

Southern Africa

18 June 2020

Highlights

64,819 refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs and host community members screened for COVID-19 in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**.

9,837 people reached in the **Republic of the Congo**, with awareness-raising messages on COVID-19 in the past week.

400 adolescent girls and young women received dignity kits in **Malawi** to enhance good hygiene and sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic.



A health promoter distributes face masks in Tongogara refugee camp, Zimbabwe. Photo: World Vision/ M. Maworera

Population Figures

8,995,280 persons of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa, including



768,423 refugees and 311,777 asylum-seekers



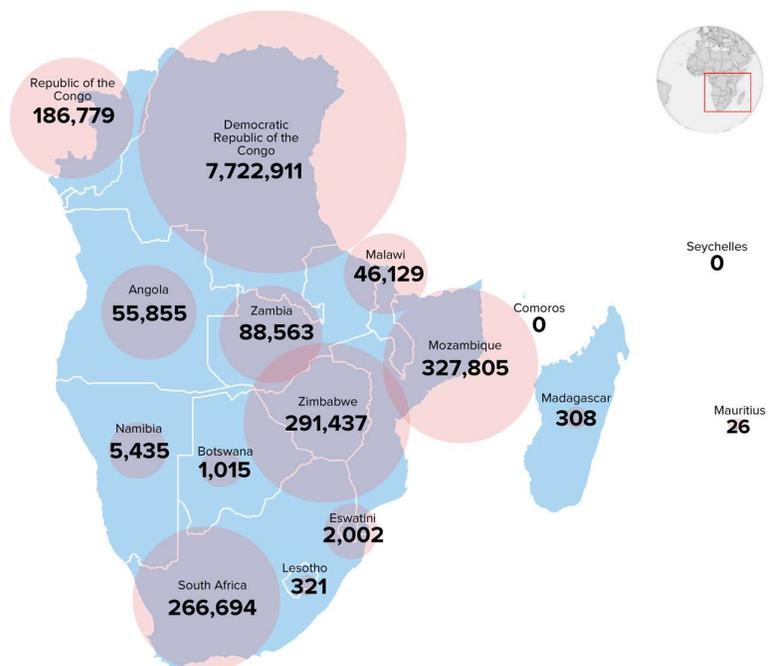
5,721,781 internally displaced persons (IDPs)



2,134,349 IDP returnees

(as of 16 June 2020)

Persons of Concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa



Operational Context

As of 16 June 2020, there are a reported 84,910 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the 16 countries covered by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, an increase of 24,570 cases over a one-week period. South Africa continues to report the highest number of confirmed cases. Across the region, national efforts to contain COVID-19 have included restrictions on movement, limits on social gatherings, prohibition of public events, suspension of commercial flights, closure of borders, and nation-wide lockdowns. Many governments have spent the past weeks strengthening COVID-19 prevention and response measures, and COVID-19 restrictions are gradually beginning to ease in many – but not all – countries in the region.

UNHCR continues to work with governments, World Health Organization (WHO) and other UN agencies and NGOs to secure the inclusion of persons of concern – refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless people and other marginalized communities – in preparedness and response measures for COVID-19.

UNHCR and partners have also committed to a 'stay and deliver' approach, continuing to provide critical services and assistance while adopting social distancing and other COVID-19 mitigation measures. This includes implementation of strict health protocols at distribution points, the use of hotlines to report protection issues and assistance needs, and support to virtual and distance learning and capacity building. UNHCR has also been expanding its outreach efforts in the region with the support of partners and community volunteers to spread the message among persons of concern and their host communities about COVID-19 prevention and services.

UNHCR Response



Health and WASH

UNHCR and partners continued water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and health activities across the region, to prevent and respond to COVID-19. In **Malawi**, UNHCR's partner distributed dignity kits to 400 adolescent girls and young women to enhance good hygiene and sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Items distributed included 20 litre buckets, pads, underwear, washing and soap. UNHCR and partners also distributed dignity kits in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, which included sanitary pads, soap, laundry detergent, buckets, razors, and underwear, to more than 9,000 Burundian refugee women and girls of reproductive age (12-49 years) in South Kivu Province. These kits make it easier for women and girls to adhere to COVID-19 prevention measures while maintaining their dignity. Further, COVID-19 screening has also continued to be rolled out across the country, with 64,819 people screened over the past week. This includes 13,143 persons screened in four camps hosting refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR); 20,531 South Sudanese refugees and Congolese screened at check points in Meri, Bele and Biringi refugee settlements, and in the town of Dungu, Haut Uele Province; 11,953 Burundian refugees screened in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement, South Kivu Province; and 19,192 people screened at checkpoints in Kasai Central Province.

To promote hand washing and minimize unnecessary movement in Tongogara refugee camp in **Zimbabwe**, UNHCR's WASH partner continues to ensure a consistent daily water supply for domestic use, and hygiene promoters continue to disseminate behaviour change messages on hand washing and social distancing at water points, and during distribution of reusable face masks. In light of churches resuming operations in Zimbabwe, including in the refugee camp, 20 hand washing stations were distributed to different churches to support hand washing in public to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, 3 foot-operated handwashing stations were distributed to the host community's health centres, namely Chipangayi, Kondo and Chibuwe clinics. Each clinic also received 100 reusable face masks to distribute to patients, health centre staff members and village health workers. Meanwhile, in **Namibia**, UNHCR continued to increase capacity of the clinic in Osire refugee camp, providing new equipment, including 15 beds with mattresses and blankets for the COVID-19 quarantine centre.



Protection, Communication and Community Engagement

UNHCR continued awareness-raising and risk communications across the region, focusing on reducing the spread and mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and related protection issues, such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). In **Angola**, UNHCR conducted a Training of Trainers for a session on refugee rights targeting law-enforcement officials during the implementation of the country's State of Emergency/Calamity for COVID-19. UNHCR will be delivering these training sessions over the next weeks in various locations across the province of Luanda. In **eSwatini**, UNHCR's supported procurement of mobile phones and data bundles for persons of concern to ensure information and counselling services continue through the lockdown. In **Namibia**, community health workers continue to go house-to-house to spread public awareness messages on hygiene techniques to curb the spread of COVID-19. Leaders from within the refugee community are assisting with the awareness campaign.

In the **Republic of the Congo (ROC)** 9,837 individuals were reached with awareness-raising messages over the past week. In Betou, an awareness-raising campaign on the prevention of COVID-19 in local communities benefited about 7,454 refugees, asylum-seekers and host community members. During the campaign, there was emphasis on the measures put in place by the government to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In Gamboma site, awareness-raising through a megaphone about COVID-19 curfew and the state of medical emergency reached 2,067 individuals, while door-to-door awareness-raising on the use of barrier gestures and management of water systems in the context of COVID-19 reached 280 individuals. Finally, in Brazzaville, awareness-raising continued through a children's forum on preventive measures against COVID-19, Malaria, HIV, STDs and general hygiene, reaching 36 children between 11-17 years of age.

UNHCR also continued a large-scale awareness-raising campaign on COVID-19 in the **DRC**, reaching 289,643 refugees and IDPs with targeted messaging via group discussions, flyers and door-to-door messaging since the beginning of the COVID-19 response. Radio spots on COVID-19 also continued to be broadcast in refugee and IDP-hosting areas, reaching thousands of individuals country-wide. Notably, UNHCR continued to raise awareness on SGBV risks linked to COVID-19. The SGBV teams in Boyabu and Inke camps used focus groups, while respecting hygiene measures, to raise awareness among 263 refugees from CAR on SGBV prevention. They educated the individuals about protecting themselves and their children, at a time when COVID-19 related restrictions have increased risks and incidents of SGBV. In Tanganyika Province, UNHCR and partners carried out 28 interactive awareness-raising sessions on the risks of sexual violence linked with COVID-19, in which 437 people participated. 20 radio spots were broadcast in the 5 community radios in Kalemie, Manono and Moba this week.

To help curb SGBV in Dzaleka refugee camp in **Malawi**, UNHCR's protection partner organized a mobile awareness campaign using a vehicle and a sound system, with a particular focus on SGBV risks related to COVID-19 measures. The campaign took into consideration COVID-19 prevention measures by ensuring that the vehicles disseminating messages moved continuously through the camp to avoid groups gathering in one place. The campaign reached more than 1,000 people and focused on basic human rights, the rights of women and girls, and the current case referral system. A similar mobile awareness approach was also used for awareness and outreach sessions targeting young people. A campaign that was initially designed to inform 700 youth in schools about drugs and substance abuse has been adapted into a mobile campaign due to school closures. COVID-19 messages were also shared during both the SGBV and the youth mobile outreach campaigns.



Assistance

UNHCR is working with partners and government to assist the most vulnerable persons of concern during this period of COVID-19 lockdown and movement restrictions, including with food and cash assistance. In **eSwatini**, 746 people have received cash assistance and personal protective equipment since the COVID-19 response began, while in **Madagascar** 108 families (approximately 432 people) received the third and final cash assistance payment this week under the COVID-19 response.

In **South Africa**, approximately 57,700 people have received assistance from UNHCR and partners under the COVID-19 response, from counselling and legal assistance to food parcels and cash assistance. Food distributions conducted over the past week reached 400 families (approximately 1,600 people) in Gauteng Province and 250 families (1,000 people) in KwaZulu Natal Province, including people living with HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable community members. Approximately 100 families (400 people) also received e-vouchers for purchasing food and household goods.

Supplementary food and dignity kits were distributed to vulnerable children and families in **Malawi**. UNHCR's partner in Dzaleka refugee camp distributed food items to 60 children with sickle cell, 15 child-headed households, 70 teen mothers, and 200 children living with a disability. The distributed items were in response to COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that various vulnerable groups are well nourished and remain in good health. Items distributed included cooking oil, eggs, maize flour, likuni phala and soya pieces.

Education and Livelihoods



Schools remain closed in many countries in the region, and UNHCR and partners continue to take measures to help students keep up with their studies. In the **DRC**, UNHCR's education partner organized home schooling for 59 final year primary school pupils to prepare them for the national certificate exams. The home-schooling teachers worked with small groups of not more than six pupils, while respecting social distancing and recommended hygiene measures. Meanwhile, COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions are gradually easing in some countries across the region, and some schools have started re-opening in June. In **Zambia**, following the re-opening of schools for examination classes on 1 June, the two schools in Mantapala refugee settlement received a grant to procure various school prerequisites, including 338 reusable face masks and 10 litres of hand sanitizers for learners and teachers.

Livelihoods support remains a key need in the region, as the economic impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions affect households who have lost income as a result of limitations on movement and economic activity. In **Zimbabwe**, COVID-19 lockdown measures have heavily affected livelihood activities in Tongogara camp. UNHCR and its implementing partner supported 72 pig farmers with 2 weeks' supply of pig feed (15 x 150kg). The farmers will continue to require assistance until produce can be marketable. The poultry projects have suffered significantly as poultry has stopped rearing. All groups need financial support and training including on animal husbandry to enhance productivity and consequently self-reliance.

In **Mozambique**, UNHCR is collaborating with an NGO that promotes the economic empowerment of women to identify refugees and Mozambicans living in or nearby the Maratane refugee camp that have sewing skills but lack access to sewing equipment or electricity. These women are being included in the Girl Move programme to receive sewing machines with a solar panel. UNHCR will support them with market linkage opportunities and additional training. In **South Africa**, a refugee-run organization provided 15,000 residents of low-income communities in the Western Cape Province with face masks to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Recipients included refugees, asylum-seekers, foreign nationals, and South African host community members. The initiative aims to promote social cohesion, peaceful coexistence and skills acquisition, as women in the community received training in basic tailoring skills.

Challenges

COVID-19 movement restrictions and other related logistical challenges mean that UNHCR and partner agencies have had a reduced presence in some remote locations, making it more difficult to monitor protection cases. To address this issue and reduce impact on protection services, UNHCR has scaled up work with community-based protection groups, who have played a significant role in linking persons of concern in need to protection assistance with UNHCR and partners. For example, in the DRC, to strengthen remote management of SGBV and child protection cases in Burundian refugee communities, UNHCR has increased communication with community-based protection groups in Lusenda refugee camp and Mulongwe settlement, South Kivu Province, by providing phone credit to these groups to facilitate case referrals and communication.

While schools in some countries are slowly re-opening as COVID-19 lockdown measures ease, many schools in refugee-hosting communities remain closed for the time being. While UNHCR and partners have been working to support students among persons of concerns and host communities to access education through remote learning programmes, challenges remain in terms of access to technology and electricity. For example, in eSwatini, school-aged refugees and asylum-seekers are facing difficulties accessing educational broadcasts on radio and television, leading to the risk of falling behind in their studies. UNHCR's implementing partner is looking into procuring communal radios and televisions for the Malindza refugee reception centre to ensure students can attend school through lockdown.

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\$252 million has been pledged and recorded towards UNHCR's appeal.

In Southern Africa, US\$31.2 million is needed under the revised Coronavirus emergency appeal. As of 2 June 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 DRC) | Germany 38.6M | EU 33.5M | UK 24.8M | Japan 23.9M | Denmark 14.6M | United Nations Foundation 10M | CERF 6.9M | Private Donors 6.7M | Canada 6.4M | Ireland 3.3M | Sweden 3M | Sony Corporation 2.9M | Finland 2.4M | Austria 1.8M | Education Cannot Wait 1.8M | Qatar Charity 1.5M | Norway 1.4M | USA for UNHCR 1M

UNHCR is also grateful to the donors that have provided unearmarked support. Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees, the internally displaced, stateless persons and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.

UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | US\$

Sweden 76.4M | Norway 41.4M | Netherlands 36.1M | Denmark 34.6M | Private donors Spain 33.1M | United Kingdom 31.7M | Germany 25.9M | Private donors Republic of Korea 17.3M | Switzerland 16.4M

CONTACTS

- Joan Allison, Head, External Engagement, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, allison@unhcr.org
- Miranda Gaanderse, Reporting Officer, Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, gaanders@unhcr.org

Global Financial Requirements: UNHCR Coronavirus Emergency Appeal

