

## Regional Bureau for Southern Africa 9 April 2020

### Key figures

**8,873,588** persons of concern in the region, including 767,754 refugees, 311,755 asylum-seekers, 5,600,782 IDPs, and 2,134,349 IDP returnees (as of 31 March)

**2,458** confirmed COVID-19 cases in Southern Africa region (Includes active cases, recovered, deaths)

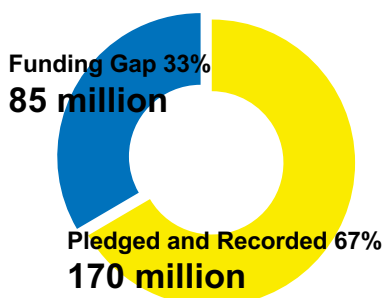
### Cases by countries

COUNTRY	CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERED
Angola	13	2	2
Botswana	5	1	0
Comoros	0	0	0
DRC	153	18	9
Eswatini	6	0	4
Lesotho	0	0	0
Madagascar	81	0	7
Malawi	7	1	0
Mauritius	253	7	8
Mozambique	9	0	1
Namibia	13	0	3
ROC	38	5	2
Seychelles	11	0	0
South Africa	1,691	13	45
Zambia	31	1	7
Zimbabwe	9	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>88</b>

Source: WHO, Government, CDC and Johns Hopkins as of 7 April.

### USD 255.2 million

Requested for UNHCR's COVID-19 response globally over the next nine months



### Regional Developments

The Southern Africa region continues to have the greatest number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the continent. Across the 16 countries in the region, national efforts to contain the virus range from the suspension of all passenger commercial flights from affected countries, through the closure of borders to national lockdowns. Some countries have instituted a partial lockdown: goods and cargo, returning citizens and legal residents are still allowed to move across borders. These measures are coupled with restrictions on the number of people allowed to gather in one place, and the prohibition of events and activities related to religion and sports. UNHCR is working with governments, WHO and other UN agencies and NGOs to secure the inclusion of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless people and other marginalized communities in national preparedness and response measures.

### Preparedness and response

Operations in the region have been looking for pragmatic and creative methods to deliver assistance given the growing risk of virus transmission and restrictions on movement. Efforts include community-based protection initiatives (with a focus on the inclusion of women and girls in leadership roles), decongesting camps, reception and transit centres where possible, and supporting authorities in the roll out of prevention and response measures for the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNHCR support to national health systems has included the rehabilitation and equipping of buildings as isolation centres in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**. In Kasai Central Province, authorities have identified an empty paediatric building that can be used for this purpose. The government has begun renovation, and UNHCR will provide beds. UNHCR has also provided in the province 264 tarpaulins for the construction of three isolation centres, and 71 tarpaulins for eight medical checkpoints.



A refugee from the Central African Republic using a recently installed handwashing station in Inke refugee camp, Nord Ubangi Province, DRC. © UNHCR/Ghislaine Nentobo

UNHCR and partners have been working with authorities in **Zimbabwe** over the last week to decongest the transit centre in Tongogara camp: 106 asylum-seekers, mainly from the DRC and Burundi who arrived over the last three months, were relocated to an available section of the camp, with 37 asylum-seekers remaining in the transit centre. In **Angola**, UNHCR donated to the Lunda Norte provincial authorities 200 jerry cans, 700 sleeping mats, 200 kitchen sets, 200 family tents, 200 plastic tarpaulins, 40 refugee housing units for temporary quarantine, 200 blankets, 200 buckets and 200 mosquito nets to assist in the COVID-19 response.

At least 3,866 refugees in the **DRC** have received COVID-19 information in settlements across the country, including in Kasai through public service announcements on seven local radios stations in French, Tshiluba and Lingala. UNHCR has partnered with mobile providers in **Zambia** to send out prevention messages by SMS on COVID-19 and sexual and gender-based violence, translated into the languages of the refugee population. Similarly, in **South Africa** UNHCR sent mass text messages to 4,500 persons of concern with information about COVID-19 prevention and UNHCR's Helpline number. UNHCR and partners have been working with authorities in **Mozambique** to share information on COVID-19 prevention measures with street children and older persons in urban areas.

UNHCR and partners in **Angola** have begun identifying the most vulnerable to COVID-19 among the urban refugees in Luanda and distributed basic food baskets to 217 persons. In the **DRC**, UNHCR and partners provided livelihoods assistance to 27 households from the refugee and host community in Sud Ubangi and Haut Uele provinces. Assistance consisted of farming tools, seeds and allocation of arable land. This will strengthen their resilience, especially given risks of dwindling resources due to COVID-19 and related movement restrictions. The assistance took place in areas hosting refugees from the Central African Republic and South Sudan. In the **DRC**, UNHCR launched mobile money cash assistance to nearly 6,000 IDPs living in the towns of Beni and Butembo, North Kivu Province on 3 April. Most beneficiaries said that they would use the assistance to pay for their rent or supplement income-generating activities. A hopscotch game was used to promote social distancing.

In compliance with the government's lockdown in **South Africa**, local authorities moved more than 400 protestors, including refugees, in Cape Town to a new site where they have basic services, such as shelter and food, and are screened for COVID-19.

## Challenges for operations

Throughout the region, social distancing measures can be difficult for refugees and IDPs to adhere to in the camps and health facilities where shelter capacity is already tight. Since mid-March, an estimated 8,390 persons fleeing armed attacks have arrived in the Bunia IDP site in Ituri Province in the **DRC**, which was already overcrowded with 16,765 inhabitants. New arrivals are currently hosted in five hangars, while four more are planned.

Prices for basic items have started to increase in countries throughout the region, which could lead to an increase in tensions, and affect urban refugees. Urban refugees already face difficulties maintaining their income during the confinement. The reduction or suspension of activities due to movement restrictions has been leading to job loss (particularly for refugees working in the informal sector), poor sales and bankruptcy.

## Financial requirements

UNHCR launched a revised [Coronavirus Emergency Appeal](#) on 27 March seeking USD 255.2 million to boost preparedness, prevention and response activities. This amount is fully coordinated with and included in the [COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan](#) launched on 25 March.

Special thanks to the major donors of softly and unearmarked contributions and pledges at the global level to the Coronavirus Emergency Situation giving UNHCR critical flexibility to rapidly respond to evolving needs.

### **SOFTLY EARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS AND PLEDGES TO THE COVID-19 APPEAL | USD**

Denmark 14.8 million | Canada 6.3 million | Ireland 3.3 million | Sweden 3 million

### **UNEARMARKED CONTRIBUTIONS | USD**

Sweden 76.4 million | Norway 41.4 million | Netherlands 36.1 million | Denmark 34.6 million | United Kingdom 31.7 million | Germany 25.9 million | Private donors Spain 20 million | Switzerland 16.4 million | Private donors Republic of Korea 10.5 million

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