

24 JUNE 2019

**QUICK FACTS**

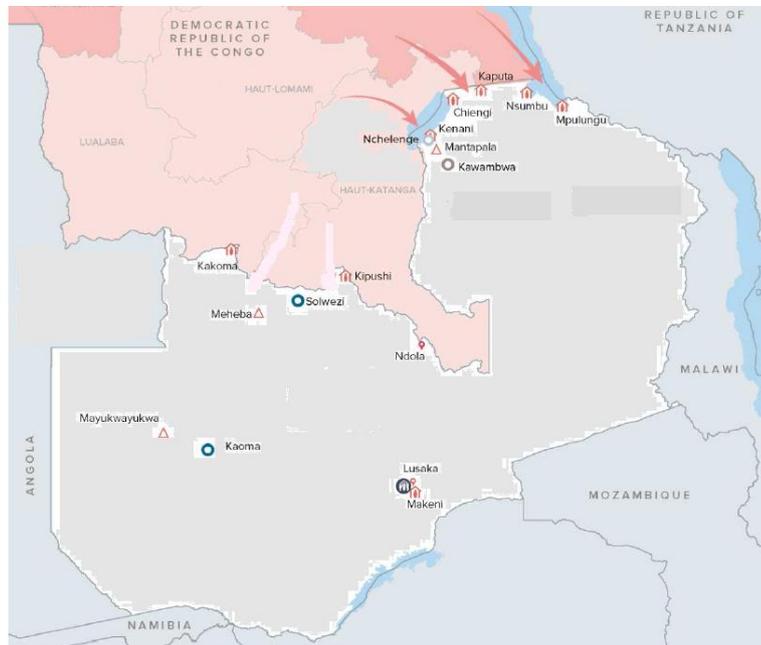
Response start date: September, 2017

Total registered Refugees: 14, 669  
Males: 49.84%  
Females: 50.16%  
Total Households: 4,409

Total Children (below 18yrs): 58.3% (8,530 individuals)

Total Persons with Special Needs (PSNs): 2,319 (15.83% individuals).

**CONTEXT**



At the end of 2017, over 685,000 Congolese refugees were seeking protection in neighbouring countries, including Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, the Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, as well as in countries in Southern Africa and beyond. Of these, some 100,000 new refugees were forcibly displaced in 2017, as a consequence of the deterioration of the situation in the country. In 2018, the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) drastically worsened, spreading to previously unaffected areas and impacting the Great Lakes region. The majority of Congolese refugees are women and children and nearly 55 per cent are under 18, many crossing borders unaccompanied or separated from family members. About 8 per cent of the total population are persons with specific needs, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), persons living with HIV and AIDS and persons with disabilities.

As of 30 August 2017, Zambia began to receive refugees fleeing conflict in Pweto and Moba areas in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In Zambia, the Congolese refugees are arriving through informal and formal borders crossing into Luapula, Western and North -Western Provinces. Mantapala was set up in early 2018 as an integrated settlement and started receiving DRC refugees who were relocated from Kenani Transit Centre after crossing into Zambia through the northern border in the last quarter of 2017. The majority of refugees have a farming, trading and artisan background. The settlement has the capacity to host up to 20,000 refugees and members of the host community. Following the elections in the DRC in 2019, the numbers of new arrivals started to reduce, but there is a steady trickle of refugees seeking protection or family reunification.

The Government of Zambia, through the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees in the Ministry of Home Affairs, supported by UNHCR, UN agencies and other partners, coordinates and leads the emergency response to address the most urgent protection needs of refugees such as food, shelter, water and sanitation, core relief items, and health services; and to provide a wider range of services including livelihood support and basic education for refugees to live in harmony with local community and contribute to the local economic development.



*Figure 1: Pupils in one of the classrooms in Mantapala*

## **COMPREHENSIVE REFUGEE RESPONSE**

The Republic of Zambia has a long tradition of hosting refugees. Currently, there are over 70,000 persons of concern including refugees, asylum seekers and others of various nationalities. These statistics also include former refugees from Angola and Rwanda whose refugee status ceased in 2012 and 2013 and who have been granted social integration in Zambia (some 22,500). The majority of refugees and former refugees in Zambia continue to reside in designated refugee settlements (Meheba and Mayukwayukwa) and a smaller number are living in urban areas, mostly in Lusaka and Ndola, while majority of new arrivals are hosted in Kenani Transit Centre and Mantapala Refugee Settlement.

The New York Declaration, adopted by all 193 Member States of the United Nations, sets out elements of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). The Republic of Zambia is signatory to the New York Declaration. During the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in June 2016, the Head of State pledged to move towards a settlement approach and to improve economic productivity in refugee-hosting areas in Meheba and Mayukwayukwa. Translating these pledges into action, rooted in the process of local integration of former refugees from Angola and Rwanda (2014-2016) and in line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework being rolled-out in Zambia, an integrated settlement approach is being applied for new arrivals from the DRC, enabling the inclusion of refugees into service delivery systems and access to livelihoods, while strengthening support to host communities.

A whole-of-government approach is being applied to the ongoing refugee response through linkages with national and provincial development priorities and plans. The Government of the Republic of Zambia formally adopted the CRRF in 2018 and is applying the framework in the current Congolese refugee response. Based on the principles and goals of the CRRF, the inter-agency refugee response will continue to support the host government to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to refugees, seeking to anchor the response in national systems wherever possible, with a specific emphasis on integrated service delivery with host communities while promoting livelihoods and self-reliance. To this end a number of Line Ministries, provincial and district level entities are engaged in responding to the needs of the refugees.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Based on the Multi-Year, multi-partner Strategy for Zambia, 2019-21, the Strategic Objectives for UNHCR's operation are that:

1. Refugees, asylum seekers and others of concern have effective access to international protection processes provided by the Government of Zambia.
2. The immediate humanitarian needs of refugees continue to be responded to, while progressively transitioning towards Government-led responses (education, health, water, social services).
3. Refugee settlements are transformed into integrated settlements and included into national development programmes, as well as Government led services benefitting both refugees and host communities.
4. Refugees and host communities benefit from livelihoods opportunities which strengthen self-reliance and promote socio-economic inclusion.
5. Opportunities for durable solutions such as local integration, voluntary repatriation/return and resettlement will be explored for individuals and groups.

Last update: 21 June 2019

