

Democratic Republic of the Congo

1 – 29 February 2020

In February, 70 South Sudanese refugees (26 households) were **relocated to the new Bele settlement**, Haut Uele Province, bringing the total to 1,377 persons (558 households) relocated to Bele from various locations since September 2019.

Reception structures for Burundian refugees are severely overcrowded; they are currently accommodating 2,684 persons although their total capacity is of 1,700. Another 379 persons are staying outside due to the lack of space.

On 22 February, a **political agreement was reached in South Sudan**, with opposition leader Riek Machar being appointed Vice President. South Sudanese refugees in the DRC generally welcomed this news with joy and hoped to be able to return as soon as possible.

Refugees

Burundian refugees

Total in DRC	Women	Men
47,172	24,291	22,881

As of 29 February 2020

- In February, **UNHCR recorded 399 new arrivals from Burundi** at the three reception structures in South Kivu Province (Kavimvira, Sange and Monge Monge). The reception structures were severely overcrowded; they were accommodating 2,684 persons although their total capacity is of 1,700, while another 379 persons (141 households) were staying outside due to the lack of space. This is posing health and protection risks, and cholera cases were identified around the transit centres.
- In February, **UNHCR biometrically registered 683 households** of 1,912 people, pending the determination of their refugee status (RSD) by the national refugee commission (CNR).
- Due to heavy rainfall, the conditions of the **road between Uvira and Baraka** have further deteriorated, seriously hampering UNHCR and partners' activities in Lusenda refugee camp. The state of the road also posed security risks.
- In February, 37,382 persons (8,834 households) received **cash-for-food assistance** in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement, South Kivu Province.
- UNHCR's partner AIRD **rehabilitated 860 shelters**, which had been destroyed by violent winds in Lusenda camp. In addition, UNHCR's Government partner CNR, with support from AIRD, **allocated plots of land to 329 households** who were relocated to Mulongwe settlement in December 2019, enabling the families to start the construction of their shelters.
- In Mulongwe settlement, **four wells were constructed and equipped** by UNHCR's partner ADES in order to improve access to water.
- UNHCR organized a **Best Interest Determination (BID) panel** with humanitarian and Government actors for three refugee children at risk. Family reunification and mediation were identified as the best solution for their respective situations.

Central African refugees

Total in DRC	Women	Men
171,400	91,648	79,752

As of 29 February 2020

- So far, **14,973 Central African refugees from the Central African Republic have stated their intention to voluntarily return** to safe areas in the Central African Republic (CAR), according to ongoing surveys carried out by UNHCR in all four camps. A majority (12,321) of those who expressed the wish to return live in Boyabu camp (Sud Ubangi Province). UNHCR plans to continue facilitating voluntary repatriations in 2020 (when the suspension due to COVID-19 will be lifted). UNHCR facilitated the return of 3,133 refugees in 2019.



UNHCR hands over medicines to health zones in Nord Ubangi Province. ©UNHCR/Clariss Achu

- UNHCR's partner ADES handed over **essential drugs, nutritional supplements and hospital equipment** to three refugee-hosting areas in Nord Ubangi Province (Mobayi Mbongo, Gbadolite and Yakoma). The drugs will be distributed to health services, improving the quality of healthcare for both Central African refugees living outside of camps and for the local population. Access to quality healthcare is usually challenging in these remote locations due to bad road conditions and a lack of funds for UNHCR to address needs.
- Through its health partners, UNHCR assisted **two unaccompanied refugee children** from the Central African Republic who were in dire need of surgery. The two siblings were transported from the remote locality of Yakoma to the city of Gbadolite, some 200 km away, for further examination. They were provided shelter, food and clothes before being further referred to Kinshasa, capital of the DRC. Healthcare is very basic in remote locations like Yakoma, where almost 112,000 Central African refugees are estimated to be living in out-of-camp locations. Additional funding is needed to ensure access to healthcare in such locations.
- After floods destroyed hectares of farmland in Nord Ubangi Province in late 2019, UNHCR's partner AIDES supported local communities in the refugee-hosting village of Kambo to **relaunch fishing and agricultural activities**. Fishing kits composed of nets and hooks were distributed to 10 persons, while a ten-hectare nursery was set up to grow vegetables. Community farming enhances the self-reliance of refugees and members of the local population and helps promote peaceful coexistence.
- As part of its "Sport for Protection" project funded by the Olympic Refugee Foundation, UNHCR and partners built a **150-seat seating area** and supported the community in **rehabilitating the sports pitch** at the local stadium in Gbadolite, Nord Ubangi Province, where over 10,500 refugees from the Central African Republic are hosted. The project uses sports to promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and locals, and to enhance the protection of children and youth.



Teams warm up for a football game at the Stade Mobutu, Gbadolite. UNHCR's partner AIRD constructed the seating area and helped rehabilitating the pitch. © UNHCR/Clariss Achu

Rwandan refugees

Total in DRC (figure based on a pre-registration done by the DRC Government)	Repatriated this month (figure pending verification)	Repatriated in 2020 (figure pending verification)
214,624	153	365
Women: 107,917 Men: 106,707		

As of 29 February 2020

- In Goma, North Kivu Province, **42 Rwandan refugees accessed primary healthcare** through the Kingo La Afya health insurance, with UNHCR support.

South Sudanese refugees

Total in DRC	Women	Men
88,583	47,324	41,259

As of 29 February 2020

- On 22 February, a **political agreement was reached by warring parties in South Sudan**, with opposition leader Riek Machar being appointed Vice President. South Sudanese refugees living in the DRC have generally welcomed this news and hope to be able to return as soon as possible.
- Despite this positive development, UNHCR registered **new arrivals of South Sudanese refugees** in February, who fled clashes between the South Sudan army and rebels who are not adhering to the peace process. 100 new asylum seekers were received in Biringi settlement (Ituri Province) in February; some from South Sudan and others from neighboring countries.
- In February, the **presence of armed elements in Kaka refugee settlement** (Haut Uele Province) threatened the civilian character of asylum and posed a challenge to the ongoing relocation of refugees from Kaka to the new Bele settlement. Some of the suspects were arrested.
- In February, **70 refugees (26 households) were relocated from Kaka to Bele**, bringing the total to 1,377 persons (558 households) relocated to Bele from various locations since September 2019. UNHCR has distributed **core relief items** (CRIs), such as kitchen sets, soap, blankets, mats, jerry cans and plastic buckets, to 459 persons (179 households) already installed in Bele.
- On 11 February, UNHCR and partner ADSSE started a one-month awareness-raising campaign on **peaceful coexistence amongst South Sudanese refugees**. A group of 152 individuals has been remaining at the Aru Waystation, Ituri Province, since September 2018 for fear of tensions with the other groups of refugees if relocated to Biringi or Bele settlement. Consultations in February encouraged ethnic groups in Biringi and Bele to welcome the group remaining at the Aru Waystation into their community.
- 15 cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence** (SGBV) were documented among South Sudanese refugees in February, including 12 cases of rape. All cases of SGBV received medical and psychosocial support, but only 3 cases of rape, all in Biringi settlement, could also receive legal assistance. Access to justice remains a gap in the other locations, namely Meri and Kaka settlements.
- In terms of the **prevention of SGBV**, 155 refugees in Biringi, Meri and Bele settlements received capacity-building on awareness-raising techniques, on basic concepts of SGBV (including typology and referral mechanisms).



South Sudanese refugee children going to school with their new school kits, provided by UNHCR and partner ADSSE. © ADSSE

- To date, over **4,500 hectares of land have been made available to South Sudanese refugees** following advocacy by UNHCR to local authorities, in Biringi and Meri settlements, and in Dungu (near Kaka settlement), Ituri and Haut Uele Provinces. However, due to a lack of funds for UNHCR to support agricultural activities, less than 4% of this land (154 hectares) are currently exploited.
- In the first half of February, UNHCR **distributed school kits** composed of notebooks, pens, pencils, geometry boxes, school bags, shoes and rulers, to 5,148 primary school children in Aba (near Meri settlement) and in Bele settlement, Haut Uele Province. Among the children, 4,292 were South Sudanese refugees and 856 were vulnerable local children.
- UNHCR is **monitoring the detention of 15 South Sudanese refugees**, detained in prisons in Ituri and Haut Uele provinces. Among them are three children and one woman.
- In Meri settlement, UNHCR facilitated the **deliverance of birth certificates** for 31 children. **68 children at risk** also received clothes, shoes, and toilet and laundry soap as basic assistance.
- In February, UNHCR experienced **shortages in medical consumables**, such as syringes and catheters, while antimalarials are soon to run out. There is also a **lack of nutritional inputs**, meaning that several children who recovered from malnutrition are at risk of relapsing; currently, 2,244 persons are enrolled in the malnutrition programme. In February, UNHCR's health partner ADES was still able to assist 6,598 patients, while 543 women attended prenatal consultations, and 166 live birth were assisted.

Congolese returnees

- In February, 322 persons (80 households) were **repatriated from Lóvua settlement in Angola**, to Kananga, Kasai Central Province.
- From 26 to 29 February, UNHCR and its partner AIDES carried out a joint assessment mission to Kandjaji, a locality at the border with Angola, to **assess the state of the roads** between there and Tshikapa (Kasai Province), to prepare for the resumption of repatriation convoys from Lóvua settlement in Angola. It was concluded that roads needed to be rehabilitated, but that such works would be compromised during the rainy season, and thus that UNHCR should explore other transport options. With COVID-19 pandemic reaching the DRC on 11 March, repatriations were since fully suspended.



The state of the road between Kandjaji and Tshikapa. © UNHCR

Urban refugees

- In Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga Province, UNHCR assisted **10 Somali asylum seekers who were detained** by the national migration authorities. They were freed and their cases referred to the National Refugee Commission (CNR) to follow due asylum-seeking procedure.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Ituri Province

- In Djugu Territory, repeated incursions by armed men caused new population movements, with persons who had returned as recently as in December 2019 being **displaced again**. In Mambasa Territory, attacks by ADF elements led to the **displacement of 3,200 persons**. Further population movements were observed in Mahagi Territory, where attacks **forced 3,970 persons to flee**. Despite the peace agreement concluded by the DRC Government with the FRPI armed group in February, pillaging, and ambushes against locals continued in Irumu Territory.
- UNHCR and partner INTERSOS recorded **874 protection incidents** in Ituri Province in February.
- In view of ongoing hostilities in Djugu Territory, UNHCR and OCHA organized a joint rapid assessment mission, along with partner INTERSOS and the Protection Civile, in the areas of Drodro, Rho and Bule, where **an estimated 32,000 new internally displaced persons arrived between 18 and 21 January 2020**.

- In February, UNHCR continued the **transfer of internally displaced persons from the General Hospital site to the new Kigonze site**, both in Bunia. Out of 10,000 persons to be relocated, 7,525 (1,707 families) have been so far. This month, 148 families who were relocated to Kigonze site **received Core Relief Items (CRIs)** comprising of mats, blankets, jerrycans, bars of laundry soap, and menstrual hygiene kits.
- In February, UNHCR's partner Caritas **constructed 376 emergency shelters** in the new Kigonze site, bringing to total to 1,991 shelters built so far at the site. UNHCR and Caritas hire construction workers from the local communities, as well as inhabitants of the site itself. This provides important livelihood opportunities and improves peaceful coexistence between the local community and displaced persons.
- Residents of the Kigonze displacement site have **established their own coordination structure** by selecting a president for the IDP committee, and establishing sectoral groups working on issues such as protection, youth, security, feedback and response. The aim is to promote their active participation and decision-making in activities at the site. UNHCR partner Caritas worked with the committees on improving conditions in terms of health, sanitation, prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and security.
- In Kigonze site, UNHCR and partner Caritas launched a **community-based complaint referral mechanism** to help prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and ensure accountability towards beneficiaries; complaint boxes were installed, and focal points elected amongst IDPs, to facilitate the feedback mechanism and raise awareness.



*Residents of the General Hospital displacement site, in Bunia, packing up to prepare their transfer to the new Kigonze site.
© UNHCR/Pascal Masirika*

North Kivu Province

- The humanitarian situation remains unpredictable in Beni Territory, with continuous population movements and persons fleeing amidst **recurrent attacks by armed groups**. At least 11 people were killed by armed men on 17 and 18 February in a village in Beni Territory's Rwenzori sector. Attacks by the ADF armed group seem to have multiplied in February, as INTERSOS recorded **368 human right violations** in Beni and Lubero territories alone; 92 more than last month. Still in eastern Beni Territory, a militia caused security concerns with apparent further plans to attack Ebola response operations. In Lubero Territory, many families have **fled their villages in the Kandole area** following forced evictions by armed men.
- In Nobili, Beni Territory, UNHCR, OCHA, Caritas and other actors **registered 26,166 displaced households (158,278 persons)**, following mass displacements from Watalinga chiefdom in December 2019. UNHCR had been working with 70 data collectors affiliated to various humanitarian agencies to identify the IDPs and persons with specific needs.
- UNHCR's partner Caritas provided **667 shelters to 371 households** (2,423 persons) who were staying in public schools and churches in Nobili. So far, 2,477 households (20,854 persons) received shelter assistance, enabling families to live in improved housing conditions. The assistance also allowed schools and churches to resume their regular activities.
- In various locations in Lubero Territory, community-based protection structures, supported by UNHCR, assisted victims of human rights violations; two underage rape victims were **referred to relevant care and legal services**, while seven arbitrarily arrested persons (including one boy) were released after successful advocacy. Another boy is still in detention. The structures also organized **14 awareness-raising sessions** for 880 community members on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, on peaceful coexistence, and on child protection.

South Kivu Province

- Due to heavy rainfall, the **road between Uvira and Baraka** has further deteriorated, seriously hampering the transport of materials from Uvira to project sites throughout Fizi Territory. The state of the road also posed significant security risks.
- UNHCR's partner AVSI continued the implementation of **17 Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)** in February, as part of UNHCR's community-based protection project targeting IDPs and host communities in Fizi and Uvira

territories. The QIPs include the construction of community spaces, the rehabilitation and equipment of classrooms, and the construction or rehabilitation of water sources and health centers.

- In February, UNHCR's partner AIDES **distributed 1,400 windows and 508 doors** to displaced households benefiting from a UNHCR shelter construction project in Kazimia, Uvira Territory.

Kasai region

- From 13 to 15 February, following torrential rain that provoked flooding in Njdoko Punda (Kasai Province), UNHCR **provided cash assistance to 1,377 persons** (470 households), as well as plastic sheets and blankets. The victims were displaced persons, returnees, and members of the host community.
- On 21 February, **UNHCR's socio-economic reintegration project for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** came to completion in Kananga, Kasai Central Province. A total of 198 displaced and returned women with specific needs received professional trainings in tailoring, cooking, baking, and soap-making. All received start-up kits at the end of the project, to start their own businesses.
- On 26 and 27 February, UNHCR and its partner NRC conducted a joint mission to Kamonia, to follow-up on the **construction of 1,731 shelters** as part of a 2019 project, on the Kamonia-Salambote axis. The project's implementation rate was at 93%. The need to keep beneficiaries involved in the project was noted, as some had moved away to carry out diamond mining activities, and therefore stopped participating in shelter constructions.
- UNHCR's Government partner, the National Refugee Commission (CNR), flagged that **expulsions of Congolese persons from Angola have continued** in Kamako, Kasai Province, while serious human rights violations have been reported. A total of over 1,600 persons are estimated to have been expelled in February, according to the CNR and to the General Direction of Migration (DGM). Expelled persons report having been subjected to torture, and physical and sexual violence.
- In February, UNHCR's protection monitoring system recorded **2,382 human rights violations** in Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami and Sankuru provinces. Most incidents consisted of **violations of the right to property** (39.5%), to freedom (20.6%), as well as of sexual and gender-based violence (19% - 454 cases). Incidents also included violations of the right to life and physical integrity, and land conflicts. Most victims were returned IDPs, while men and women were almost equally affected (55% men, 45% women).
- UNHCR's partner War Child UK responded through referrals to relevant actors, counsel, and advocacy. UNHCR's monitoring partners also conducted sensitization for **299 persons** (returnees, locals and IDPs) in Kasai Oriental Province, while **20 mediations of land conflicts** were carried out, leading to the resolution of 12 conflicts. In terms of sexual and gender-based violence, **12 sensitization radio shows** were broadcast on a local radio in Kasai Oriental Province.



Distribution of shelter construction materials in Kazimia, Uvira Territory, South Kivu Province. © AIDES/ Rodriguez Nshombo

Tanganyika / Haut-Katanga Provinces

- On 7 February, OCHA issued a note about the **resurgence of inter-community violence in Nyunzu Territory**, Tanganyika Province, which it estimates has displaced some 31,500 persons (6,500 households). The situation led 12 humanitarian organizations, including UNHCR, to suspend their activities in the area as some humanitarian actors were targeted.
- On 10 February, UNHCR and partners AIRD and CNR handed over **community market buildings to three villages** in Kalemie Territory, Tanganyika Province, where displaced persons have started to return to. The markets aim to revitalize the fragile local economy and promote returnees' self-reliance. In the same villages, 600 shelters were also constructed in 2019 as part of UNHCR's assistance for returnees.
- From 17 to 19 February, UNHCR and partners carried out an **assessment mission to Bendera**, Kalemie Territory, at the request of provincial authorities, as many persons have returned to the red-zone area since November 2019 and are living in dire conditions. The mission highlighted shelter, food, education, health, nutrition and hygiene and sanitation needs. It also recommended setting up community protection structures

such as village peace committees. UNHCR is conducting a registration mission to Bendera to include those returnees into its assistance program.

- From 24 to 29 February, UNHCR, partners and provincial authorities launched an **awareness-raising campaign on voluntary return** in the displacement sites of Kankomba TzF, Kankomba Office and Kaseke, in and around Kalemie in Tanganyika Province. Since August 2019, provincial authorities decided to gradually close the 14 IDPs sites around Kalemie. UNHCR is therefore providing return assistance to IDPs



*A community market building handed over by UNHCR in a return village in Tanganyika Province.
© UNHCR/Aline Irakarama*

who expressed their intention to return to their areas of origin in Kalemie Territory.

- On 24 and 25 February, UNHCR's partner AIDES conducted a **training on peaceful coexistence, conflict resolution and the monitoring of SGBV and human rights violations** for 118 participants, including 106 women from two women's associations, in Kiambi Health Zone, Manono Territory, Tanganyika Province.

- Following a multi-purpose cash distribution that benefitted 991 households in December 2019, in two villages in Manono Territory, Tanganyika Province, UNHCR's partner AIRD, carried out a **post-distribution monitoring** to assess how the assistance was used. Results show that the assistance allowed beneficiaries to access essential goods and services; 61% declared that the assistance improved their living conditions.

Clusters and Working Groups

Protection Cluster

- During a workshop on the Humanitarian Needs Overview/Humanitarian Response Plan in the Kasai region, between 11 and 13 February, the Protection Cluster advocated for the **prioritization of the localities of Dimbelengue and Demba**, in Kasai Central Province, for the 2020 protection response.
- In Ituri Province, the Protection Cluster is advocating for **additional anti-mine action funding**, as current funding will run out in June. The presence of mines and other explosive remnants greatly limits the movement of local populations, and anti-mine action is necessary to prevent accidents during the return of displaced persons to their village, and during new population movements.
- An inter-agency mission was organized in February to assess the **humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons** in the territories of Fizi (South Kivu Province), Kalemie (Tanganyika Province) and Kabambare (Maniema Province). Displaced persons lived in precarious conditions, and expressed priority needs in terms of shelter, CRIs, food, and agricultural tools. Most lived in host families, while a few households were staying in informal sites in Butale (Fizi) and Lambokatenga (Kalemie).
- In Beni, North Kivu Province, the Protection Cluster met with **IDPs who fled attacks in Mangina (Beni Territory) and Bela (Ituri Province)** in early February. They mentioned killings, including by decapitation, as well as abductions, lootings, and property destruction by alleged members of the ADF and some elements of the army. Their main needs included housing, food, health, and education. However, they were mainly wishing for peace so that they could return to their places of origin.

Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Working Group

- The CCCM of Bunia, Ituri Province, assessed **coordination and management needs in five uncoordinated displacement sites**, hosting a total of 14,538 persons in Fataki (Djugu Territory) and Angumu (Mahagi Territory). Urgent needs were identified in terms of food security, dignified living conditions, access to healthcare, and core relief items. The CCCM proposed to include these sites into UNHCR and IOM management.

External / Donor Relations

As of 27 February 2020

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

Donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2020

United Nations Foundation (0.32 M) | International Olympic Committee (0.23 M) | European Union (0.17 M)

Major donors of regional or other funds with soft earmarking 2020

Germany (8.4 M) | Canada (2.3 M)

Major donors of un-earmarked funds in 2020

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

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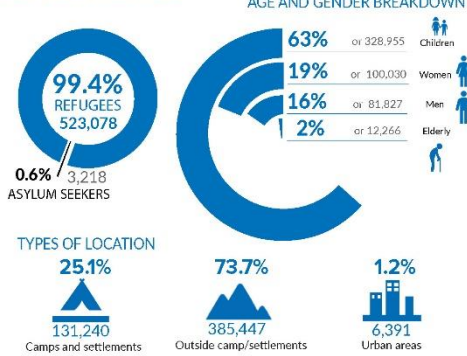
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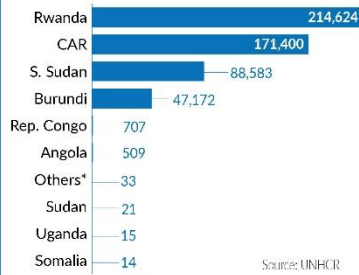
526,296

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

KEY STATISTICS



REFUGEE POPULATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

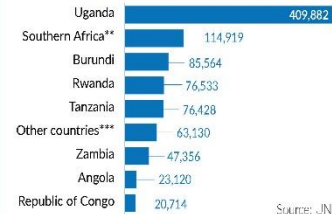


*Others include Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Syria, Liberia, Chad, etc.

REFUGEES FROM DRC IN AFRICA

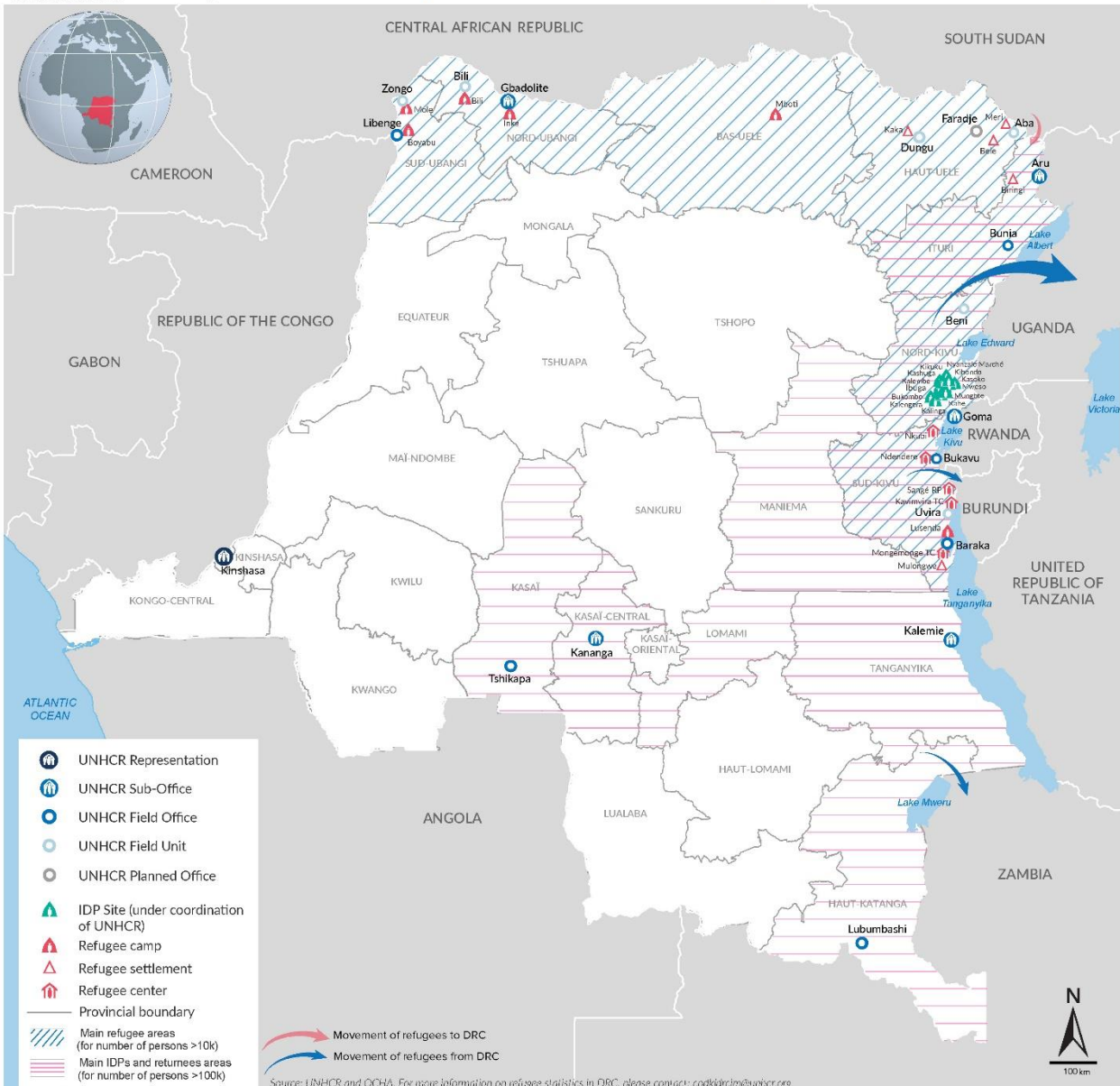
917,646

TOTAL DRC REFUGEE POPULATION



**Southern Africa includes Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, 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.

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