Ebola Outbreak: Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda

UNHCR West and Central Africa/Eastern and Southern Africa | External Update #2 | 18 June 2026

UNHCR in collaboration with WHO and North Kivu provincial authorities conduct Ebola-related training, for nurses working at refugee collective sites in North Kivu © UNHCR/Elema Bih Fondufe 2026

Overview of the Outbreak

- The Ebola virus disease outbreak is rapidly spreading in eastern DRC, where 837 confirmed cases, including 196 deaths and 49 recoveries, have been reported as of 15 June. The outbreak now affects 31 health zones across Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu, with Ituri remaining the epicentre, accounting for 767 confirmed cases, followed by North Kivu with 67 cases and South Kivu with three.
- Although there have been no reported cases among refugees to date, recent Ebola-related deaths of two internally displaced people (IDPs) from the Kpangba IDP site underscore the heightened risks facing forcibly displaced communities and the need to reinforce disease surveillance, referral pathways, community engagement and infection prevention and control in sites and surrounding host areas.
- Health officials warn that the response remains behind the pace of transmission, with high test positivity, continued geographic spread and weak contact follow-up pointing to likely undetected community transmission. Insecurity and community mistrust are further complicating containment efforts, including through repeated armed attacks on health workers in eastern DRC and responders.
- Persistent clashes between armed groups continue to drive forced displacement in the three affected provinces, currently hosting around 4.1 million returnees, 3.4 million IDPs and nearly 240,000 refugees and asylum-seekers, heightening protection risks and complicating access to health services, disease surveillance and community-based response activities.
- In Uganda, transmission appears relatively contained, with confirmed cases remaining at around 19, including 10 recoveries and two deaths as of 18 June. Around 690 contacts have also completed the 21-day follow-up period recommended by the Government, reducing the number of active contacts under monitoring from 826 to 122 within a week.
- UNHCR and partners have made significant progress in decongesting transit and reception centres in Uganda through relocations to settlements, helping to reduce overcrowding and support safer reception conditions for new arrivals and affected communities.

- Across the affected countries, DRC and Uganda, and high-risk countries, Burundi, Rwanda and South Sudan, UNHCR is supporting national preparedness and response efforts through coordination, risk communication and community engagement, border screening, community awareness and support to refugee-hosting areas. Refugees have been included in national preparedness and response plans, but critical gaps remain in workforce capacity, disease surveillance and the scale-up of preparedness and community engagement activities. The outbreak is occurring in a context of recurrent cholera, measles, malaria and mpox outbreaks, widespread displacement, malnutrition, growing mental health and psychosocial needs, and fragile health systems already under significant strain. Critical gaps also persist in water, sanitation and hygiene services, since severe funding cuts in 2025.
- Sustained support is essential to keep response and preparedness efforts ahead of transmission, particularly in displacement and border areas.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

UNHCR Needs and Response:

- More than 500 Rwandan refugees remain stranded in transit centres in Goma and Bukavu in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces respectively, following border closures with Rwanda, linked to the Ebola outbreak, prolonging uncertainty and challenging living conditions for refugees who want to return home.
- In North Kivu, UNHCR is reinforcing Ebola prevention and response measures in refugee collective sites and transit facilities. In Petit Nord, rehabilitation of the Goma Transit Centre to meet Ebola prevention requirements is underway. In collaboration with the Provincial Health Division and WHO, UNHCR also held a five-day training for 12 nurses working with refugees in Petit Nord to strengthen Ebola identification, screening and case management.
- In Ituri, Ebola prevention activities are being integrated into community events and refugee outreach. During activities marking the Day of the African Child in Adumi and Tsinzi villages, which host 5,000 refugees, 80 refugee children and 40 host community children across different event locations were trained to build hands-free handwashing stations using locally available materials, alongside reinforced hygiene messaging. Culturally adapted Ebola messaging is also being integrated into World Refugee Day activities, while UNHCR continues to support WHO response efforts in IDP sites around Bunia.
- UNHCR-coordinated training, with more than 100 IDP site and community leaders, permitted WHO and local health authorities to share Ebola prevention messages that will then be transmitted to communities, in local languages, by trusted leaders.

Uganda

UNHCR Needs and Response:

- No confirmed Ebola cases have been reported among refugees in Uganda to date, but the risk of exposure remains significant: over 90 per cent of the country's refugee population of 2 million people live in districts considered at high risk of transmission.
- As of 18 June, Uganda had reported 19 confirmed cases, including two confirmed deaths and one probable death, with 10 people still admitted in Ebola treatment centres and 10 successfully treated and discharged. Contact follow-up is progressing, with 122 contacts currently under monitoring, while 694 of the 826 identified and tested contacts have completed the 21-day follow-up period.
- In the North region, the 4 June government directive suspending the admission of asylum-seekers as a precautionary measure has halted operations at Lokung and Elegu collection points. However, 48 new arrivals from the DRC have reached Elegu, likely through informal border entry points, and remain at the collection point. UNHCR is engaging with the Office of the Prime Minister to clarify the application of

the 21-day isolation requirement and agree on safe, protection-sensitive arrangements for managing new arrivals, while coordinating with WFP and the Office of the Prime Minister on interim food assistance.

- Decongestion and relocation efforts have advanced across the North and West Nile regions, helping reduce overcrowding and improve conditions in reception facilities. In Lokung, 200 additional individuals were relocated during the week and the site is now largely empty, enabling rehabilitation works to proceed. In Adjumani, engagement with the district task force is supporting onward relocation from Nyumanzi to Palorinya and Kiryandongo. In West Nile, Kuluba Reception Centre has been fully cleared, while relocations from Imvepi and Ocea to plots continue with UNHCR and partners providing cash assistance and logistics support.
- In the Southwest and Midwest regions, the situation remains calm, with infection prevention and control measures in place across reception and transit centres and strong progress on relocations and decongestion. Transit centres are largely empty, aside from a small number of protection cases, while relocations from Kabazana, Kyangwali and Rwamwanja reception centres are ongoing. All intercepted contacts assessed to date have been found to pose no risk.
- Despite progress, sustained partner engagement and support remain essential to address operational constraints and keep preparedness efforts on track. Priorities include clarifying quarantine and admission procedures, strengthening coordination with Port Health and national authorities, ensuring sustainable food and logistics arrangements, addressing OPM staffing, registration and network constraints, and preparing to receive people currently unable to cross at official border points once movements resume.

A newly arrived refugee undergoes a temperature check before entering the Nyumanzi Reception Center in Adjuman, © UNHCR/Ssozi Mukasa Daniel

Coordination and Regional Preparedness

- UNHCR's Ebola Preparedness and Response Plan further elaborates and updates the refugee and displacement-related priorities, activities and funding requirements in the Africa CDC and WHO Joint Bundibugyo Virus Disease Continental Preparedness and Response Plan. UNHCR is seeking **USD 14.08 million from July to November 2026** to support preparedness and response activities in the DRC and Uganda, while also strengthening preparedness capacities in Burundi, Rwanda and South Sudan. The appeal aims to protect refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs and host communities from Ebola virus disease transmission, ensure continuity of essential services, and facilitate access to national response systems. OCHA's Emergency Relief Coordinator has activated the Inter-Agency Standing Committee System-Wide Scale-Up for the Control of Infectious Disease Events for the DRC, with immediate effect and for an initial period of three months.

UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

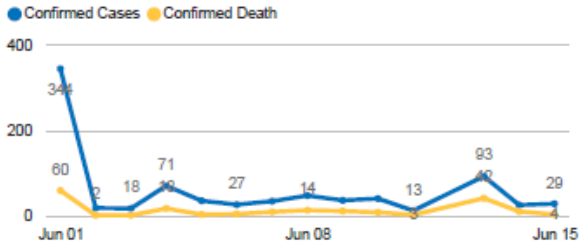
Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda
Ebola Bundibugyo Virus Disease Outbreak - 2026

Confirmed Cases**	Confirmed Deaths	Refugees		IDPs	
		Cases**	Deaths	Cases**	Deaths
856	198	0	0	2	2

Cases, Deaths and Affected Health Zones by Province*

Province	Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Deaths	Affected Health Zones
Ituri	767	157	20 out of 36 (55.6%)
Nord-Kivu	67	38	10 out of 34 (29.4%)
Sud-Kivu	3	1	1 out of 34 (2.9%)
Total	**837**	**196**	**31 out of 104 (29.8%)**

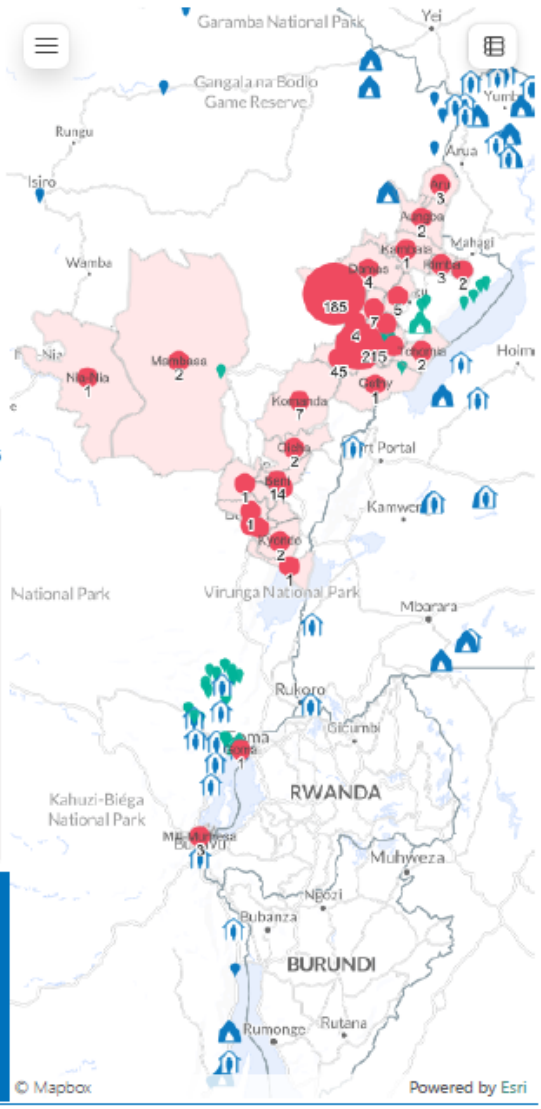
Confirmed Case(s) & Death(s) Per Day*



Confirmed Case(s) & Death(s) By Date & Health Zone*

Data Reporting Date	Confirmed Cases	Confirmed Death
6/1/2026	344	60
6/2/2026	19	2
6/3/2026	18	2
6/4/2026	71	18
6/5/2026	36	4
6/6/2026	27	5
6/7/2026	35	10
6/8/2026	48	14
6/9/2026	37	12
6/10/2026	41	9
6/11/2026	13	3
6/13/2026	93	42
6/14/2026	26	11
6/15/2026	29	4
Total	**837**	**196**

Affected Districts & Number of Confirmed Cases*



UGANDA

Total number of confirmed cases in Uganda is 19 with 2 confirmed death as of 16 June 2026 (WHO, Ministry of Health of Uganda).
More details will be added as data is made available

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Daily data are reported from the Situation Reports (SitReps) of the National Institute of Public Health of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (INSP) starting from 1 June 2026. Data prior to this date are presented as cumulative figures only.

** Map, tables and charts are showing data only from Democratic Republic of the Congo. Detailed data from Uganda is not available*
*** Number of confirmed cases reported is the total number of detected cases including the number of deaths*
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Creation date: 10-Jun-26 - Sources: UNHCR, WHO, Ministries of Health of Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda
Author: DEPS, SRS Data as of: 15-Jun-26

Contacts:
Kinshasa: Rachel Briana Criswell, External Relations Officer, @criswell@unhcr.org
Kampala: Letitia Dragomir, Senior External Relations Officer, @dragomir@unhcr.org
Dakar: Claris Achu, Associate Reporting Officer, @achuc@unhcr.org and Serge Berthomieu, Emergency Officer, @berthoms@unhcr.org
Geneva: Allen Maina, Head of Public Health, @mainaa@unhcr.org