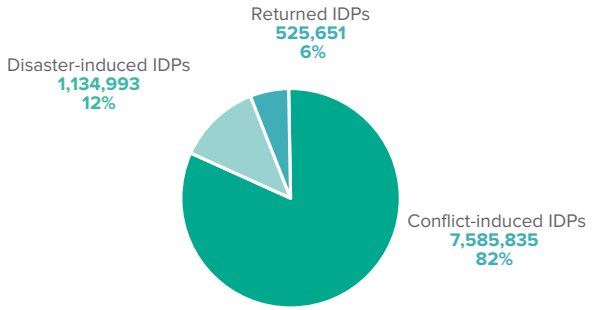
9,246,479

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS & IDPs RETURNEES

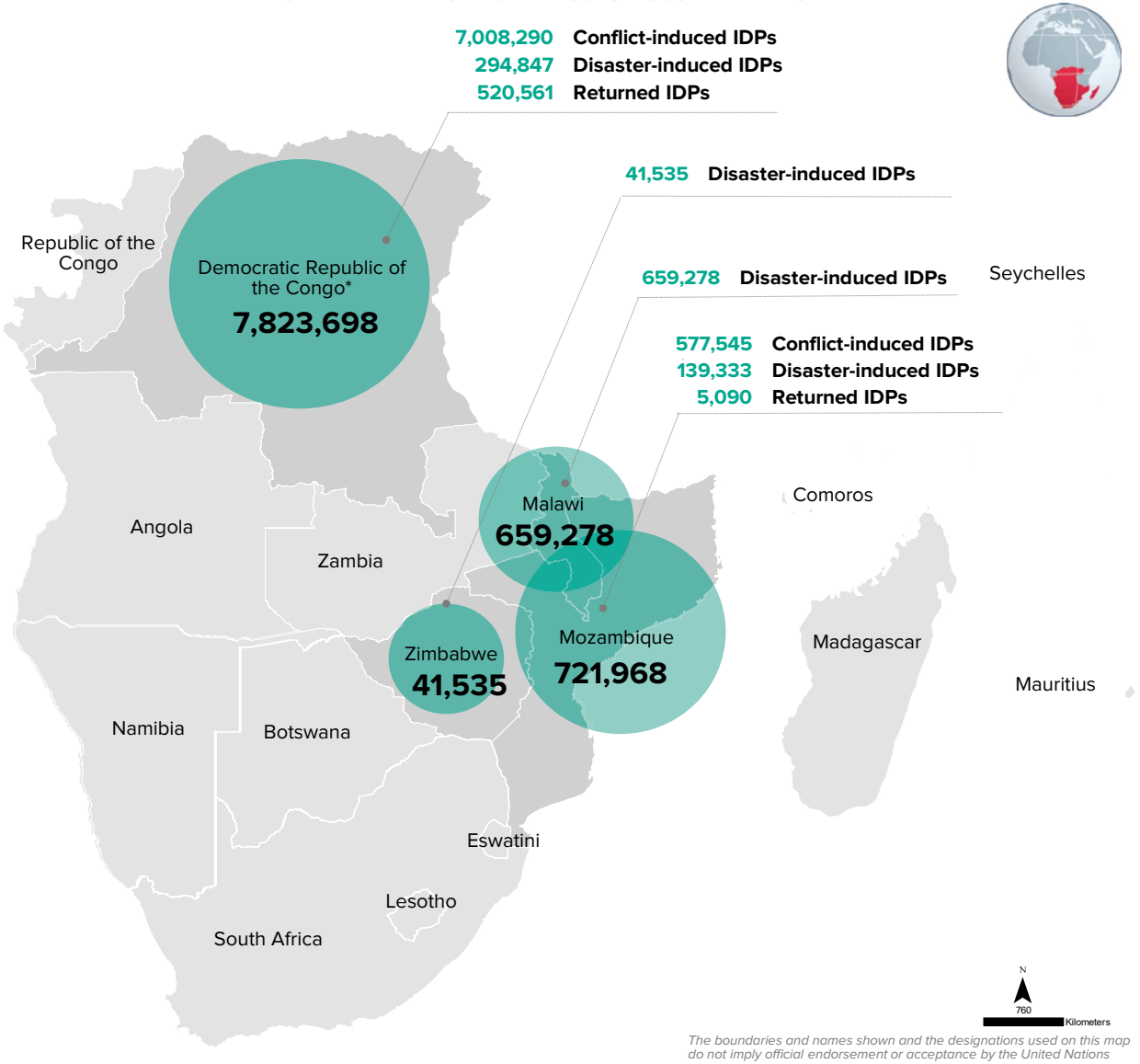
IDPs by Country of Origin



Proportion of IDPs



MAP OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Author: UNHCR DIMA - RSA Contact : rsarbdima@unhcr.org

Source: REF, ASY, OOC, RET (UNHCR PRIMES, Government); **IDP DRC** (OCHA); IDP Zimbabwe & Mozambique (IOM); **IDP ROC** (Government, Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Action (MASAH).

Date of creation : As of 30 June 2024

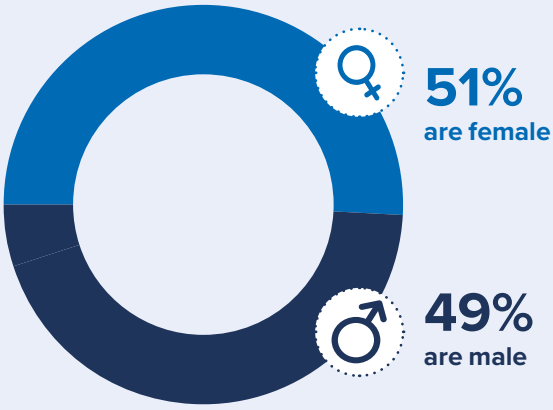
For more information visit: UNHCR Data Portal

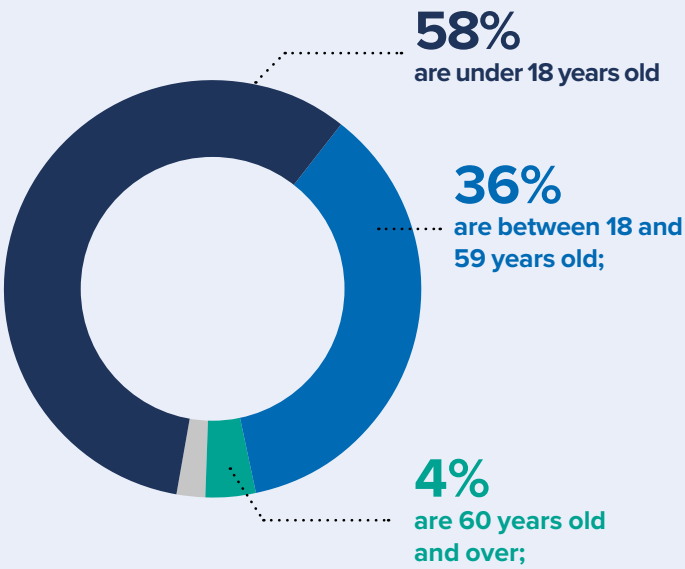
* IDP figures in DRC are as of 31 October 2023 DRC = Democratic Republic of the Congo ROC = Repulic of the Co ngo IDPs = Internally Dispaced Persons

Internally Displaced Persons

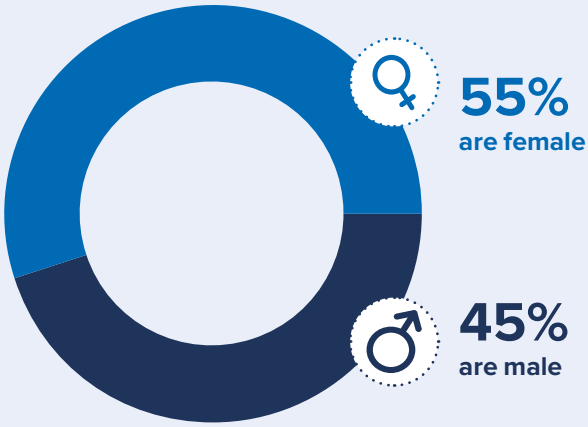
Demographics

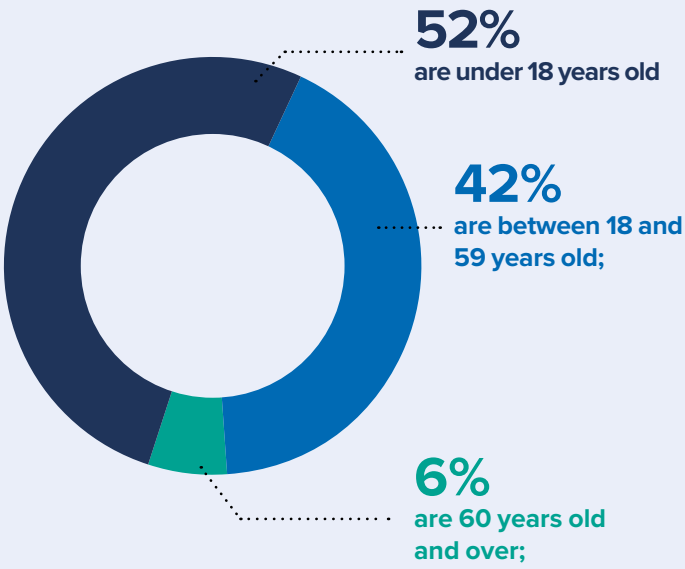
In DRC





In Mozambique





Socioeconomic profiles and needs

In DRC

42% of the IDPs possess legally recognized identity documents or credentials.

15% of the IDPs own an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money service provider

3% of the IDPs self-reported positive changes in their income compared to previous year.

1% of the IDPs are unemployed.

38% of the IDPs are covered by social protection floors/systems.

In Mozambique

68% of the IDPs possess legally recognized identity documents or credentials.

36% of the IDPs own an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money service provider

13% of the IDPs self-reported positive changes in their income compared to previous year.

23% of the IDPs are unemployed.

6% of the IDPs are covered by social protection floors/systems.

In the Southern Africa region, IDPs make up 89 per cent of the total population that UNHCR is mandated to protect and assist. This IDP population is primarily located in the DRC and Mozambique, where conflict is the main driver of internal displacement. Additionally, the region has 1.1 million people displaced internally due to disasters and climate change. The displacement figures are as follows: Malawi (659,278), DRC (294,847), Mozambique (139,333) and Zimbabwe (41,535). The region also has ongoing IDP response efforts in the DRC and Mozambique.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS RESPONSE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

The DRC accounts for over 92 per cent of the region's IDPs, totalling 7.6 million individuals, most of whom have been displaced due to armed conflict. The IDP population is composed of 51 per cent females and 49 per cent males. Notably, the population is predominantly young, with 58 per cent aged 0 to 17 years, 36 per cent aged 18 to 59 years and 4 per cent aged 60 years and above.

In 2024, through protection monitoring and advocacy efforts led by UNHCR and its partners, 520,561 IDPs successfully returned to their places of origin. Of the total human rights violations identified in 2024, 20 per cent have involved IDPs. The five most prevalent violations were assault and battery (4 per cent), extortion of property (4 per cent), rape (2 per cent), looting (2 per cent) and illegal detention (1 per cent).

In alignment with SDG 16.9, UNHCR initiated

individual registration processes at the start of 2024. This resulted in 281,615 IDPs being registered and documented, primarily through the issuance of birth registration certificates. The age distribution of those receiving documentation is as follows: 25 per cent aged 0 to 5 years, 34 per cent aged 6 to 17 years, 36 per cent aged 18 to 59 years and 5 per cent aged 60 years and above.

Regarding access to basic services in IDP sites managed by UNHCR, a multisectoral response was coordinated with other actors. Over 744,000 IDPs benefited as part of the broader humanitarian effort through the CCCM (Camp Coordination and Camp Management) Cluster. A total of 1.3 million IDPs are hosted in camps under the CCCM mechanism. The provinces covered include Ituri (166,970 individuals), North Kivu (551,873 individuals) and South Kivu (25,339 individuals). Although UNHCR in the DRC does not directly implement livelihood activities for IDPs, 17,190 individuals have received cash assistance since the beginning of 2024.

Protection monitoring by UNHCR and its partners has identified over 26,000 violations and abuses. While this monitoring covered approximately 448,000 people, this represents only 6 per cent of the total IDP population in the DRC. Moreover, protection incidents were recorded in 27 of the 53 territories hosting IDPs. Therefore, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the protection environment it is necessary to expand the coverage area by increasing the number of monitors across the entire country.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS RESPONSE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique hosts 577,545 IDPs due to conflict, with the following demographic breakdown: 55 per cent female, 45 per cent male, 52 per cent children under age 18, 42 per cent aged 18 to 59 years and 6 per cent aged 60 years and above. In Northern Mozambique, 74 per cent of IDPs live in host communities, while 26 per cent reside in site-like settings. Notably, 76 per cent of the country's IDPs are in Cabo Delgado province. Between 1 January and 30 June 2024, 5,090 IDPs spontaneously returned to their places of origin.

Regarding documentation, UNHCR Mozambique assisted 7,723 IDPs and host community members in acquiring civil documentation (birth certificates and national IDs) during the reporting period, restoring their access to basic rights and services.

Protection monitoring in Mozambique identified human rights violations affecting 471 IDP households from 1 January to 30 June 2024. The top five reported violations were: destruction of property (75 per cent), killing (16 per cent), theft (4 per cent), abduction (3 per cent) and forced eviction from house/land (1 per cent). The most affected districts in Cabo Delgado province were Chiure (46 per cent of violations), Metuge (37 per cent), Macomia (7 per cent), Quissanga (2 per cent) and Meluco (1 per cent).

In terms of livelihoods, 472 IDPs and 163 host community members benefited from livelihood assistance, including vocational training, business skills and financial literacy training, entrepreneurship training and business grants. However, from 1 January to 30 June 2024, no one benefited from shelter assistance, including climate-resilient shelters, shelter upgrades and shelter repair kits.

The following needs of IDPs and returnees in Mozambique (Cabo Delgado and Nampula), were identified through more than 6,200 household interviews conducted during protection monitoring:

- 85 per cent of interviewed households have at least one family member with specific needs. This includes people with disabilities, serious medical conditions, specific legal and physical protection needs and children at risk.
- The top three reported protection needs are safety and security, civil documentation and child protection/education.
- The top three reported humanitarian assistance needs are food, material assistance and shelter.
- 39 per cent of respondents lack some or all civil documentation, leaving them without access to basic rights and services.

Statelessness

The High-Level Segment on Statelessness that took place in October 2019, and the Global Refugee Forums (GRF) in 2019 and 2023, sparked an unprecedented commitment to end statelessness. This is evidenced by the significant number of pledges made by Southern African States. Globally, 66 States submitted 252 pledges to the High-level Segment, including 13 from Southern African.

2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the end of the #IBelong campaign to End Statelessness. Therefore, a new initiative, called the Global Alliance to End Statelessness, will be launched in October 2024 during the 75th session of the Executive Committee. This alliance aims to build on the successes, momentum and lessons learned from the campaign to create "a world free from statelessness where everyone enjoys the right to a nationality without discrimination". UNHCR is engaging with the governments in the Southern Africa region to promote their membership in the Global Alliance and accelerate efforts to end statelessness.

Statelessness is a significant issue in Southern Africa, where many countries are already grappling with ongoing emergencies, protracted displacement and mixed movements due to conflict, persecution, human rights violations and climate change. At the end of 2023, UNHCR reported 4.4 million stateless people worldwide. In Southern Africa, it is challenging to find reliable and unified data sources, making it difficult to determine the exact number of stateless individuals and those at risk. **It is estimated that millions are at risk of statelessness in Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries**.

To address this, the UNHCR Regional Bureau in Southern Africa is promoting collaboration with NSOs through a regional Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) endorsed in 2022 with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This MoU supports the inclusion of forcibly displaced and stateless persons in national censuses. **The census is a reliable data source that UNHCR in Southern Africa will utilize to gather accurate data on stateless persons and those at risk. The data will assist in the planning of activities related to the prevention and eradication of statelessness**. **Additionally, UNHCR has launched studies on statelessness in several countries in the region to better understand the situation.**

UNHCR continues to engage with governments in the region to collect qualitative and quantitative data on stateless individuals and those at risk. In March 2023, the Government of Namibia reported that 141,000 people were identified and registered as stateless and undocumented. National authorities have begun registering these individuals, and a new law will be enacted to regularize their status.[2]

In June 2022, the SADC adopted a two-year roadmap to eradicate statelessness, with UNHCR actively supporting its implementation. Of the 33 activities set out in this roadmap, 72 per cent are at various stages of implementation.

Among the 16 countries in the region, five are parties to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (Angola, Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho and Mozambique). Nine Member States are party to the 1954 Convention (Angola, Botswana, Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

UNHCR supports governments and Regional

2 Source: Over 141 000 people stateless, undocumented - News - The Namibian

Economic Communities (RECs) in addressing statelessness issues. It encourages new synergies with development actors and promotes the exchange of ideas and practices among countries to create a more holistic and effective approach to tackling statelessness.

Since 2023, several governments in the region have included refugees in civil registration and vital events. Birth certificates have been issued to refugee and asylum-seeker children aged five and under in the following countries: Mozambique (85 per cent), Angola (82 per cent), Zambia (41 per cent), Malawi (36 per cent), DRC (30 per cent), Zimbabwe (30 per cent) and the Republic of Congo (21 per cent).

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA IN ADDRESSING STATELESSNESS

	Party to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons	Party to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness	National Action Plans adopted	Study on Statelessness completed	Study on Statelessness is ongoing	Legislative reforms are ongoing	Birth registration scaled up
SADC Countries							
Angola	✓	✓		✓			
Botswana	✓	✓			✓		
Comoros							
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)			✓				
Eswatini	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Lesotho	✓					✓	
Madasgascar	✓						
Mauritius							
Malawi	✓			✓			✓
Mozambique	✓				✓		✓
Namibia				✓		✓	✓
Seychelles							
South Africa					✓	✓	✓
Tanzania							
Zambia	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Zimbabwe	✓	✓					
Non SADC Country							
Republic of Congo (RoC)			✓				

Mixed movements

Mixed movements of refugees and migrants present significant, multifaceted challenges for Southern African countries, the individuals involved and communities in countries of origin, asylum, transit and destination. These movements occur along two major routes:

- The Southern Africa route from East Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region towards South Africa.
- The Western Indian Ocean route towards Comoros and Mayotte.

While refugees have distinct needs for international protection, as recognized in international refugee law, they often use the same routes as migrants and face similar vulnerabilities and risks, such as falling prey to traffickers and smugglers.

Effectively and predictably responding to the challenges of mixed movements requires a route-based approach. This involves engaging States, RECs and other key players to ensure more humane and effective protection and solutions for refugees, while upholding rights and creating opportunities for migrants, along key routes.

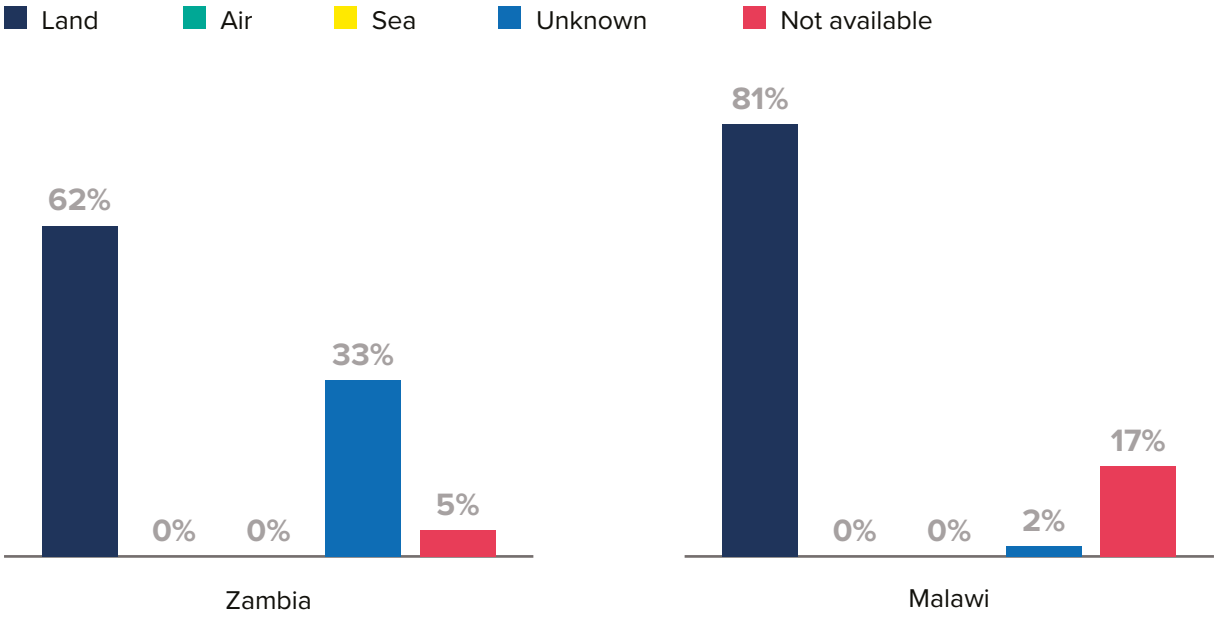


FIGURE 5: Type of route used by refugees and asylum-seekers to enter host countries

Regional analysis of cross-border movements shows that forcibly displaced persons use various routes (for example by land, air and sea). The primary reasons for leaving their home countries include insecurity, conflict, wars, instability, persecution and rebel activities. Zambia and Malawi are particularly effective in reporting on routes used by registered refugees and asylum-seekers in the region. Consequently, refugees and asylum-seekers are disaggregated by their routes of arrival in Zambia and Malawi as shown in Figure 5.

With the standardization of the regional registration dataset, systems have been revamped to prioritize

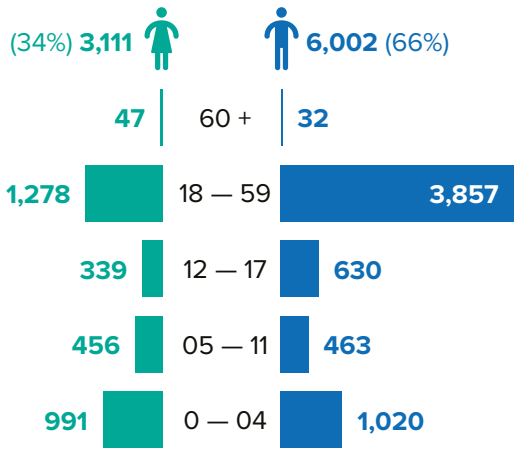


FIGURE 6: Age and Sex breakdown of the refugees and asylum-seekers involved in the mixed movements in Southern Africa region

data collection at entry points during the registration of new arrivals, newborns and routine data updates. This ensures comprehensive and disaggregated data on mixed movements of refugees and asylum-seekers along the Southern route. Additionally, the region collaborated with the Mixed Migration Centre in qualitative data research. Their 4Mi data collection and analysis in South Africa revealed that out of 468 respondents, 99 self-reported as either asylum-seekers or refugees. Of these, 8 per cent arrived by mixed routes, 11 per cent by air routes and 81 per cent by land routes (Mixed Migration Centre, 2022).

South Africa is a major destination country. The 2022 South Africa national census revealed that between 2011 and 2022, Gauteng Province received a net influx of almost 400,000 people. The top five sending countries were Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This remained consistent from 2011 to 2022, with more than 85 per cent of all migrants arriving from these five countries in 2022 (South Africa NSO's Census Report, 2022).

In conclusion, cross-border movements of forcibly displaced persons in the region are predominantly by land routes. The region categorizes mixed movements into arrivals and onward movements. A regional overview of mixed movements as of June 2024 shows that UNHCR identified 26,771 cross-border movements in Southern Africa, with 25,082 arrivals in the region and 1,689 secondary (onward) movements.

ARRIVALS IN THE REGION

The arrivals in the region are divided into two sub-categories: new arrivals (those who arrived this year) and those who came before 2024 but were only registered this year by UNHCR, the government or partners. There were 9,114 new arrivals and 15,968 refugees and asylum-seekers who arrived before this year but were registered in 2024. 47 per cent of these individuals are in South Africa. Figure 7 shows an overview of the identified arrivals in the region. It indicates that, as of June 2024, South Africa was the country that received the most refugees and asylum-seekers.

For the overall arrivals in the region, the top 10 nationalities moving in the Southern Africa region are illustrated in Figure 8.

All these arrivals cited conflict or the general insecurity in their country of origin as the reason for flight. For those who arrived before 2024 and registered this year, the top three nationalities are South Sudanese, followed by people from the DRC and Ethiopians. While for new arrivals, the top three nationalities are people from the DRC, followed by Ethiopians and Burundians. From a legal status perspective, there are 73 per cent of refugees and 27 per cent of asylum-seekers who arrived before 2024 and registered in 2024. 1 per cent of this group have specific protection needs and the proportion of males and females seems to be equal.

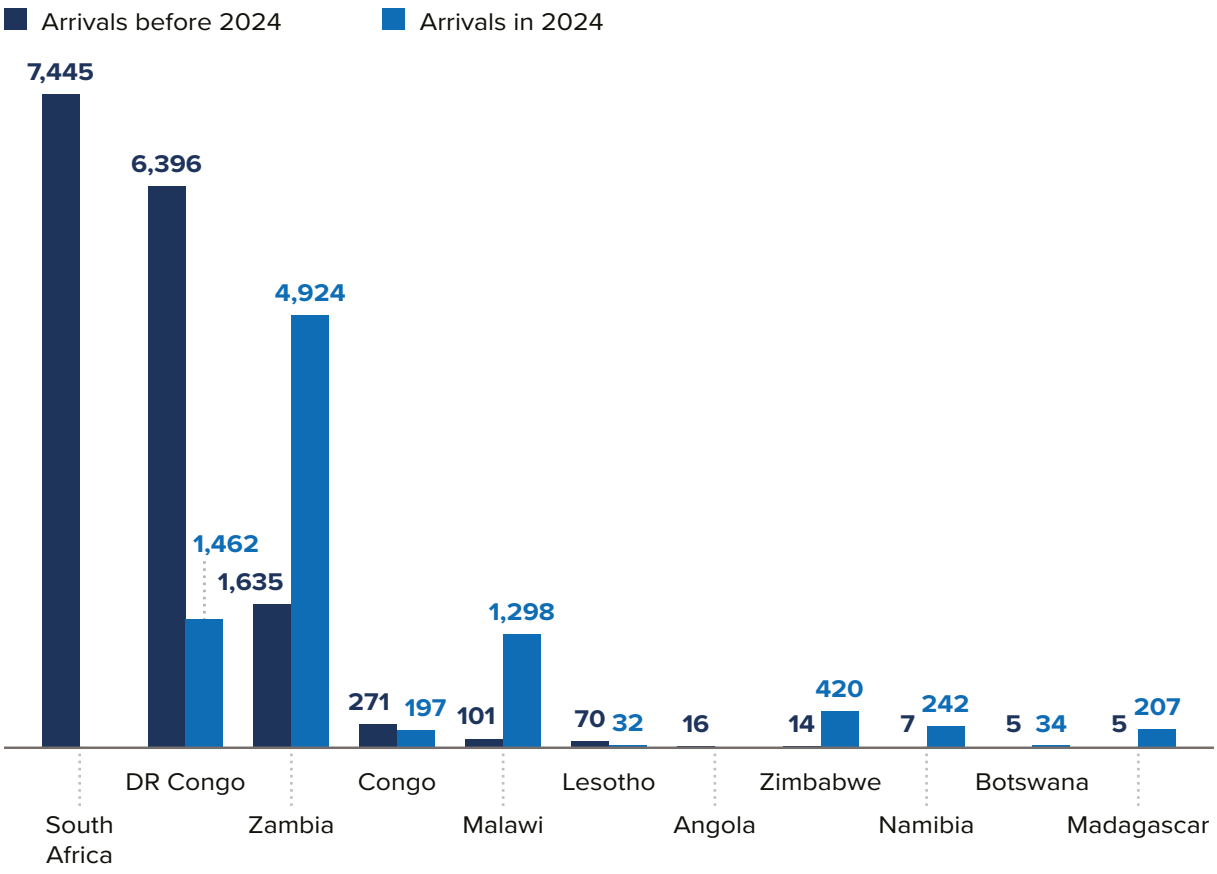


FIGURE 7: Arrivals per country of asylum in Southern Africa region

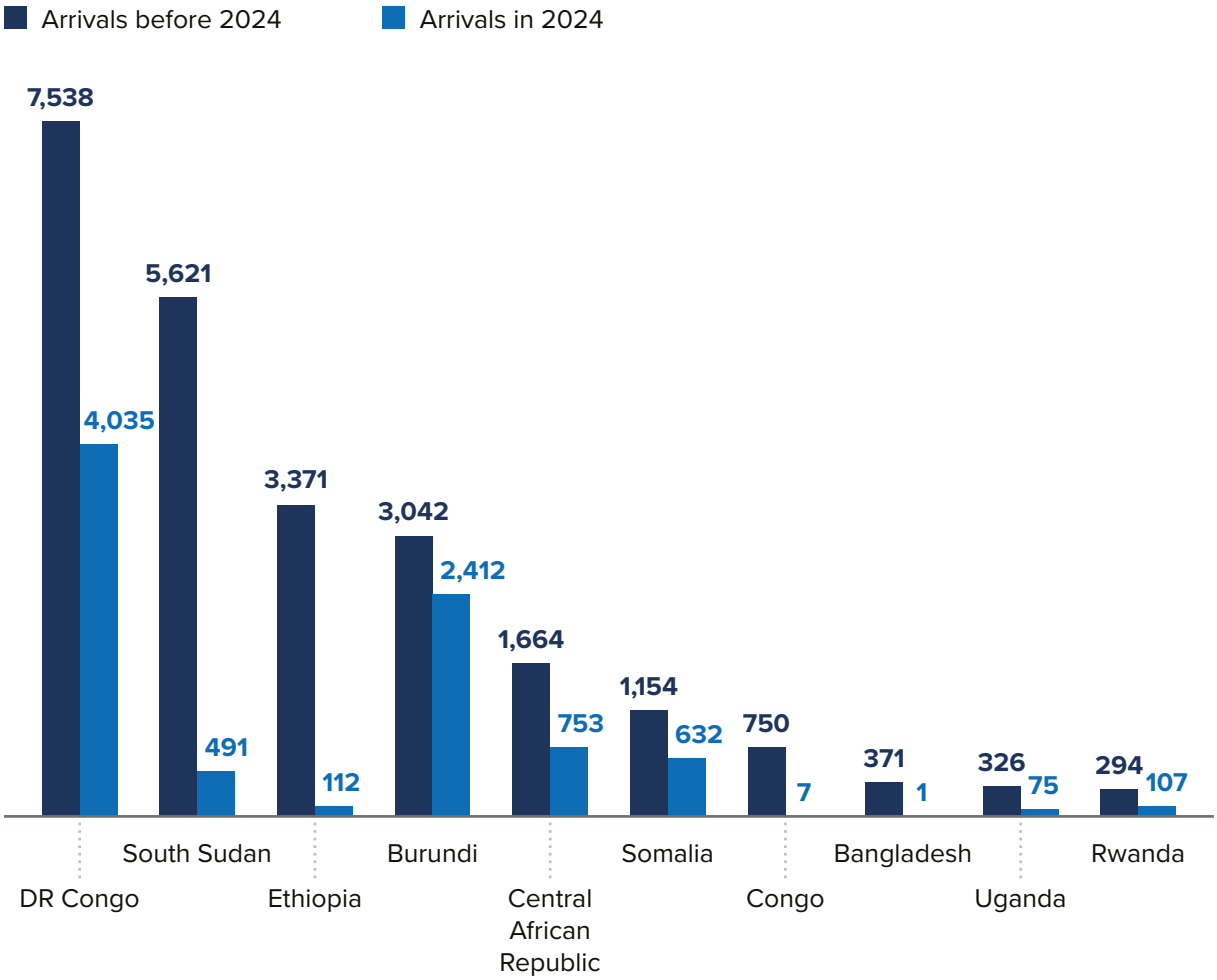


FIGURE 8: Trend of arrivals per country of origin

NEW ARRIVALS

New arrival refers to individuals who, within the current year, have crossed into a country seeking international protection and have been registered by UNHCR, the government or partners. From January to June 2024, the region identified 9,114 new arrivals, including 43 per cent children and 1 per cent persons with specific needs. The top five nationalities of new arrivals were the DRC (45 per cent), Burundi (27 per cent), Central Africa Republic (7 per cent), Somalia (7 per cent) and South Sudan (5 per cent). The top five destinations of these new arrivals were Zambia (54 per cent), DRC (16 per cent), Malawi (14 per cent), Zimbabwe (5 per cent) and Eswatini (3 per cent).

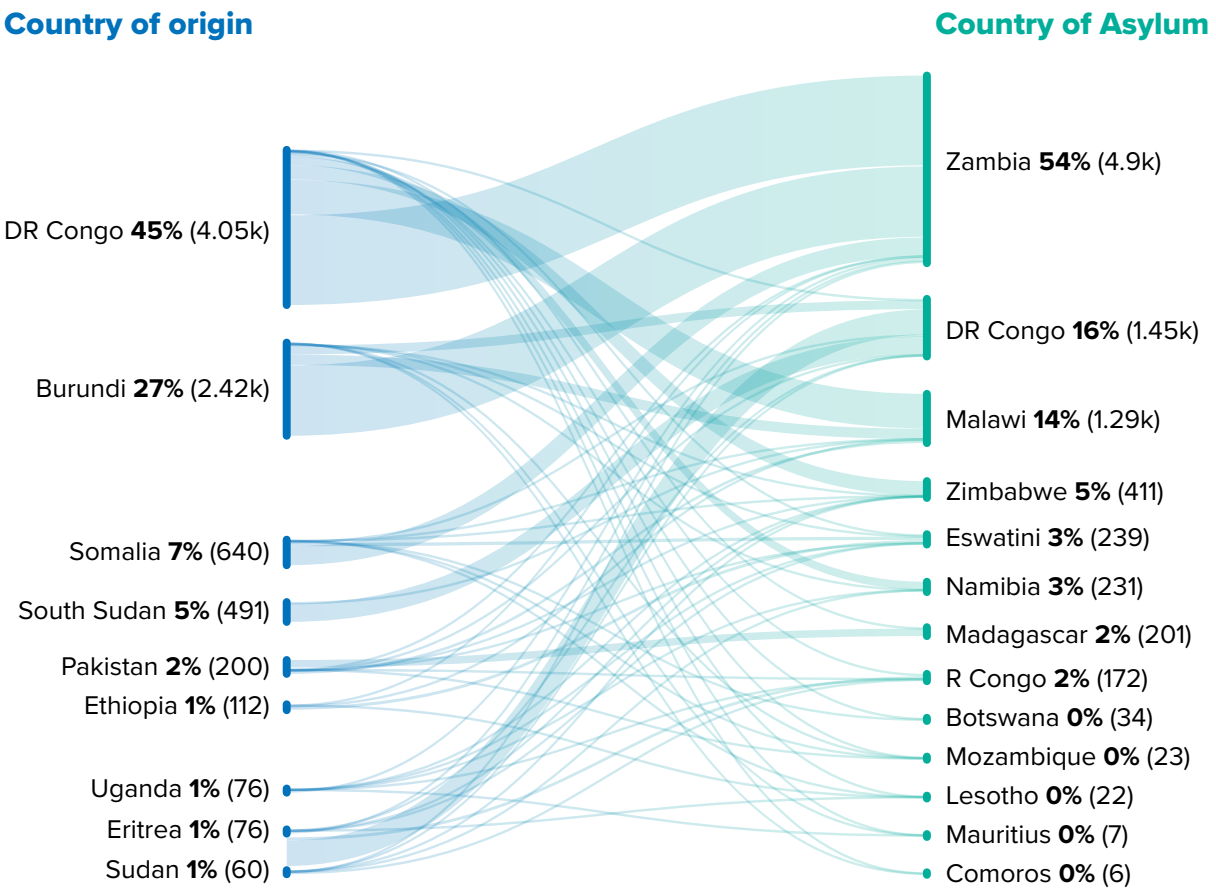


FIGURE 9: New arrivals movements (country of origin to country of asylum) in southern Africa region from January to June 2024

In May 2024, the region experienced the highest peak of new arrivals for the first half of the year. This surge, which began in April 2024, is attributed to escalating violence in the DRC. Conflicts in eastern Congo have spread to previously stable areas, such as Lubero, Masisi and the Kalehe coastal zones, leading to increased displacements. According to OCHA, approximately 700,000 people were newly displaced between April and May 2024, bringing the total number of displaced individuals to 7.2 million. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in the number of people from the DRC seeking asylum in neighbouring countries. 45 per cent of new refugee arrivals in Southern Africa originate from the DRC.

ONWARD OR SECONDARY MOVEMENTS

This term refers to the movement of refugees and asylum-seekers from one country where they enjoyed, or could have sought and received, international protection to another where they may request it. During this review period, the region identified 1,689 movements, captured in BIMS.

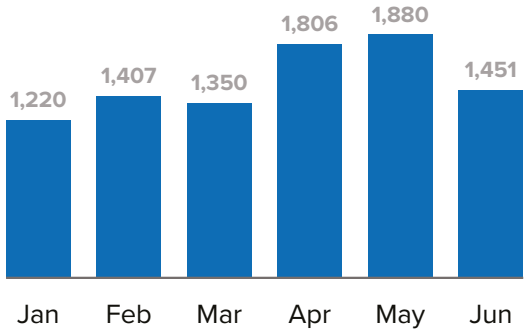


FIGURE 10: Trend of new arrivals from January to June 2024

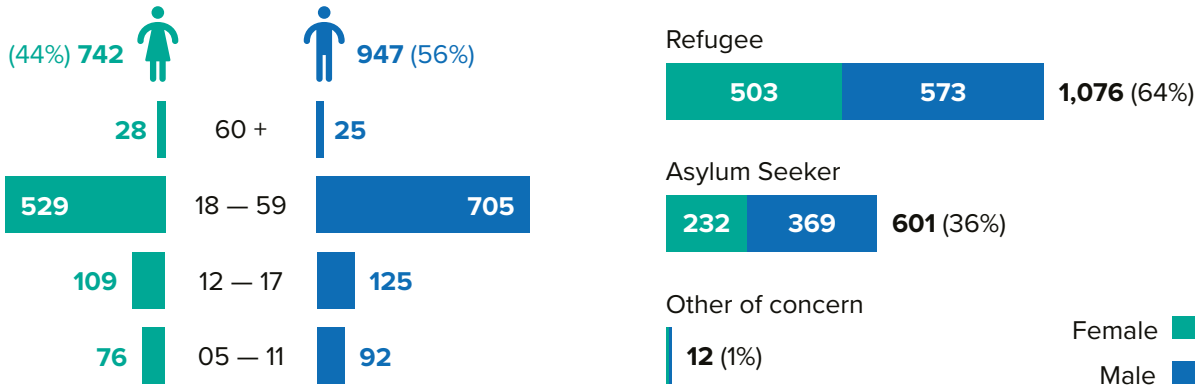


FIGURE 11: Age, sex and legal status of onward movers

The individuals moving cross-border within the region include those with vulnerable profiles. The top three of which are those with serious medical conditions (18 per cent), disabilities (16 per cent) and single parents (15 per cent). From a socioeconomic perspective, the profiles include unemployed individuals (12 per cent), students (29 per cent) and skilled workers (35 per cent). The top three recorded skills are market-oriented skilled agricultural workers (23 per cent), agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers (17 per cent) and personal services workers (10 per cent). Language proficiencies include Swahili (27 per cent), English (17 per cent) and Nyanja (9 per cent).

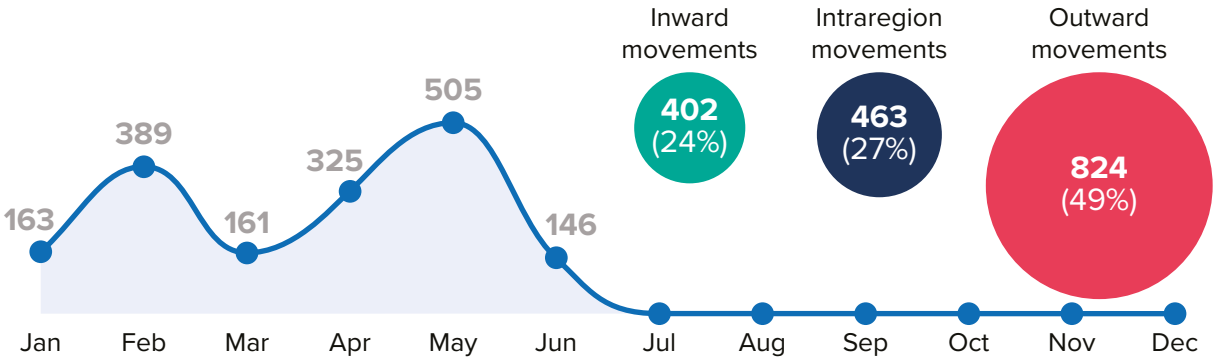


FIGURE 12: Trend and type of movement of onward movers in 2024

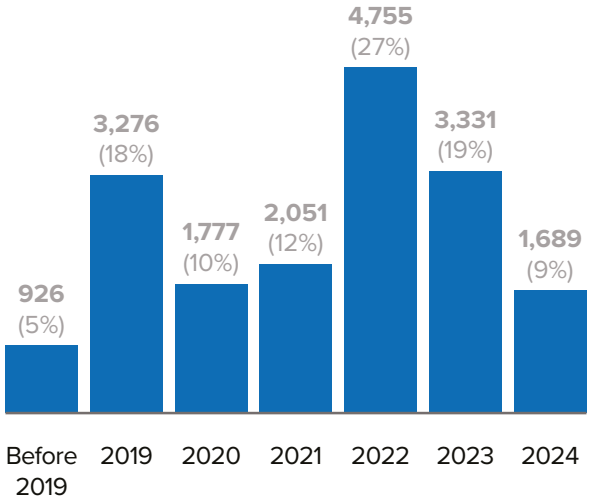


FIGURE 13: Annual trend of movement of onward movers

The total of the secondary (onward) movements identified in the first half of 2024 represent 51 per cent of all movements identified in 2023. As outlined in figure 13, most of the movements identified this year (as of June 2024) are outward, involving the main countries highlighted in the graphic.

The top five nationalities of refugees and asylum-seekers on the move in the region are from the DRC (51 per cent), South Sudan (19 per cent), Burundi (16 per cent), Somalia (6 per cent) and the Central African Republic (3 per cent). This aligns with the new arrival trends during the same reporting period, suggesting that those moving southward along the Southern route are not necessarily registering for asylum in multiple countries.

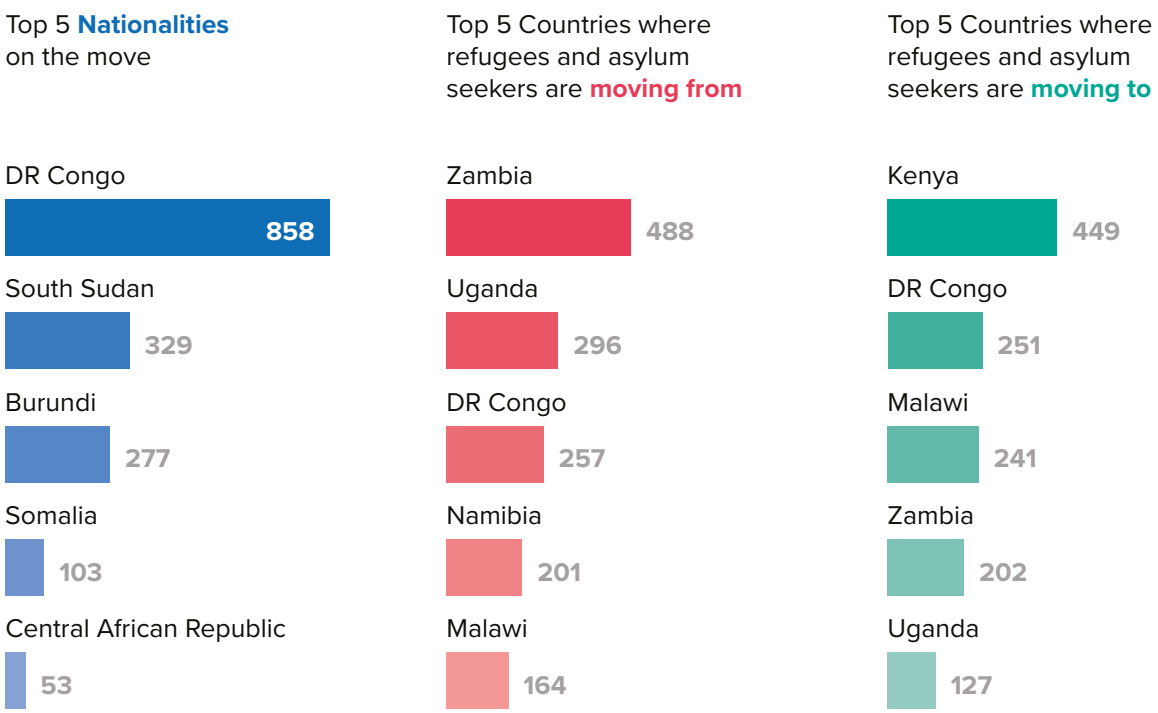


FIGURE 14: Nationality, country of origin and country of asylum of onward movers

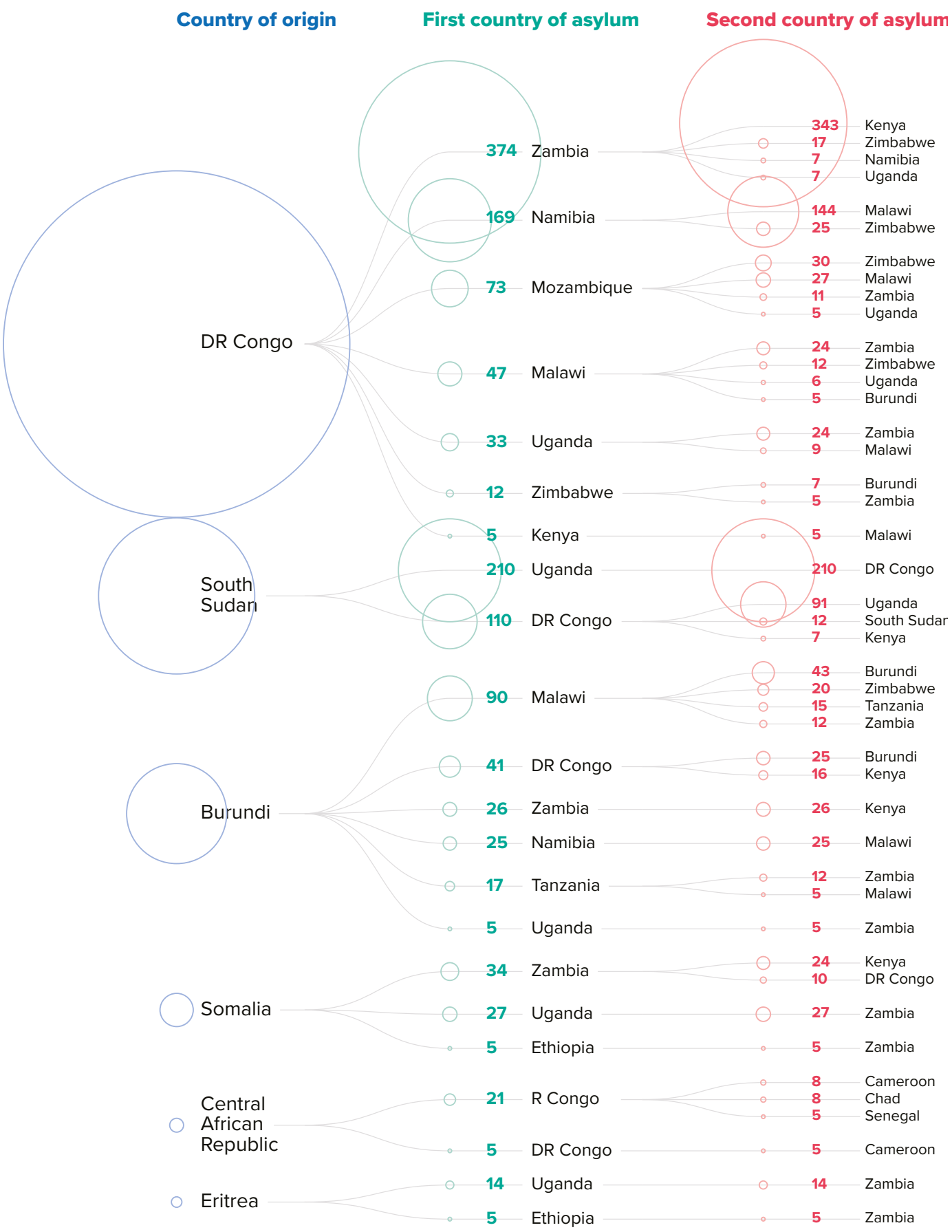


FIGURE 15: Movements of onward movers from first to second country of asylum

Regional data analysis shows that only 3 per cent of Congolese refugees who arrived in Zambia in 2024 moved on to other countries. Of these, 36 per cent moved to Malawi, 31 per cent to Uganda, 10 per cent to Mozambique and 5 per cent to Zimbabwe. While none of the new arrivals moved to Kenya, some Congolese refugees already in Zambia did relocate to Kenya.

In addition to existing data collection mechanisms on onward movements, the region has endorsed a 2024-2027 regional strategy for implementing a route-based approach. This strategy aims to enhance protection and solutions for refugees and migrants in mixed movements along the Southern Africa route.

Objective 6 of the regional strategy emphasizes sound data collection and analysis to understand the nature, scale and trends within mixed movements. This data will inform the design, implementation and evaluation of appropriate policies and responses. To this end, the region designed, and will roll out, continuous and harmonized data collection and triangulation on onward and mixed movements of refugees and migrants. This will be done using a self-service digital platform for forcibly displaced and stateless persons on the move, as well as migrants within and across borders in Southern Africa.

The rollout of this digital platform could initially be piloted in specific countries such as South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Angola and Namibia. This will involve engaging communities and leaders from forcibly displaced populations through information campaigns. Incentives will also be provided to individuals dedicated to supporting the data collection effort. This initiative will complement UNHCR's existing biometric identity management system (BIMS) in countries like South Africa and Angola, where BIMS is not used to capture primary and secondary movements of refugees and asylum-seekers.

The way forward

To enhance regional data and improve service delivery, the region will focus on the following key objectives:

- Enhancing regional data governance: The focus will be on harmonization, quality assurance, analysis, inventory, interoperability, protection, security and capacity development. These efforts will align with the 2024-2027 regional strategy to implement a route-based approach. This strategy aims to strengthen protection and solutions for refugees and migrants along the Southern Africa route. It will do this through comprehensive, targeted and coordinated interventions by States, UNHCR, International Organization for Migration (IOM), other UN agencies, civil society partners, migrant and refugee organizations, and other stakeholders. The overall goal is to:
    - Reduce dangerous journeys and related human suffering.
    - Offer effective, rights-based alternatives to externalization proposals and expulsion practices.
    - Help States manage the challenges of irregular movements, including return, in line with their international obligations.
- Enabling data for development programmes: We will work with National Statistics Offices to raise awareness of the Expert Group on Refugee, IDP and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS), participate in EGRISS workshops and collaborate on census preparation. Anticipated initiatives include operationalizing the Demographic and Health Survey in Malawi and the Living Standards Measurement Study in the DRC, with the support of JDC, and conducting a forced displacement survey in Zambia with financial support from the European Union. We will emphasize the inclusion of the UNHCR population, which represents only 3 per cent of the total regional population, in national statistical frameworks to ensure this small group is not left behind.
- Leveraging digital tools: Efforts will be strengthened to promote the issuance of refugee travel documents that comply with International Civil Aviation Organization standards. We will also support sustainable programming through self-service and the use of PRIMES tools, and innovate by testing and piloting AI to enhance data analysis.

The region is committed to the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs. This includes eradicating poverty in all its forms, ending discrimination and exclusion, and reducing inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind. Persistent forms of discrimination, including gender discrimination, must be addressed to ensure that individuals, families and whole communities are not marginalized and excluded.

By focusing on these objectives and leveraging digital tools, the region will create a more inclusive and effective approach to managing mixed movements and ensuring the protection and well-being of refugees and migrants.

Regional Bureau for Southern Africa

Population Data Analysis Mid-Year Review

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Contact:

UNHCR RBSA DIMA, rsarb@unhcr.org

Links: UNHCR RBSA data portal – Facebook – Twitter – Instagram