

East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region

May-July 2020



South Sudanese refugees have their temperature taken before entering a food distribution site at Kakuma camp, Kenya. © UNHCR/Samuel Otieno

KEY FIGURES (AS OF 30 JUNE)

4.6 M Refugees and asylum-seekers

8.1 M Internally Displaced Persons

160,428 Refugee returnees between January 2019 and June 2020

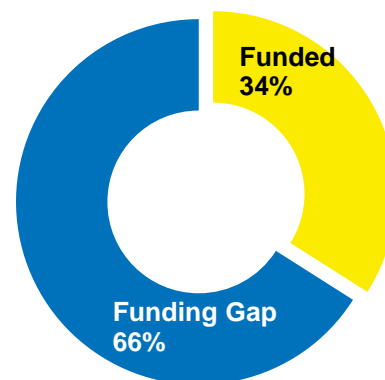
POPULATION OF CONCERN BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

South Sudan	2,168,840
DRC	703,960
Somalia	520,094
Burundi	341,625
Sudan	335,281
Eritrea	311,847
Other	153,636
Ethiopia	79,477
Rwanda	20,316

FUNDING (AS OF 22 JULY)

USD 1.9 B

2020 requirements for the region (inclusive of COVID-19)



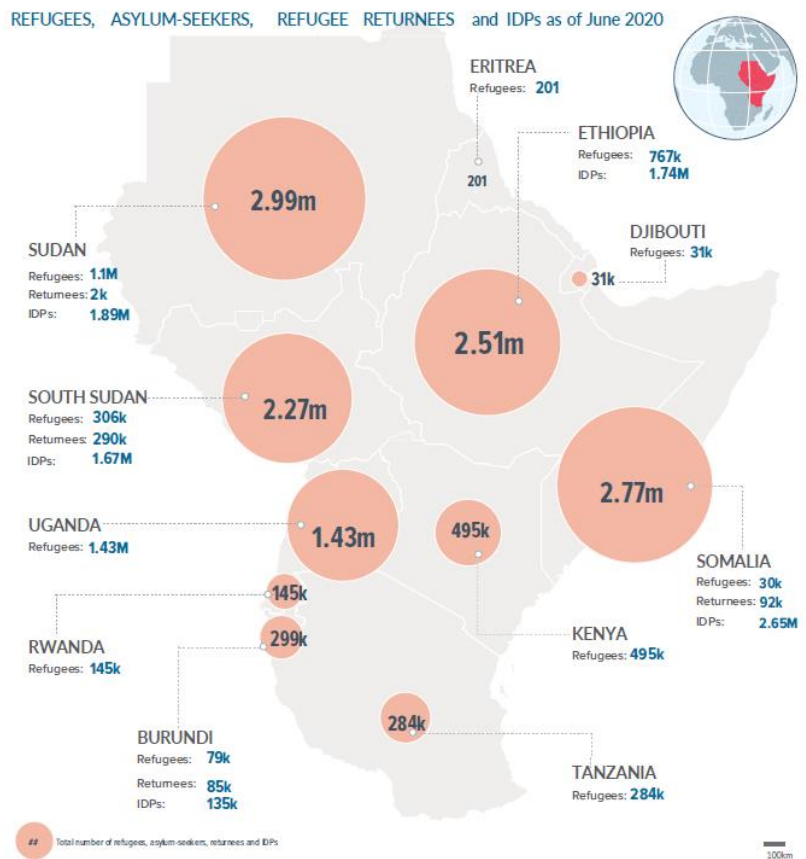
OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The first cases of COVID-19 in the East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes (EHAGL) region were reported on 13 March. As of 21 July, there were 50,420 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the 11 countries of the region. While there has been no large-scale outbreak in the approximately 100 refugee camps and settlements in the region, 4.6 million refugees and their host communities are at risk, as are some 8.1 million IDPs. With cases of local transmission ongoing in all countries of the region, preparedness and response measures are well underway. UNHCR is working closely with governments, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Country Teams to promote the inclusion of refugees, IDPs, stateless people and others of concern in national preparedness and response measures – in particular in health, hygiene and sanitation programmes, as well as emergency social safety nets where possible. UNHCR continues to assess the impact of border closures and travel restrictions on access to asylum and has appealed for special measures to be put in place, to allow for asylum-seekers to be screened, quarantined and admitted, and for UNHCR to be granted access to areas hosting persons of concern. In March, a temporary hold on resettlement travel was put in place due to disruptions and restrictions to international air travel caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. On 18 June, UNHCR and IOM issued a [joint statement](#) announcing the resumption of resettlement departures. Although many travel restrictions remain in place in the region, as these begin to lift, as well as in many resettlement countries, more refugee departures can be anticipated.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, the region is plagued by multiple crises. The rainy season has led to increased humanitarian needs as a result of additional displacement due to flooding and landslides. There have been a few minor cholera outbreaks in the region with more to be expected. Locust infestations in several countries have exacerbated a region already facing high levels of food security and threaten the livelihoods of millions. These crises add to the complexities of responding to the pandemic where movement restrictions and limited physical interaction is a key strategy to mitigate the spread of the virus in the region. Parallel health services for regular health needs vs. COVID-19 response must be maintained, which is stretching the human and financial resources available.

Since the beginning of the year, some 220,000 people were granted international protection in the EHAGL region, bringing the total number of refugees and asylum-seekers to 4.6 million. The region hosts some 67 per cent of the refugees on the African continent and 20 per cent of the global refugee population. The largest number of refugees and asylum-seekers in the region are from South Sudan, with significant numbers also from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Somalia and Sudan. Prior to COVID-19, Governments had generally maintained open-door asylum policies and embraced the Global Compact on Refugees by adopting progressive national refugee frameworks and promoting the inclusion of refugees into national health and education services. Over 8 million people are currently internally displaced. Country Operations in the region have been working to strengthen UNHCR's role in inter-agency IDP responses in line with UNHCR's 2019 IDP policy and the High Commissioner's new Initiative on Internal Displacement which includes Ethiopia, South Sudan and Sudan.

In a [joint press release](#) on 9 July, UNHCR and WFP warned that millions of refugees in Africa face hunger and malnutrition as the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated food shortages. A large number of urban as well as camp-based refugees have lost their income due to COVID-19 measures and given that most are not covered by social protection schemes, they have no choice but to rely on humanitarian assistance. In refugee camps in Ethiopia, where rations have been at 62% of children are experiencing critical levels of anemia. In Uganda, which hosts the largest number of refugees in Africa, rations were reduced by 30% in April due to lack of funding. Over 3.2 million people, or 72% of total refugee population in the region are affected by shortfalls in food assistance (both in-kind and cash based transfers). Unless urgent action is taken to address the situation, levels of acute malnutrition, stunting and anemia are expected to rise.



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

BURUNDI SITUATION: As of end June, the countries of the Great Lakes Region were host to 333,703 Burundian refugees. A total of 3,247 Burundian refugees entered neighbouring countries between January and March 2020. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the closure of borders in the region, no new arrivals have been registered. COVID-19 has exacerbated the already precarious condition of Burundian refugees in the region. Pressure on the mostly inadequate health and sanitation systems available to Burundians living in remote areas of countries of asylum increases the risk of an outbreak.

Despite heightened tensions during the May elections, there has not been any reported major forced displacement inside Burundi or across borders. Following the death of the outgoing President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza on 9 June, and the early swearing in of the President Elect, the country remains stable, though political tensions persist. It remains crucial to continue to provide international protection for refugees who may not opt for voluntary return to Burundi in the immediate future and to respect the right of Burundians to continue to seek asylum. Voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in Tanzania was suspended from 15 May due to the elections and resumed on 2 July. A total number of 6,423 Burundians have returned this year from Tanzania. A meeting of the Technical Working Group of the Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Burundian Refugees in Tanzania has been scheduled for 22-24 July 2020 in Kigoma, Tanzania to review progress on the joint workplan.

Contingency planning for any potential outflows related to the elections had been put in place at the regional level with country operations in the DRC, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia updating their plans and undertaking preparedness assessments in close consultation with UN/NGO partners and host governments.

SOUTH SUDAN SITUATION: The South Sudanese refugee population remains the largest in the region and is one of the most vulnerable. Whether in camps, settlements or urban areas, over 2.2 million refugees are living in extremely precarious conditions, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite border closures, lockdowns and other movement restrictions, there is a steady flow of new South Sudanese arrivals in asylum countries such as Ethiopia and Sudan. A total of 20,381 refugees have been registered in neighbouring countries between January and June 2020. Most refugees face high levels of poverty, limited access to livelihood opportunities, and are hosted in some of the poorest regions of host countries, where communities are already struggling to meet basic needs.

On 9 July, South Sudan marked its 9th anniversary since gaining independence. UNHCR, in a [statement](#), called on the country's leaders to reinvigorate efforts to establish lasting peace and bring an end to the continent's largest displacement crisis. It was highlighted that South Sudan has shown commendable commitment to welcoming people fleeing war and persecution, including during the COVID-19 pandemic when hundreds of refugees have arrived in the country from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR) and Sudan. The signing of the Kampala Convention committing the country to uphold rights and protections for internally displaced people (IDPs) is another favorable milestone.

In a [statement](#) on 13 July, the UN Security Council welcomed encouraging developments in South Sudan's peace process. The members of the Security Council encouraged the

Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) to finalize the remaining appointments of state governors and establish state and county administrations without delay. The members of the Security Council expressed grave concern regarding the increased violence between armed groups in South Sudan in recent months, including in Jonglei, which has killed hundreds and displaced thousands. They called for the R-TGoNU to support UNMISS efforts in facilitating intercommunal dialogue and enhancing community engagement. They also deplored the recent killing of humanitarian workers in Jonglei and Lakes State.

ETHIOPIA: Efforts are ongoing to address the situation of more than 8,000 new arrivals from South Sudan who have been sheltering at the newly re-opened Pagak Reception center in Gambella and a nearby school. Both facilities are overcrowded and services overstretched. As part of the agreement reached with the Government of Ethiopia to decongest the centers and start relocations to refugee camps, random sample COVID-19 testing has been initiated. Negative cases will be relocated, while positive cases will



Being internally displaced in South Sudan has not stopped Salwa from becoming her community's go-to conflict mediator. UNHCR/ E.M. Stuart <https://bit.ly/2BXmHC3>

be moved to government isolation facilities. Treatment facilities in the region are quickly nearing capacity and there is an urgent need for additional quarantine and isolation facilities, as well as PPE, testing kits, and other medical equipment. Once the Pagak Reception Centre is emptied, sustainable solutions will need to be found to avoid relocations being delayed and the Centre becoming overcrowded again.

SOMALIA: Somalia has been facing a triple crisis with cases of COVID-19, riverine and flash flooding caused by *Gu* rains and infestation of desert locusts, all of which compounded by ongoing armed conflict. In recent months, some 500,000 individuals have been displaced by flooding. Shelter and NFI have been identified as priority needs. UNHCR has so far distributed 5,776 NFI kits and another 5,250 kits are to be distributed. The shipment of an additional 6,300 NFI kits and 5,000 plastic sheets for shelter kits arrived end of June and will also be distributed to affected sites across the country.

SUDAN: On 13 July, Sudan declared a state of emergency in parts of Darfur after violence and unrest escalated in Kutum locality, North Darfur. The joint AU-UN mission in Darfur (UNAMID) expressed its deep concern about violence in Kutum town on 12 July and the attack by unidentified armed men on the Fata Borno IDP camp on 13 July which reportedly left 9 IDPs dead and 20 injured. The incident comes a few days after a group of IDPs at the camp staged a sit-in protest denouncing the alleged increase of attacks by armed groups in the area, preventing them from accessing their land for farming, and demanding increased protection and security by the Government. The latest violence took place while the transitional Government of Sudan and the armed movements were close to concluding negotiations expected to bring peace and stability to the Darfur region and to the whole of Sudan.



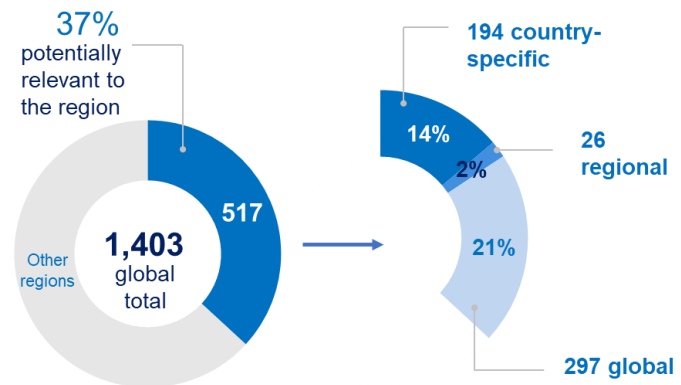
Protecting their home from the rains - refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) at a new site Al Mashaga, Darfur, Sudan. UNHCR.

UGANDA: Following the temporary opening of Uganda's borders between 1 and 3 July, over 3,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo were able to enter the country, some 65 per cent of whom were children. The new arrivals were taken to a quarantine facility, as part of COVID-19 measures, where UNHCR and its partners are providing aid and health care services. After the 14-day mandatory quarantine, the group will be transported to existing refugee settlements, in line with national guidelines and protocols. UNHCR continues to support the Government of Uganda in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, including through constructing and strengthening quarantine and isolation facilities and increasing handwashing supplies and availability of masks. For more details, see UNHCR's [Briefing Note](#). In a [press release](#), UNHCR commended the Government of Uganda's decision to temporarily re-open the country's border, despite restrictions in place to curb the spread of COVID-19, as an example of how careful border management can respect international human rights and refugee protection standards amid the pandemic.

GLOBAL REFUGEE FORUM: Countries in the region were well represented at the Global Refugee Forum in December 2019. A number of governments and various stakeholders made significant pledges that will help bring the Global Compact on Refugees to life in the region. Pledges made include to increase the quality of education and health service delivery by taking a holistic approach and by integrating service delivery for refugees into national systems.

The pledge analysis undertaken by the Regional Bureau, identified that of the 1,403 total pledges made at the GRF and the High Level Segment on Statelessness in October 2019, 517 (37%) are potentially relevant to the 11 countries in the EHAGL region and can be classified into three categories to help the pledge follow up approach: 194 country-specific pledges¹, 26 regional pledges made by regional actors² and 297 global pledges or pledges whose geographic scope has yet to be defined.

Almost half of the 194 country-specific pledges (77 pledges) were announced by governments in the region (40%) – with Rwanda announcing 17 pledges, and Sudan and Uganda 12 in total - followed by 70 made by NGOs (35%). The 3 main focus areas were education (19%), statelessness (18%) and jobs and livelihoods (17%). A number of regional bodies made pledges that are relevant to the EHAGL region. More than half of the pledges were policy pledges and material & technical contributions.



GRF progress tracking: A GRF digital platform tracking database was developed by a coordination team based in HQ, which allows pledge making entities to submit online on an ongoing basis any updates on progress towards the implementation of their pledges. So far, about 270 updates on pledges have been submitted. Out of these, 24 are related to pledges in the region – 11 are in the planning stages while implementation progress has been reported on 13 pledges. The 24 pledge updates were submitted by three host governments (Ethiopia, Rwanda and Somalia) and five non-host government entities.

Main challenges: Some of the factors identified as linked to the lack of swift GRF pledge progress are related to the COVID 19 response focus and prioritization, connectivity issues around remote work arrangements, reshuffling of government counterparts and inconsistent partner engagement.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to the **East and Horn of Africa, and the Great Lakes Region**, as well as to those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with broadly earmarked and unearmarked funds.

Total contributions to the **region, inclusive of COVID-19 contributions** amount to some **USD 655 million**.

Special thanks to the major donors of softly earmarked and regional funds | USD

United States of America 114.8M | Germany 39.2M | United Kingdom 24.8M | Denmark 14.6M | Canada 11.3M | Private donors USA 7.4M | Private donors Australia 4.6M | Private donors Japan 3.9M | Spain 3.4M | Ireland 3.3 M | Sweden 3M | France 2.8M | Private donors United Kingdom 2M

The World Bank | Norway | Morocco | Malta | Liechtenstein | Jersey | Iceland | Australia | Private donors

Special thanks to the major donors of unearmarked contributions | USD

Sweden 76.4M | Norway 41.4M | Private donors Spain 39.8M | Netherlands 36.1M | Denmark 34.6M | United Kingdom 31.7M | Germany 25.9M | Private donors Republic of Korea 20.5M | Switzerland 16.4M | France 14M | Private donors Japan 11.7M

¹ The 194 country-specific pledges also include multi-country pledges – i.e. pledges that benefit more than one country. For instance, the Netherlands pledge on the Prospects Partnership, which benefits Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda (as well as countries in MENA Region) is classified as a country specific pledge.

² The 26 pledges were made by the following six regional actors. African Union, East African Community (EAC), ICGLR, East Africa Nationality Network and Southern Africa Nationality Network.

COVID-19 APPEALS

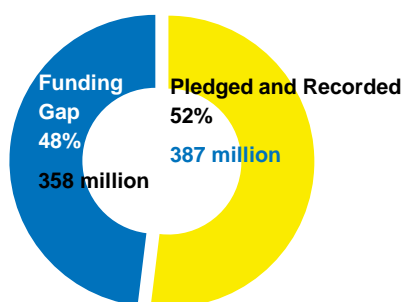
The second revision of the [Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) was launched on 16 July and where funding requirements have risen to \$10.3 billion. The spread of the pandemic necessitates more intensive health prevention and treatment measures and increasing investments to maintain other essential health services.

UNHCR's revised requirements of US\$745 million reflected in the revised May [Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (that was launched on 7 May seeking US\$6.7 billion) remain unchanged. UNHCR's [Revised Emergency Appeal](#) detailing the country and sectoral breakdown of UNHCR's global budget requirements was launched on 11 May. Within the revised appeal, \$126 million has been requested for ten countries in the East and Horn and Great Lakes Region.

This is a revision of the initial [Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) launched on 25 March seeking US\$2.01 billion, and which included US\$255 million for initial, prioritized requirements in UNHCR's operations in affected countries.

Funding (as of 22 July 2020)

USD 745M requested for UNHCR's COVID-19 response globally:



Total contributed or pledged to the COVID-19 appeal

USD 387M including:

United States \$186M | EU \$43M | Germany \$39M | UK \$25M | Japan \$23.9M | Denmark \$14.6M | UN Foundation \$10M | CERF \$6.9M | Canada \$6.4M | Qatar Charity \$3.5M | Spain \$3.4M | Ireland \$3.3M | Sweden \$3M | Sony Corporation \$3M | Education Cannot Wait \$1.7M | UNO-Fluechtlingshilfe \$1.7M | Private donors UK \$1.5M | Norway \$1.4M | Unilever (UK) \$1.3M | USA for UNHCR \$1M

Unearmarked contributions to UNHCR's regular global programmes:

Sweden 76.4M | Norway 41.4M | Private donors Spain 39.8M | Netherlands 36.1M | Denmark 34.6M | United Kingdom 31.7M | Germany 25.9M | Private donors Republic of Korea 20.5M | Switzerland 16.4M | France 14M | Private donors Japan 11.7M

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