

Southern Africa

21 May 2020

Highlights

2,122 handwashing stations installed in refugee, IDP and host communities across the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, since the beginning of the COVID-19 response.

27,888 refugees and asylum-seekers reached with assistance in **South Africa** since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, including food parcels, cash assistance, legal assistance and data for online studies.


210 IDP households reached per day in **Mozambique** by community protection volunteers, with door-to-door messages on COVID-19 prevention and mitigation.





A refugee woman involved in the production of cloth face masks in Maratane Refugee Camp, Mozambique ©UNHCR/Adaiana Lima

Population Figures

8,873,757 persons of concern in the Southern Africa region, including

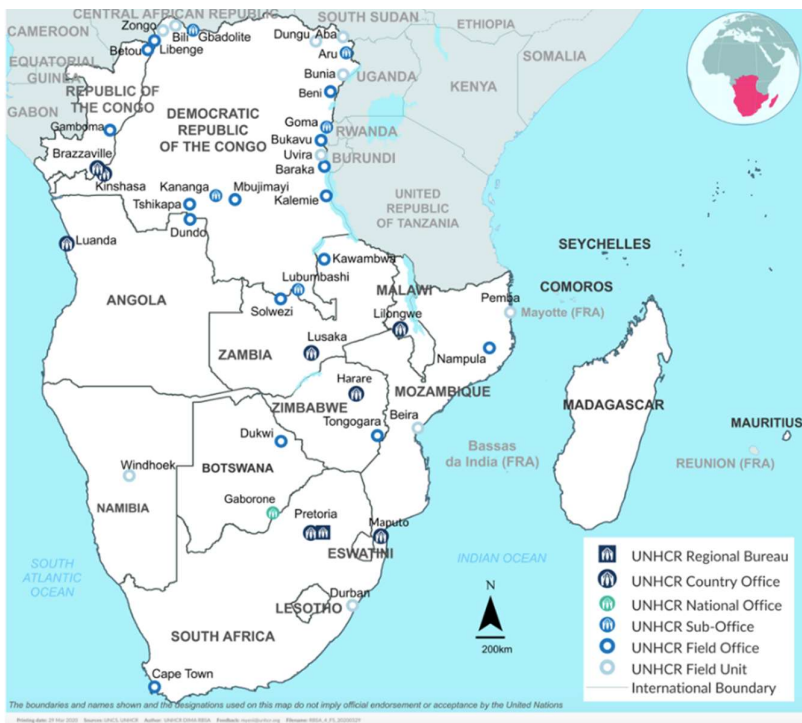
 768,694 refugees and 311,032 asylum-seekers

 5,600,782 internally displaced persons (IDPs)

 2,134,349 IDP returnees

(as of 3 May 2020)

16 countries under the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Southern Africa



Operational Context

As of 18 May 2020, there are a reported 20,378 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the 16 countries covered by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa. Across the region, national efforts to contain COVID-19 include varying restrictions on movement, limits on social gatherings, prohibition of public events, suspension of commercial flights, closure of borders, and nation-wide lockdowns. Exceptions are often made for goods and cargo, as well as returning citizens and legal residents to move across borders. While some countries have extended their lockdowns and states of emergency, many are beginning phased approaches to ease COVID-19 restrictions.

UNHCR is working with governments, WHO and other UN agencies and NGOs to secure the inclusion of persons of concern – refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless people and other marginalized communities – in preparedness and response measures for COVID-19. UNHCR has also been expanding its outreach efforts in the region with the support of partners and community volunteers to better engage persons of concern and their host communities with information about COVID-19 prevention and services.

In order to continue monitoring affected communities' perception of COVID-19, UNHCR and partners are carrying out remote surveys to understand the needs, fears and threats expressed by the population. To encourage social distancing, UNHCR has been promoting the use of hotlines to report protection issues, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as well as general assistance needs.

UNHCR Response



Health and WASH

UNHCR continued implementing WASH activities for the prevention of COVID-19 across the region. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 response, UNHCR and partners have installed 2,122 handwashing stations for refugee, IDP and host communities across the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**. This includes 232 new handwashing stations installed in the past week, as well as 105 “Tippy Taps” – handwashing stations made by refugees using recycled materials – set up in sites hosting South Sudanese refugees.

Hygiene and sanitation material distributions are ongoing to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in refugee and IDP communities. In **Mozambique**, 510 families in IDP neighbourhoods received hygiene packages comprised of a 50-litre bucket with tap, a smaller 20-litre bucket and 5 bars of soap. This distribution is an inter-agency initiative involving 10 UN and non-governmental organizations as well as government. Meanwhile, in the **DRC** 65,145 persons have received soap in refugee and IDP-hosting areas, 1,599 community structures have been disinfected, and 330 refugee households in Kinshasa received hygiene and sanitation kits as part of COVID-19 sanitation measures.

UNHCR and partners are working to establish and equip isolation and quarantine centres in several countries, to limit the spread of COVID-19 in refugee, IDP and host communities. In **Angola**, isolation and quarantine centres in Lóvua refugee settlement are being furnished with an initial capacity of 25 beds in each of the two centres, which can be increased if needed to a total capacity of 96. In **Zambia**, the site for a COVID-19 isolation centre in Mantapala refugee settlement was identified and cleared. UNHCR has contributed one refugee housing unit to use as temporary isolation centre while construction of a permanent structure is underway.

Similarly, in the **DRC**, UNHCR and its partner organization are rehabilitating the transit centre in Boyabu refugee camp, Sud Ubangi Province, which has been identified as an isolation site for suspected COVID-19 cases. Assessments are underway to determine the need for similar structures at the Bili, Inke and Mole refugee camps. In addition, over 23,000 people in four camps hosting refugees from the Central African Republic in Nord and Sud Ubangi provinces have been screened for COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic.



Protection, Communication and Community Engagement

UNHCR continued risk communication and outreach on COVID-19 throughout the region. Bulk SMS systems are being used to reach refugees and asylum-seekers with critical information and messaging on COVID-19 and related topics. In **Malawi**, 1,000 SMS messages were sent to individuals in the refugee community with information on the new referral management system, human rights, SGBV and child protection issues. Meanwhile, in **South Africa**, the sixth in the series of SMS bulk messages containing COVID-19 information was received by 4,268 refugees and asylum-seekers in the Western Cape province. The message contained information on support networks and helplines operating during the country's COVID-19 lockdown for mental health issues and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

UNHCR rolled out a mobile information campaign in Tongogara refugee camp in **Zimbabwe**, across the 10 residential sections of the camp. Messages were shared via loudhailer, urging the community to maintain hygiene standards, to wear masks, to stay at home, to maintain social distancing when outside their homes and to keep women and children safe. Whilst many refugees and asylum-seekers in Tongogara refugee camp have been wearing face masks, more is being done to encourage the community to maintain social distancing. In Sofala Province, **Mozambique**, 21 community protection volunteers disseminated door-to-door messages on COVID-19 prevention and mitigation in IDP neighbourhoods, reaching about 210 households per day. The initiative also included information about referral pathways and health services available to IDPs.

In the **DRC**, 2,456 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) were reached by door-to-door awareness-raising on COVID-19 in the past week, in four camps in Nord and Sud Ubangi provinces. UNHCR also distributed 2,000 fliers in French, Lingala and Sango to hygiene promoters and partners in and around Bili camp hosting refugees from CAR. In Kasai Province, 11,828 persons were reached by awareness-raising sessions over the past week, while 500 leaflets were printed and distributed in Kasai Central Province, as radio messages continued to be broadcast. In Kalemie, UNHCR jointly with government delivered COVID-19 awareness-raising kits at the Kikumbe, Elya, Kalenga, Mwaka, Kisalaba and Likasi IDP sites, which are considered highly vulnerable to COVID-19. Each kit consisted of 2 megaphones, 2,500 leaflets, 250 vests for the COVID-19 Awareness Committee, and 4 posters.



Assistance

In partnership with the National Commission for Human Rights, UNHCR in the **Republic of the Congo** (ROC) donated supplies and equipment to protect against the spread of COVID-19 at the Brazzaville Detention Centre. The donation consisted of 100 handwashing devices, 6,618 masks, 3,309 hydroalcoholic gels, 208 boxes of soap, 99 women's underwear and sanitary towels. The distribution benefits 1,103 detainees.

In **South Africa**, a reported 27,888 refugees and asylum-seekers have been reached with assistance from UNHCR's implementing partners since the COVID-19 lockdown began on 26 March, including food parcels, cash assistance, legal assistance and data for students to continue their studies online under lockdown conditions.

Through UNHCR's livelihood programme in **Zimbabwe**, refugee tailors are producing masks for distribution in the community free of charge, prioritizing persons with specific needs including elderly persons, terminally ill patients and persons with disabilities. So far 790 masks have been produced under the pilot project, which aims to produce 12,810 washable face masks to benefit refugees and individuals from the host communities surrounding Tongogara refugee camp.

Financial Requirements

On 7 May 2020, the UN launched a revised inter-agency [Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) seeking US\$6.69 billion, which includes US\$745 million for UNHCR's operations in affected countries through December 2020 and as reflected in UNHCR's [revised Coronavirus emergency appeal](#). US\$232 million has been received towards UNHCR's appeal.

In Southern Africa, US\$31.2 million is needed under the revised Coronavirus emergency appeal. As of 20 May 2020, the region has received earmarked funding totalling US\$429,017, accounting for approximately 1% of financial needs.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND PLEDGES TO THE UNHCR COVID-19 APPEAL | US\$
 USA 64M (400,000 earmarked for the DRC operation) | Germany 38M | EU 31.8M | UK 24.8M | Japan 23.9M | Denmark 14.6M | CERF 6.9M | Canada 6.4M | Ireland 3.3M | Sweden 3M | Luxembourg 2.7M | Finland 2.4M | Sony Corporation 3M | Private Donors 2.9m | Education Cannot Wait 1.8M | Qatar Charity 1.5M | Norway 1.4M | Australia 0.8m | Estonia 0.2M | Monaco 0.2M | Iceland 0.1M | Portugal 0.1M | Liechtenstein 0.1M

UNHCR is also grateful to the following donors that have provided unearmarked support that contributes towards addressing needs in the region.

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | US\$

Sweden 76.4M | Norway 41.4M | Netherlands 36.1M | Denmark 34.6M | United Kingdom 31.7M | Germany 25.9M | Private donors Spain 20M | Switzerland 16.4M | Private donors in Republic of Korea 10.5M

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Global Financial Requirements: UNHCR Coronavirus Emergency Appeal

