

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

EMERGENCY UPDATE ON THE BURUNDIAN REFUGEE SITUATION

February 2017

KEY FIGURES

35,789

(as of 28 February 2017)
Burundian refugees registered in
DRC (new caseload of 2015-2017)

27,057

(as of 28 February 2017)
Refugees living in Lusenda refugee
camp

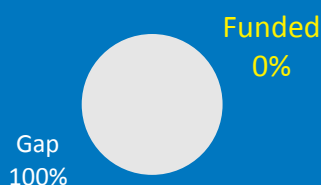
25,596

Refugees received food vouchers to
purchase the food of their choice.

FUNDING

USD 18.7 M

Requested for the operation



PRIORITIES

- Identify and arrange new sites to accommodate the incoming influx of refugees.
- Promote and implement peaceful coexistence activities between refugee and hosting communities.
- Provide adequate protection and assistance to people with specific needs.

HIGHLIGHTS



Burundian refugees wait at the meal tent at Kamvivira transit centre @UNHCR/Eduardo Soteras Jalil

- Following the rise in the number of new arrivals from Burundi, UNHCR-supported structures at Lusenda camp in South Kivu Province could not accommodate any additional Burundian refugees. At the end of February, some 1,400 Burundian asylum seekers were staying outside transit centers, while another 400 had found shelter in a church in Katogota (Uvira Territory). The latter could neither be accommodated in the transit centers, nor at Lusenda camp. Moreover, in Lusenda camp over 800 refugees had to be sheltered in communal spaces due to lack of available individual family shelters. UNHCR and its Government partner, the National Refugee Commission, intensified their efforts to identify unused shelters in Lusenda camp to accommodate some of the recent arrivals.
- Limited resources is a major obstacle to immediately setting up a new camp. So far, since no viable option for a site near Lusenda has been found, only an option much further away from the camp and the operational base of UNHCR and partners (in Mboko) seems feasible.
- February saw an increase of arrivals from Burundi, with 1,688 Burundian refugees arrived in DRC with an arrival rate of 60 individuals per day.
- As of 28 February 2017, 1,529 refugees were hosted in the three transit structures of Kavimvira, Sange and Mongemonge. The capacity of these structures had been stretched to host up to 1,800 individuals.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

- A FARDC soldier (Congolese National Army) was killed near Lusenda camp in the night of 8th February by unknown perpetrators. 11 refugees were arrested in the aftermath of the incident.
- On 10th February, during the transfer of prisoners to the Prosecutor's office in Baraka, the 11 refugees and 7 Congolese policemen escorting them were injured in an accident of the police car transporting them. All the injured were transferred to hospital for care. Most of the prisoners could leave the hospital and may be brought to court. One refugee remained in hospital in Bukavu where she was transferred for appropriate healthcare. The cases are followed by a CNR lawyer.

Protection

Achievements and Impact

- In the aftermath of the incident occurred at the camp, two sensitization sessions were carried out by UNHCR and CNR for chiefs of village and refugee committee members about the rights and obligations of refugees living in DR Congo and their responsibility in case of unreported illicit activities. Moreover, policemen had also been sensitized about their responsibilities.
- Five cases of people with specific needs were identified during registration of newly arrived refugees: 3 cases of rape survivors (committed in the country of origin) and 2 unaccompanied children. Temporary foster families were found for the children while Best Interest Assessment (BIA) are carried out. Survivors had been referred to appropriate services as soon as they arrived to the camp.
- Sensitizations of refugee women living in Lusenda camp about the forthcoming celebration of International Women Day were carried out around the theme "*Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030*".

Health

Achievements and Impact

- 4,712 medical consultations of which 4,093 new cases were recorded in February. The main pathologies were malaria (43.5%) and acute respiratory infections (28.2%).
- During the month, 2 suspected cholera cases were referred to the cholera treatment center, although just one of them resulted positive to the quick test. The case received necessary treatment. Sensitization sessions on cholera were carried out in the camp and 17,302 refugees were reached.
- The prevalence of malnutrition in relation to the cases treated is 8.9% while the cure rate of 6 to 59 months is 100%, the alert threshold being less than 80%.
- In order to transport refugees hosted in transit structures to healthcare facilities outside, 7 three-wheeled vehicles able to carry patients were purchased.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- A high number of medical transfers to local hospitals was recorded in February among asylum seekers who stayed outside transit structures due to lack of space. This situation was due to the lack of essential drugs because of overcrowding and also to poor living conditions outside the structures, such as lack of mosquito nets and exposure to bad weather. Cases of diarrhea and acute malaria were reported. There is an urgent need to provide the alimentation of those admitted to hospitals.



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- The food voucher distribution of WFP took place at the end of the first fortnight of February without incident. The vouchers, equivalent to \$ 15 / person, were distributed to 25,596 Burundian refugees aged over 6 months according to the WFP protocol, including 400 new arrivals, to purchase their monthly food ration.
- The voucher distribution was closely monitored by UNHCR staff, and the exercise helped to discourage fraudulent attempts and to identify and deal with cases of protection needing food assistance, such as unaccompanied or separated children. At the end of the distribution, refugee certificates belonging to persons who had left the camp were seized. This will allow a close monitoring to identify empty or abandoned shelters that might be granted to new arrivals.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- For three months, no therapeutic milk F100 and F75 has been available at the two therapeutic units of Lusenda camp for severe malnutrition treatment (*Unité nutritionnelle thérapeutique de malnutrition severe sans complications – UNTA and Unité nutritionnelle thérapeutique de malnutrition severe avec complications. – UNTI*) as it should be provided by National Nutrition Program (PRONANUT). As a temporary measure, patients with severe malnutrition are transferred to Baraka Hospital supported by MSF Holland.



Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- 280 empty shelter were identified after physical verification. 147 were rehabilitated and assigned to refugee households arrived in January (441 individuals). For the other 133 empty shelter researches of the owners were still ongoing. Physical verification exercise is constantly ongoing and it will be combined with verification of individuals at the moment of cash vouchers distribution in order to minimize fraud (cases of village chiefs renting out empty shelters were reported).
- A small space was identified at Lusenda's extension of Lulinda which UNHCR's implementing partner AIRD used it for the construction of 70 new emergency shelters which were assigned to new arrivals. Around 844 individuals (259 households) were still hosted in community shelters awaiting opportunities of transfer in individual shelters where possible. Community infrastructures as town hall, health post and counselling center were built to complement the shelters.
- 230 transitional shelters were completed. They were attributed to persons with specific needs among whom there are elderly individuals.
- Non-food Items kits (including blankets, mats, mosquito nets, jerry cans, bucket, soap, kitchen set) and firewood were distributed to 1,016 refugees (331 households) transferred to Lusenda camp in February. Some items are distributed to refugees at the community center for current personal needs (e.g. blankets, mats, jerry cans, soap) while some others (e.g. solar lamps) were added at the transfer day to individual shelters.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- 2,369 Burundian refugees hosted in transit centers and common dorms of Lusenda camp were waiting to receive a family shelter. 789 additional shelters are needed to accommodate them.



Community Empowerment and Self-Reliance

Achievements and Impact

- Local NGOs ADED (*Appui au Développement de l'Enfant en Détresse*) and HCC (*Help Channel Congo*) distributed material for dressmaking to 23 young refugees (13 boys and 10 girls) who followed the training in tailoring. 10 of them were recruited as tailors outside the camp.

- 4,800 new seedlings were planted in Lusenda camp for the second cultural season. Other 800 are needed to cover all the camp villages.

Working in partnership

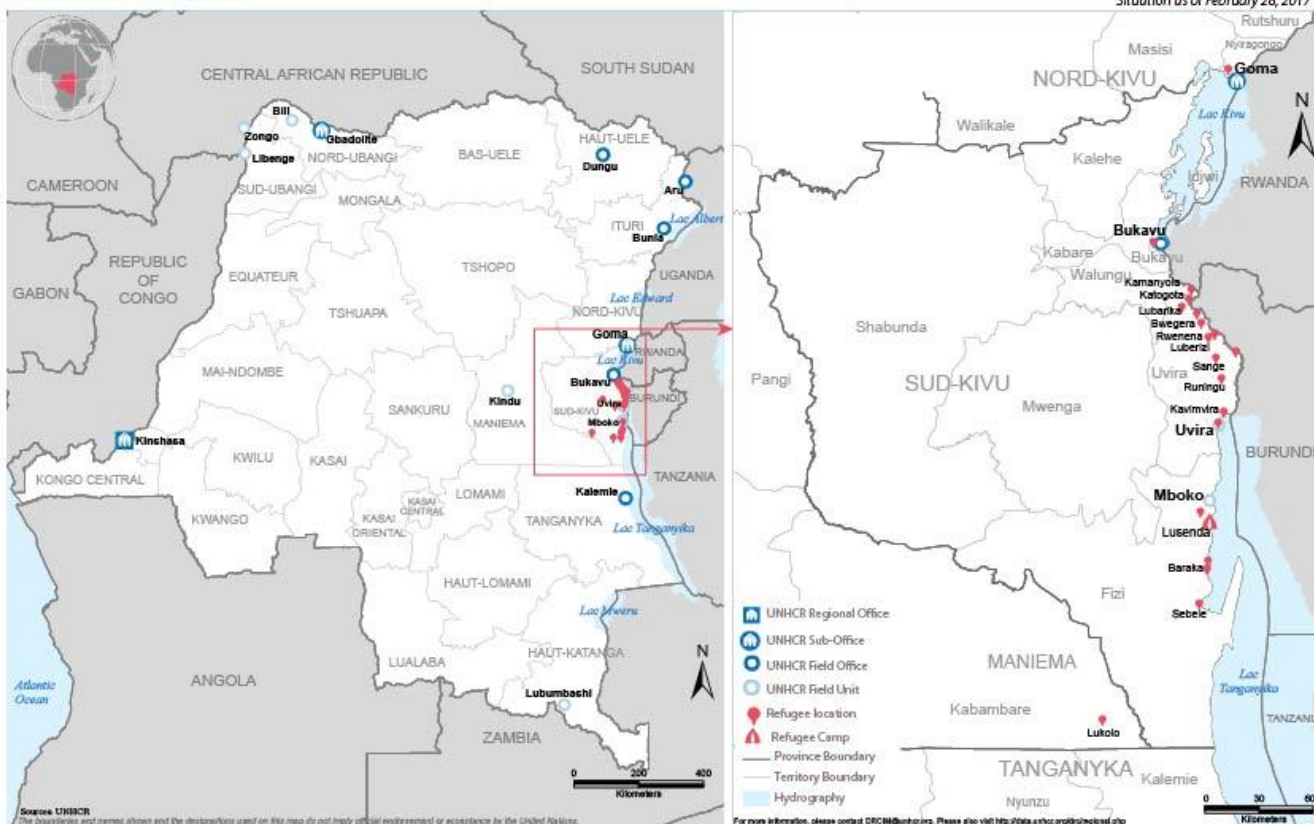
- UNHCR coordinates its assistance with a variety of humanitarian actors, working together to ensure refugees benefit from dignified and efficient protection mechanisms.
- For this operation, UNHCR partners are: AIRD, CNR, ADES, INTERSOS and SAVE THE CHILDREN. Other partners include ADE, ADED- HCC, AFPDE, BVES, EBEN EZER, FAO, ICRC, MSF, NRC, OCHA, RHA, UNFPA, UNWOMEN, WAR CHILD HOLLAND, WFP, WHO, SCI and WORLD VISION.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Burundian Refugees



Situation as of February 28, 2017



Donors for BDI refugee response in DRC in 2017

No contributions earmarked for the Burundi response have been received.

Other donors for DRC programmes in DRC in 2017

United States of America (3.1 M) | Japan (2.5 M) | Belgium (0.3 M) | UN Fund for Intl Partnerships (0.2 M) | Vodafone Foundation (0.05 M) | Private Donors Spain (0.06 M)

Contacts:

Andreas Kirchhof, Snr Regional External Relations Officer, UNHCR RR Kinshasa, kirchhof@unhcr.org, Cell (+243) 81 700 94 84
 Chiara Cavalcanti, Associate Reporting Officer Bukavu, cavalcanti@unhcr.org, Tel: +243 99 80 88 098, Cell (+243) 81 040 39 01