

# DR Congo

February 2020

**527,038\*** refugees and asylum seekers in DRC, among them 82% women and children.

**73.7%\*** of refugees in DRC live in rural areas, and 25% live inside refugee camps or settlements.

**905,059\*** refugees from DRC in Africa.

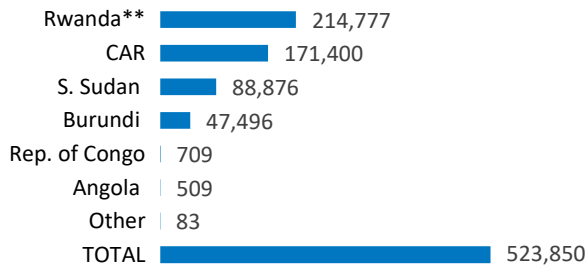
\* January 2020 figures

## POPULATION OF CONCERN

**523,850\*** refugees and **3,188\*** asylum-seekers in DRC

**5.01M** Internally Displaced Persons

Country of origin



\* January 2020 figures

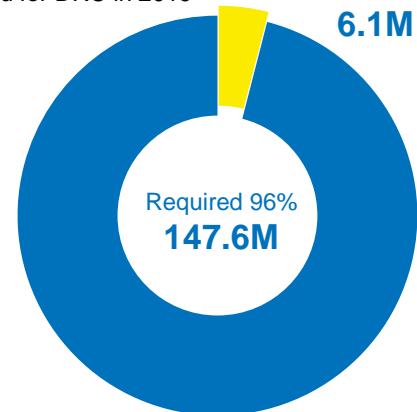
\*\* The DRC Government presented the number of 245,052 Rwandan refugees as the outcome of a pre-registration exercise by the National Commission for Refugees from December 2014 to January 2015. Biometric registration of Rwandan refugees is ongoing.

## FUNDING AS OF 27 FEBRUARY 2020

**USD 153.8 M**

requested for DRC in 2019

Funded 4%  
**6.1M**



## UNHCR PRESENCE (AS OF 29 FEB 2019)

### Staff:

National staff	295
International staff	93
Affiliate workforce and deployees	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>

### Offices:

- 1 Regional Representation in Kinshasa
  - 5 Sub-Offices: Aru, Gbadolite, Goma, Kalemie, Kananga
  - 5 Field Offices: Baraka, Bukavu, Bunia, Beni, Libenge, Lubumbashi
  - 8 Field Units: Aba, Bili, Dungu, Tshikapa, Uvira, Zongo
- Total 18 offices**



A community market building handed over by UNHCR in a return village in Tanganyika, to help former displaced persons rebuild their resilience. © UNHCR / Aline Irakarama

## Main activities – Refugees

### Protection

- UNHCR provides practical and technical support to national, provincial and local authorities, including the **National Commission for Refugees (CNR)**. UNHCR trains key counterparts on principles of refugee protection and international law. It collaborates with national authorities on the **biometric registration** of refugees and facilitates the provision of **refugee ID documents** by Congolese authorities, as well as access to **civil registration**.
- UNHCR monitors **arrivals**, the **protection environment** (rule of law, civilian character of asylum, access to justice, non-refoulement), and specific needs, notably at borders and in refugee-hosting areas. UNHCR works towards child protection, including through support for **Best Interest Determination (BID)** assessments, and carries out detention monitoring.
- **Individual support and assistance** are also provided, including advocacy and the preparation and submission of urgent **resettlement** cases.
- UNHCR also facilitates **access to justice** through support for police in refugee-hosting areas, mobile courts, and the availability of legal aid.
- Lastly, UNHCR supports **access to land** for agriculture and housing, with a view of allowing alternatives to camps and supporting self-reliance wherever possible.

### Education

- UNHCR supports the integration of refugee children into the **national education system**. Due to a lack of resources, the focus is on primary education.
- Since schools lack resources to take in large numbers of refugee children, UNHCR provides **infrastructure support** (rehabilitation and construction), **equipment** (school uniforms, stationery, etc.), and **payments** of additional teaching staff and of school fees where necessary.

### Health

- UNHCR supports a **primary health programme** integrated to the national health system, in order to facilitate access to quality healthcare for refugees and local populations, through for example the supply of medicines, equipment and health staff, capacity-building, and support for the construction of health centers in and outside of camps.
- UNHCR supports the authorities in elaborating **local preparedness and response plans** for outbreaks and supports the response to outbreaks in refugee-hosting areas.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with authorities, ensures optimum access to **reproductive health services** (including prenatal and postnatal care), and to **HIV/AIDS programmes** in local health structures, as co-lead of the HIV/AIDS response for displaced persons, in line with the UNAIDS division of tasks.
- UNHCR works on the prevention and effective treatment of **acute malnutrition**, in collaboration with authorities.

### Food Security and Livelihoods

- UNHCR promotes refugees' self-reliance through **market-based livelihoods interventions**. Agricultural production is supported by ensuring **access to arable land** and providing agricultural inputs such as **seeds and tools**.
- UNHCR fosters **professional and vocational skills** for urban and rural refugees' self-employment. **Income-generation** is encouraged through the creation of viable business plans, and business and financial literacy training.
- UNHCR's livelihoods activities can also take the form of targeted **cash-based assistance** based on vulnerability criteria.
- UNHCR works in close collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and other UN partners, the Ministry of Agriculture, the World Bank-funded project PARSSA, and public and private companies.

- In close collaboration with UNHCR, WFP provides unconditional **food assistance** to 256,000 camp-based refugees every month.
- UNHCR is working on an **agro-forestry model** for South Sudanese refugees and host populations, aiming at the sustainable economic integration of refugees, and income-generation benefiting the host community and developing the area, while reducing the carbon footprint.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- UNHCR supports water, sanitation and hygiene programmes for refugees and host communities, to ensure that they have **adequate access** to potable water and sanitation without discrimination on sex or age. The three main strategic axes are the establishment of community management for WASH infrastructures, the inclusion of WASH services into the national system, and the improvement of WASH services.
- UNHCR **constructs and rehabilitates** water points (from water towers and wells, to natural water sources). Water Management Committees provide **maintenance and reparations** for water points.
- UNHCR provides **cash or materials** for refugees to build their own latrines and showers, along with sensitization and construction training.
- **Hygiene promotion activities** encourage refugees to adopt good hygiene practices.

## Shelter and Core Relief Items (CRIs)

- To ensure sustainable housing conditions, UNHCR promotes – wherever possible – **local construction materials** and a **community-based approach**, using conditional cash transfers as a preferred modality for shelter construction and rehabilitation. UNHCR's shelter strategy in DRC is centered around three priorities: to provide an emergency response, to support local integration, and to reinforce local capacities.
- UNHCR encourages the self-construction of **semi-durable shelters** in accordance with **local construction methods**, but does not exclude the use of emergency shelters in cases of acute and urgent need.
- UNHCR distributes **Core Relief Items (CRIs)**, such as kitchen sets, sleeping mats and mosquito nets, but provides cash for refugees to buy basic items whenever this option is viable.

## Site management

- UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) collaborate on the application of UNHCR's **Policy on Alternatives to Camps**, which aims at avoiding encampment and gives refugees the opportunity to become active members of the community while contributing to its wealth.
- UNHCR currently supports 4 camps for Central African refugees, 3 settlements for South Sudanese refugees, and one camp and one settlement for Burundian refugees.
- Collaboration with the World Bank and UNDP on local governance, and with other development actors in refugee-hosting areas, is expected to facilitate a shift towards stronger **community-based responses** in the coming years.

## Access to energy

- UNHCR is committed to the **Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE)** initiative, seeking to ensure refugees' access to combustibles and energy for cooking, heating and electricity.  
Through partners, UNHCR organizes trainings and the production of **biomass briquettes** (an alternative, eco-friendly combustible) and **fuel-efficient stoves**. Sensitization campaigns on energy-saving are organized. UNHCR supports the use of solar energy in community infrastructure (for example, health centers).

## Durable solutions and reintegration

- UNHCR supports all forms of durable solutions for refugees in DRC; **voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement to third countries**. Resettlements to third countries remain at a very limited scale, as there has been a global reduction in third countries' resettlement allocations, which severely impacted the DRC. Over

the past years, UNHCR has also facilitated the voluntary repatriation of tens of thousands of **Rwandan refugees**, as well as of **Central African refugees**, and of **Congolese refugees** coming back to the DRC.

- UNHCR has advocated for the issuance of **residence cards** for former refugees (Angolans, Rwandans), as well as for the issuance of **biometric travel documents** for current refugees.

## Logistics

- UNHCR has a **fleet of vehicles** to ensure that assistance to refugees is delivered in due time despite logistical challenges in DRC. To increase efficiency, UNHCR provides vehicles on loan to partners. Stocks of aid are also positioned in **warehouses** across the country. UNHCR works with UNHAS (UN Humanitarian Air Services) to ensure flights to refugee-hosting areas are available for the humanitarian community.
- Where necessary, UNHCR contributes to the **rehabilitation** of roads, bridges or other infrastructure in refugee-hosting areas.
- In collaboration with its partners, UNHCR facilitates transport and the provision of basic household items for the **repatriation** and **return** of refugees and displaced persons.

## Multipurpose cash grants (MPGs)

- In addition to sectoral cash assistance detailed in each relevant section, UNHCR provides multipurpose cash transfers to small numbers of refugee households with specific needs, to help them meet their **basic needs**, prevent **protection risks** and strengthen their **livelihoods**. Multipurpose cash transfers allow beneficiaries to choose the way they spend the money and respond to their own priority needs according to their own livelihoods strategies. Upon repatriation to countries of origin, refugees also receive multipurpose cash grants to help them **reintegrate** at home.

## Main activities – Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

### Protection

- UNHCR works with authorities to ensure the full **restoration of the rights** of IDPs and returnees, in areas such as the Kasai region and the provinces of Tanganyika, Haut-Katanga, Lualaba, Ituri, Mai Ndombe, Maniema, North Kivu and South Kivu.
- To inform the humanitarian response and ensure IDPs live in safety and dignity, UNHCR undertakes **protection monitoring** and related analysis in main displacement and return areas. The results are a source of information for the humanitarian community to craft protection-oriented responses, and serve as the basis for **advocacy** to local and national authorities, the **prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence** (including through sensitization and advocacy), **individual protection interventions** such as the referral of victims to relevant legal, medical or psychosocial structures, and **cash assistance** for protection outcomes.
- UNHCR provides practical and technical support to national, provincial and local authorities. It conducts **trainings** with local authorities, members of the armed forces and police, as well as IDPs and host communities, to inform them on the rights of IDPs and their obligations towards them.
- As the lead of the **Protection Cluster**, UNHCR coordinates and supports the protection activities of various humanitarian actors, including by actively supporting sub-clusters and working groups.
- UNHCR facilitates the implementation of the UN Humanitarian Country Team's protection strategy.

### Health

- UNHCR advocates for IDPs' and local populations' access to **HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment services**, under the UNAIDS division of labor. UNHCR organizes capacity-building through training of HIV service providers, and supplies screening tests in order to increase geographical coverage in displacement areas.

---

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- UNHCR **constructs** emergency latrines and showers, as well as garbage pits, and **rehabilitates** existing water sources, based on specific gaps and needs identified during shelter and site management activities.

---

## Shelter and Core Relief Items (CRIs)

- UNHCR's three strategic shelter orientations for IDPs in DRC are to provide an **emergency response**, to support **returns or local integration** in displacement areas, and to **reinforce local capacities**.
- In terms of **emergency responses**, those sleeping in the open air, in public buildings and in host families are targeted. UNHCR promotes **self-reconstruction and rehabilitation** with local materials, and IDPs and host communities' effective participation. UNHCR prioritizes conditional **cash transfers** as a modality to support shelter construction and rehabilitation.
- On 20 January 2020, the **Shelter Cluster** was activated in the DRC, with UNHCR as its lead. As the lead, UNHCR coordinates and supports other actors' shelter activities. Shelter remains a major underfunded need in DRC. Assessments by the Shelter Cluster at the end of 2019 showed that 4.1 million people needed shelter assistance, of which the Shelter Cluster will target 1.4 million for shelter and 1.3 million for CRIs.

---

## Site management

- UNHCR, together with IOM, supports the **management of some official IDP sites** including in North Kivu Province and Ituri Province.
- UNHCR co-leads the **Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Working Group** in Tanganyika and North Kivu provinces, jointly with IOM. Since 2018, the CCCM strategy focuses on solutions and support to local communities.

---

## Community empowerment and self-reliance

- To better protect IDPs and reduce risks of intercommunity conflict, UNHCR includes **host communities** into its programming. UNHCR reinforces local protection structures, and promotes peaceful coexistence, access to justice (for example, in case of conflicts over land and property – a major cause of conflict in DRC), and the participation of IDPs in decision-making.
- UNHCR also supports **income-generating activities** with a community-based approach. For example in North Kivu province, UNHCR established communal fields, helping IDPs gaining access to agricultural lands, and contributing to durable solutions.

---

## Durable solutions

- To promote durable solutions for IDPs, UNHCR provides, among others, livelihoods and shelter assistance to **returned IDPs** or to those who settle permanently elsewhere, as well as **protection assistance**.
- UNHCR advocates for the Government's adoption of the **National Durable Solutions Strategy** which has been supported by the Humanitarian Country Team.
- UNHCR is conducting advocacy for the DRC to ratify the **2009 Kampala Convention** (African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa) and to transpose it to national law. In October 2019, to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the Kampala Convention, UNHCR and ICRC organized an international conference on durable solutions in Kinshasa, DRC, to reinforce this advocacy.

---

## Multipurpose Cash Grants (MPGs)

- (see "Multipurpose Cash Grants" section on refugees)

## Main activities – Statelessness

### Protection

- As part of the fight against statelessness, UNHCR is advocating for the DRC Government to ratify the **1954 and 1961 UN conventions on statelessness**. With UNHCR's support, the DRC's Ministry of Justice signed the decrees establishing a National Interministerial Technical Committee to combat statelessness in DRC. This committee has the mandate to support the Government to prevent and respond to statelessness issues.
- UNHCR advocates for the implementation by the DRC Government of the 2017 **Declaration and Plan of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Member States on the Eradication of Statelessness**.
- UNHCR continues statelessness prevention activities, by facilitating the identification of stateless persons, and providing support for the reform of the civil registration system (**birth registrations** and the issuance of **birth certificates**) in North Kivu, South Kivu, Nord-Ubangi, Sud-Ubangi, and Ituri provinces.

### Working with Partners

- Together with the DRC Government, working closely with the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), UNHCR ensures international protection and delivery of multi assistance to persons of concern.
- UNHCR works with 19 national and international implementing partners: ACTIONAID UK, ACTED, ADES, ADRA, ADSSE, AIDES, AIRD, AMICOR, AJEDEC, CARITAS, CNR, CTLA, DRC, INTERSOS, JRS, MOCC, NRC, TSF et WAR CHILD UK.
- Coordination mechanisms: Within the cluster system, UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster and co-leads the Protection and Prevention component of the National Strategy on SGBV. UNHCR also leads the Shelter Working Group within the Shelter/NFI Cluster, co-leads the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Working Group jointly with IOM, and co-leads the National Cash Working Group jointly with UNOCHA.

### Donors

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of:

#### Donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2020

United Nations Foundation (0.3M) | International Olympic Committee (0.2M) | European Union (0.2M)

#### Donors of regional or sub-regional funds in 2020

Germany (8.4M) | Canada (2.3M)

#### Major donors of unearmarked funds in 2020

Sweden (76.4M) | Norway (41.4M) | Netherlands (36.1M) | Denmark (34.6M) | United Kingdom (31.7M) | Germany (26.4M) | Switzerland (16.4M)

### CONTACTS

Johannes van Gemund, Senior External Relations Officer, DRC, gemund@unhcr.org, Tel: +243 996 041 000, Cell +243 817 009 484

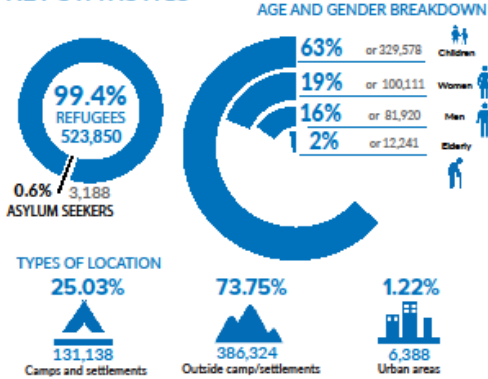
Simon Lubuku, Senior Public Information Associate DRC, lubuku@unhcr.org, Tel: +243 996 041 000, Cell +243 81 950 02 02

### LINKS

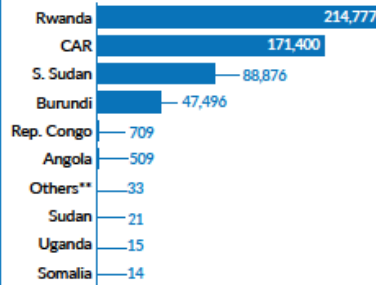
[DR Congo Emergency page](#) - [UNHCR DRC operation page](#) - [Facebook page](#) - [Twitter](#)

# 527,038

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS  
KEY STATISTICS



REFUGEE POPULATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

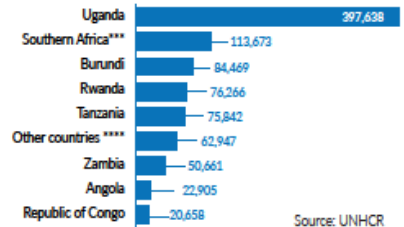


\*\*Others include Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Syria, Liberia, Chad, etc.

REFUGEES FROM DRC IN AFRICA

# 905,059\*

TOTAL DRC REFUGEE POPULATION

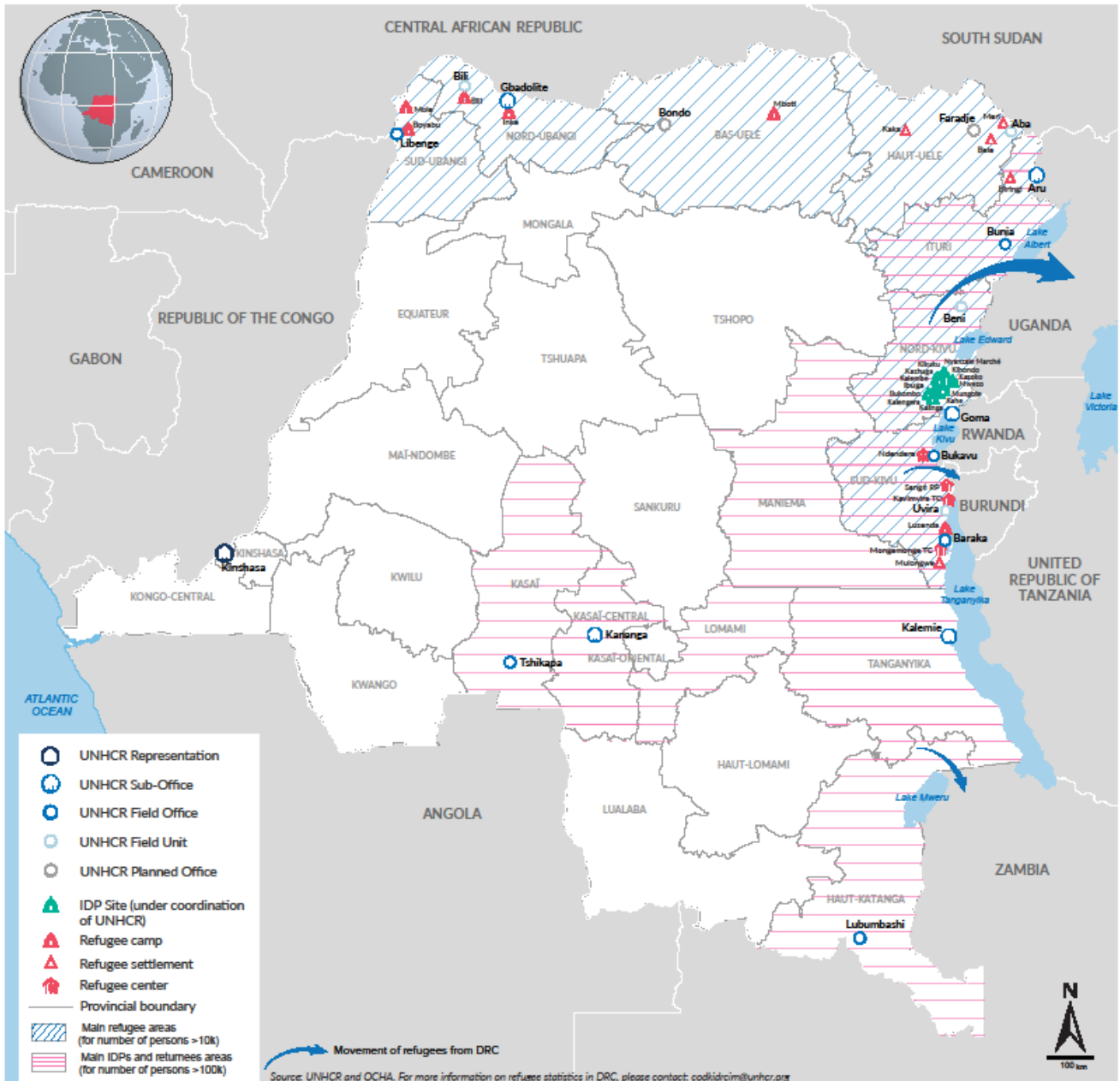


Source: UNHCR

\* These figures are those of December 2019, the figures for January 2020 are not yet available.

\*\*\* Southern Africa includes Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Madagascar, South Africa and the Kingdom of Eswatini.

\*\*\*\* Other countries include South Sudan, Kenya, Central African Republic and Chad.



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