

# Democratic Republic of the Congo

May 2021

*During the COVID-19 pandemic, UNHCR DRC is producing a condensed monthly Operational Update. Specific information about UNHCR's response to COVID-19 in DRC can be found [here](#).*

## Highlights

- Following the Nyiragongo volcano eruption on 23 May, **350,000 persons fled** Goma. UNHCR set up emergency teams to provide shelter assistance and core relief items to over 7000 displaced persons in the affected areas.
- During the month of May, **534 Burundians and 234 Rwandans were assisted in their voluntary repatriation** by UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR).
- Between 18 and 27 May, UNHCR, WFP and ADSSE carried out **joint distributions of cash assistance to 13,301 CAR refugees and 1,432 host community members** in North Ubangi Province.
- On 10 May 2021, UNHCR and its CNR officially handed over 163 birth certificates** to applicants at the Meri site, Haut Uélé province.



*UNHCR Teams distribute emergency supplies to displaced persons in Sake town after the volcan Nyiragongo eruption (c)UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans.*

## Refugees



### PROTECTION

- In May, 534 Burundian refugees and 234 Rwandan refugees who decided to return to their countries of origin were assisted** by UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) and repatriated in safety and dignity.
- UNHCR and its partner War Child Holland supported the Burundian Refugee Sexual and Gender-Based violence (SGBV) committee with **awareness raising activities and messaging related to the elevated risks of SGBV in the context of COVID-19**. A total of **617 Burundian refugees** (129 in Lusenda camp and 488 in Mulongwe settlement) were reached. Messages addressed intimate partner violence, early or forced marriage and denial of resources.
- As of 31 May 2021, UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) have **biometrically registered 26 new arrivals from South Sudan including 09 men and 17 women in Bele site**. 50 family composition attestations were distributed to beneficiaries as part of the ongoing registration exercise in Bele.
- During the month under review, 104 protection incidents were reported and documented in the Faradje territory (Haut Uélé Province) and in Aru territory (Ituri Province)** by UNHCR partners, representing a 65% increase from April 2021, with the majority of the incidents committed by government forces and non-state armed groups.

- **9 sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) incidents were reported in Meri, Bele and Biringi sites during the month of May.** The incidents involved rape, early/ forced marriage, denial of resources and opportunity and psychological violence. All survivors received psychosocial counseling by UNHCR and its partners; the rape survivors were also assisted through medical assistance, while mediation sessions were conducted for the survivors of early marriage and denial of resources and opportunities.



## HEALTH

- **1,718 refugee children between 0-11 months benefited from vaccination** for the routine vaccines in the health centers of Biringi, Bele and Meri sites. These children had not yet been vaccinated due to a lack of vaccine stocks in the concerned sites.
- **On May 12 and 18, UNHCR partner AIDES organized two sessions offering psychosocial support for 200 persons living with HIV,** including 170 refugees and 30 members of the host community in Biringi, Bele and Meri sites (Haut Uélé Province).



## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- UNHCR and partners continue to promote health and hygiene of Burundian refugees. **During the month of May, 428 refugees were informed by UNHCR through a door-to-door awareness-raising campaign** conducted on respecting hand hygiene measures before entering refugee camps and sites. Meanwhile, chlorinated water has been made available at the various entry points in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement.
- **1,445 persons, among which 609 in Meri and 836 in Biringi sites in Haut Uélé Province were informed on hygiene and sanitation measures** through a campaign conducted around the theme "Living in a healthy environment".



## SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- In the Mulongwe settlement (South Kivu Province) UNHCR through its implementing partner ADES distributed **latrine kits consisting**, as well as **cash for shelter to 34 households (204 people) who were relocated in 2021.**
- During the month under review, **UNHCR and partner ADSSE distributed core relief items (CRIs) comprising blankets, sleeping mats, mosquito nets, buckets and jerry cans to a total of 10,385 (2,077 households) Central African refugees** in Zongo, Sambolola and Congo-Rive localities, in South Ubangi Province. These distributions were meant to improve living conditions among the newly arrived Central African refugees whom, until now, have been living in makeshift shelters with no or limited access to essential services.
- **In Ndu, Bas Uélé Province, UNHCR and ADSSE have distributed tarpaulins to 5,153 individuals (1,332 households) including host community members,** whose shelters had been destroyed by strong winds and torrential rains earlier during the month. A similar assistance is planned for other localities in South Ubangi which have also been heavily affected by the rainy season.
- **On May 29, UNHCR Aru Sub-Office organized a training workshop for members of staff from UNHCR and other organisation on the use of the shelter score card for the assessment of shelters belonging to persons with special needs of Biringi and Bele sites.** The main goal of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of the Enumerators to collect reliable data. The workshop was attended by 26 people among UNHCR, CNR, AIRD, AIDS and ADSSE staff, 17 of whom were from Aru and 9 from Faradje territories.

## CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)

- Between 18 and 27 May, **UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP) and ADSSE carried out joint distributions of cash for the purchase of core relief items (CRIs) to a total of 13,301 CAR refugees and 1,432 individual host community members** in the localities of Limasa, Gomba, Yakoma and Modale in North Ubangi Province.
- UNHCR has facilitated the provision of cash-for-food by the World Food Programme (WFP) in Mulongwe settlement. **7,625 Burundian refugees living in Mulongwe** were reached (representing 94% of the Burundian camp population). A second distribution started in Lusenda on May 28 and will continue throughout the month of June 2021.
- **In Bele Site (Haut Uélé Province) UNHCR implementing partner AIRD provided to 52 households from the South Sudanese refugee community a sum of 50 USD/ per household** the use of which is conditional to the transformation of their emergency shelters into transitional shelters.

## Statelessness

- During the month of May in Meri site (Haut Uele Province), **UNHCR and government partner CNR officially handed over 163 birth certificates to applicants** (107 for refugee children and 56 for children from the host community) as part of statelessness prevention activities. The activity took place in the presence of the local authorities of the Kakwa Chiefdom, the administrative authorities of the Aba town, and the Refugee Committee of Meri site.
- **In Kananga**, UNHCR continued the drafting of birth certificates as part of the support for the campaign to register late births in the City of Kananga's nursery and elementary school. **A total of 11,445 birth certificates have been distributed in the different communes of the city of Kananga during the month of May** and a total of 15,682 birth certificates have been distributed since the beginning of the operation.

## Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

### PROTECTION

- **On May 22, 2021, the Nyiragongo volcano erupted in the city of Goma (North Kivu)**. 32 people are confirmed to have died as a result of the eruption. More than 3,654 houses were burned, and more than **350,000 people fled** Goma to the nearby localities of Sake, Rutshuru, Bukavu, Masisi, and approximately 4,000 people fled into to Rwanda. UNHCR and its partners immediately set up emergency teams in displacement locations to address the humanitarian needs for shelter, water, and other relief items that displacement created.
- **1,559 human right violations have been reported during the month of May in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces**, marking a decrease compared to the recorded number of 3,434 violation documented in the previous month in the four territories concerned (Djugu, Irumu, Mambasa and Mahagi). The majority of the incidents have occurred in Djugu territory (43%), followed by Irumu (34%), Mambassa (15%) and Mahagi (9%) of the total of incidents and consisted predominantly in murders, kidnapping, physical harm, and looting. **In the same period, 265 SGBV violations were registered including 101 rape cases the majority of which perpetrated by civilians**. 100 among the survivors were referred to medical structures and 93 were supported with post-exposure prophylaxis kits. Other 87 survivors were referred to psychosocial support, and 94 were

directly assisted by UNHCR partner INTERSOS with cash for transportation and access to medical assistance since the beginning of the year.

- During the month of May 2021, the protection situation in North Kivu was also characterized by armed violence, particularly in Beni territory. **Ten targeted killings were reported, and a further 56 civilians were killed in attacks attributed to members of militia groups.** A total of **255 protection incidents were reported by UNHCR through its partner INTERSOS**, 65% of which were in Beni and 35% in Lubero, affecting a total of 199 men and 56 women. During the same period, UNHCR conducted an assessment mission with its protection monitoring partner INTERSOS to Uvira territory (North Kivu Province), to assess the protection needs of a wave of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who had fled violent clashes between two militia groups, Ngumino and Mai-Mai, in the villages of Kifune, Mukono, Gaso, Bijojo and Gongwe.
- **In the Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces, 376 protection incidents were collected and documented by UNHCR and its protection monitoring partners** (145 cases in Kasai Central and 231 cases in Kasai) during May. The majority of cases involved sexual violence and violations of the right to life/physical integrity, violations of the right to property, right to liberty, and land conflicts.
- **From May 24 to 28, 2021, an awareness-raising campaign on how to report cases of sexual abuse and exploitation (PSEA) took place in Tshikapa, Kasai Province**, in the five vocational training centres. These sessions reached a total of 99 learners, mostly people at risk of SGBV, and 12 trainers. **44 SGBV survivors were identified in the region during the month under review: 8 cases of physical assault and 36 cases of rape received medical care at the referral facilities.** Among the 36 cases of rape referred, 22 received the post-exposure prophylaxis kit and the post-rape kit within 72 hours. 09 survivors also benefited from transportation support to access the nearest health care facilities.
- **UNHCR and its partner SAFDF have continued to identify ambassadors of positive masculinity among the displaced and the host communities in Beni territory, North Kivu.** 10 men have been identified and will be trained on addressing unequal power relations between men and women and discriminatory behaviours within their respective communities. In North Kivu, UNHCR had already trained 140 Ambassadors of positive masculinity (80 in the areas of Masisi and Rutshuru and 60 in the localities of Lubero and Beni).
- UNHCR, through its partner SOCOAC, continues to promote peaceful coexistence between internally displaced people and their host communities by promoting social cohesion. Within this context, during the month of May **UNHCR has negotiated access to 157 hectares of arable land, established 35 farming groups and provided them agricultural tools** in the territories of Beni, Musienene, Mabalaka, Kasindi and Lubero.



## HEALTH

- **UNHCR continues to support the Congolese health authorities by donating medical equipment to 22 health zones** in the provinces of North Kivu (10) and South Kivu (12) in order to better equip and protect health workers and the patients. The latest contribution was made in Goma on 5 May and consisted of 22 motorcycles, 30,000 surgical masks, 1 ton of chlorine, as well as communications and surveillance materials (awareness posters et thermo flash).



## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- During the month of May, UNHCR partner AIDES conducted a WASH/shelter assessment, in Boga and Tchabi localities (Irumu Territory), to identify the needs of the displaced population residing in these settlements and plan an adequate response to the most urgent needs identified.



## SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- UNHCR, through its partner AIDES, finalized the construction of **12 community shelters in Beni** town (North Kivu) to accommodate 600 persons (100 households) internally displaced who arrived in Beni during recent months. At the same time, UNHCR is also working with local authorities to ensure a coordinated shelter response in Beni.

### **\$ CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)**

- **In Tshikapa (Kasai Province), UNHCR has initiated the purchase and distribution of telephones to approximately 99 beneficiaries, predominantly women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** within the framework of a socio-economic reintegration project which aims to enable them to strengthen their self-resilience and reduce their exposure to negative coping mechanisms such as survival sex, whilst receiving their subsidy in a secure manner through mobile cash (M-PESA transfer).

## Clusters and Working Groups

- From 17 to 20 May, **UNHCR's Shelter and CCCM teams have assessed the overall shelter needs in two IDP sites in North Kivu** under UNHCR management. In response to this assessment, the clusters are planning to decongest the sites and help integrate IDPs in their host communities as a durable solution.
- **From 23rd to 26th May 2021, UNHCR, through the coordinators of the Protection and Shelter Clusters and the CCCM Working Group, contributed to the organization of a multi-sectoral needs assessment in the localities of Boga and Tchabi** (Ituri Province). This exercise was a follow-up evaluation conducted with the aim to assess and re-orient humanitarian response targeting 24,470 displaced people and 9,585 returnees who were affected by the ADF militia attack in June 2020 and by the inter-community conflict occurred in September of the same year.
- **From 13th to 14th May in Bunia (Ituri Province) UNHCR, through the Protection Cluster Coordinator, co-facilitated a capacity building workshop for members of the Child Protection Working Group.** The objective of this workshop was to ensure a good understanding of the cluster approach and the expectations of the sectoral coordination bodies vis-à-vis the cluster members.
- **In Tshikapa, a Protection cluster meeting was held during the month of May which focused on the security issues in the Kasai province.** The province remains affected by criminality, banditry and human rights violations, with sexual violence being the most common human rights violation against women and girls.

## External / Donor Relations

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### **Donors for UNHCR operations in DRC**

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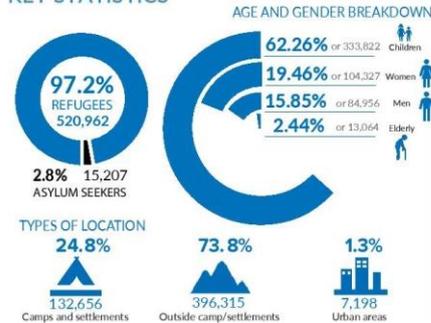
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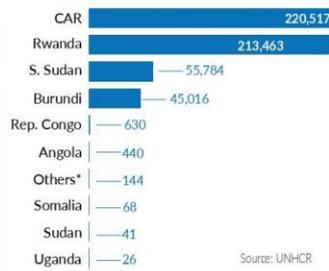
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TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

KEY STATISTICS



REFUGEE POPULATION BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

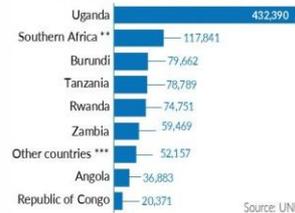


\*Others include Ivory Coast, Eritrea, Syria, Liberia, Chad, Liberia, Mali, Lebanon, etc.

REFUGEES FROM DRC IN AFRICA

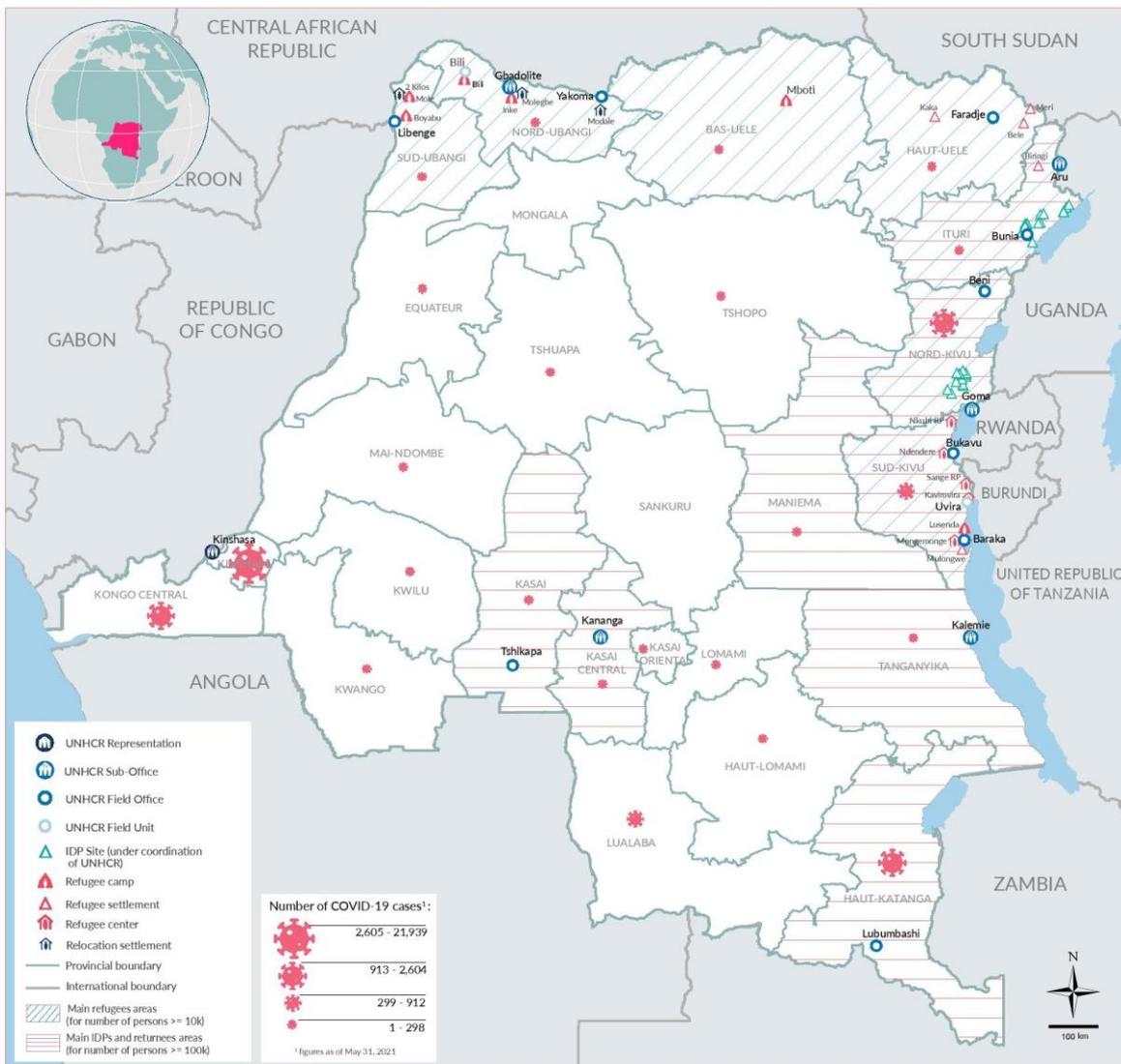
**952,313**

TOTAL DRC REFUGEE POPULATION



\*\*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 endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Printing date: 31 May 2021

Sources: UNHCR, WHO, CMH-Covid-19 in RDC and OCHA. For more information on refugee statistics in the DRC, please contact: covid@drc@unhcr.org

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Coordinate System: GCS\_WGS\_1984  
Datum: WGS 1984  
Units: Meters