

# Meri refugee settlement, Haut-Uele Province DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

31 May 2019



Total population  
**35,765**

Newly registered in 2019  
**1,026**

Meri refugee settlement, situated 18km from the South Sudanese border in DRC, is home to over 35,700 refugees.

It was built in 2015, and since then the number of South Sudanese refugees increased steadily due to insecurity in South Sudan. A massive influx of thousands of refugees to Meri was observed in 2016.

The maximal capacity of Meri settlement is of 20,000 people, but over 35,700 people live there.

Meri's overpopulation poses major concerns in terms of shelter and space needs.



Aerial view of Meri settlement. © UNHCR/Thomas Freteur

## Protection

**92** unaccompanied and separated children.

**418** people with specific needs assisted.

**5** reported cases of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) in April 2019.

Despite best efforts, assistance to unaccompanied and separated children is restricted due to underfunding and understaffing. Reports of SGBV cases remain low.

## Shelter and Non-Food Items (NFIs)

**15,750+** refugees living in sub-standard shelters.

**7,938** shelters and latrine kits needed for those who relocated to Meri since 2018.

**26,814** pieces of underwear distributed to women and girls, in May 2019.

**Shelter remains a major gap, especially when responding to new influxes.** Due to underfunding, only some of the refugees have received shelter construction kits. Others live in communal hangars for months, exposed to several protection risks. Shelters are built with local materials and using the local construction model.

## Education

**2,803** out of 9,465 refugees attending primary school.

**6,662** refugees out of primary school.

**133** additional classrooms needed.

**Enrolment rates in primary schools remain low**, in part due to a lack of funds. Since 2019, UNHCR has started assisting secondary school-age refugees under a small programme. In Meri, **276 out of 5,417** South Sudanese refugees are enrolled in secondary school.



## Health

**3,375** refugees go to the health center every day.

**1** additional health post needed.

**8,993** cases of malaria since the beginning of 2019.

**Malaria is the deadliest disease** among South Sudanese refugees.



## Food security and livelihoods

**40** hectares of land have been cultivated, and 660 more were made available and can be cultivated, if funding is available.

**1,279** refugees engaged in agricultural activities in 2019.

**140** households enrolled in Income-Generating Activities in 2019.

South Sudanese refugees engaged in agricultural activities in Meri are organised in small groups, each composed of refugees and members of the host community. Other income-generating activities include carpentry, baking, tailoring, hairdressing, etc.



## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

**47** water points available.

**29** additional boreholes needed.

**13.8** liters of water per person, per day.

The continuous influx of South Sudanese refugees has put **stress on available water sources in Meri**. More boreholes are needed to reduce the time it takes to fetch water, and the consequences refugees suffer from the lack of drinking water.

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## Contacts

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