

# Democratic Republic of the Congo

December 2021-January 2022

## Highlights

- Between December and January, UNHCR and partners facilitated the **voluntary repatriation of 467 Burundian and Rwandan refugees** to their country of origin.
- In December, **298 Congolese refugees were repatriated in safety and dignity** to Pweto, Haut-Katanga, from Luapula Province, Zambia.
- Between 17-19 January, in Kananga, Central Kasai Province, **Ms. Liz Ahua UNHCR DRC Representative officially launched a programme to support vulnerable young women in Kasai,**
- UNHCR's protection monitoring partner INTERSOS recorded **4,923 protection incidents in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces.**



UNHCR DRC Representative Ms Liz Ahua engages in a dialogue with young women attending the mentorship programme in Kananga, Kasai Centra Province. © UNHCR/ Clarissa Fatouma Kounduono

## KEY FIGURES<sup>1</sup>

**476**

Burundian and Rwandan refugees repatriated

**61,235**

People assisted with core relief items

**1,096**

Refugees vaccinated against Covid-19

**4,923**

Protection incidents recorded

## Context & Security

During the months of December and January, **the security situation in several parts of the country remained volatile**, with the eastern Provinces of the DRC continuing to face **intercommunal conflicts and armed group confrontations**. In North Kivu, confrontations between members of the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and armed groups continued to uproot populations in Rutshuru territory, whilst clashes between rivaling armed groups in Lubero and Rutshuru territories have forced thousands of people to flee, causing **human rights' violations and hindering humanitarian access**. In South Kivu, frequent armed clashes between opposing militias in the Highlands of Fizi and Itombwe led to growing insecurity, attacks against civilians and protection incidents. The deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Ituri has also seen increased attacks against IDP sites during the past months, including mass murder, looting of livestock and belongings, and destruction of shelters. **At the same time, in the northern of DRC, armed groups continue to be active in border localities of the Central African**

<sup>1</sup>Figures for the reporting period December 2021 – January 2022

**Republic**, leading to sporadic movements of people across the Ubangi River seeking refuge in northern DRC, with the exact figures of these influxes still under assessment by UNHCR.

## Refugees

### PROTECTION

- Between December and January, **UNHCR and its partner La Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR) facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 467 Rwandan and Burundian refugees from North and South Kivu Provinces** to their countries of origin. 1,920 Rwandan refugees and 7,296 Burundian refugees were repatriated from the DRC in 2021.
- During the month of December, **UNHCR and its partners facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 298 Congolese who have decided to return to their home in Pweto territory (Haut Katanga Province) from Zambia**, where they had sought refuge following intercommunal conflicts. Returnees were welcomed in a transit center set up by UNHCR and partners and received cash for the purchase of core relief items (CRI).
- In December, **UNHCR and the CNR carried out physical verification of 9,092 persons (2,215 refugee households) in North Ubangi and Bas Uele Provinces**, in addition to the 29,777 persons verified in Mole and Boyabu camps in South Ubangi Province since October. Physical verification of refugees biometrically registered years ago in the DRC allows to renew personal documents and to ensure a more targeted protection and assistance.
- **In December, UNHCR and partners documented 28 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) among Central African refugees and 28 cases among South Sudanese refugees living in Bele and Meri sites (Haut-Uele Province) including 19 cases of child abuse.** UNHCR and partners are providing multi-sectoral assistance to the survivors of these incidents, including psychosocial support, facilitating access to justice and material assistance to ease reintegration into the community.
- **UNHCR and its partners continued the relocation of South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers to the Bele site**, which is located in a safer area far away from the South Sudan border. The relocation also contributes to the preservation of the Garamba Park natural reserve. As of 31 January, 3,229 refugees and asylum seekers have been relocated to the Bele site.
- During the month of December **UNHCR and its partner Terre Sans Frontières (TSF) supported community protection structures in the Biringi site, Ituri Province, with communication kits and office furniture** including baffle, radio, solar equipment, chairs, and office supplies to improve access and information dissemination for refugees and their hosts.
- In December, **seven unaccompanied minors have been reunited with their parents in Rwanda through a partnership between UNHCR and ICRC**, which organizes family tracing in Rwanda. Sixty-seven Rwandan children were repatriated in 2021.

### EDUCATION

- During the reporting period, **UNHCR continued the construction of 18 classrooms in three primary schools in the development hubs of Modale, Sidi, and Wenze villages**, North and South Ubangi Provinces. Within the framework of the Education



UNHCR partner, ADSSE distribute stationery and manuals to teachers at the Salongo 2 primary school in Nzakara, North Ubangi.  
© UNHCR Ghislaine Nentobo

Cannot Wait (ECW) project, 30 other classrooms, five administrative blocks and 10 blocks of latrines are under construction in the localities of Lembo and Nzakara, North Ubangi.

- To harness support for community participation in the construction of classrooms and to encourage parents to enrol their children in school, **UNHCR and l'Association pour le Développement Social et la Sauvegarde de l'Environnementt (ADSSE) carried out awareness raising sessions that reached about 11,500 refugees and host community members in four localities in North Ubangi Province.** ADSSE meanwhile has distributed stationery and manuals for remedial classes to teachers, parent/teacher committees and headteachers in 19 schools, where about 6,953 children are currently enrolled.
- **In December, 216 urban refugees' children enrolled in primary schools in Bukavu and 27 urban refugees' children enrolled in Uvira. Both received a cash distribution from UNHCR** and its partner Actions et Interventions pour le Developement et l'Encadrement Social (AIDES) in order to pay the school fees for the 2020-2021 and for the 2021-2022 school years.



### WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- **In order to strengthen access to safe water supply to South Sudanese refugees** and host communities members, UNHCR partner AIDES constructed 10 boreholes including six at the Bele site in Haut-Uélé Province and four at the Biringi in Ituri Province.
- In December, **UNHCR and ADSSE distributed soap to 2,939 South Sudanese refugees and 150 vulnerable people** from the host community at the Bele site to improve hygiene measure and prevent the spread of infectious disease.
- In order to **facilitate access to water for the Burundian refugee community** in Lusenda camp and the local host community, **UNHCR** through its partner UGEAFI **made operational 30 ferrocement water storage tanks and the 8 standpipes.**
- To improve hygiene and sanitation conditions and prevent diseases, **UNHCR through ACTED built nine blocks of latrines at Covid-19 isolation, quarantine and camp health centres** in Bili, Inke Mole and Boyabu in North and South Ubangi Provinces.



### HEALTH

- In December UNHCR, together with its partner ADES, launched **the vaccination campaign against Covid-19 for Burundian refugees and host communities in South Kivu.** 5,000 doses of Moderna and Pfizer vaccines were made available at the Nundu hospital and at the health post located inside the Lusenda refugee camp. As of 31 December, 12 health workers and **816 Burundian refugees and members of the host community got vaccinated.**
- In December, **280 refugees from Mole and Boyabu camps were vaccinated against Covid-19** during the second round of a DRC government mass vaccination campaign supported by UNHCR. This makes a total of 481 persons vaccinated in the two camps in 2021.



*A refugee receives his vaccine against Covid-19 at Lusenda refugee camp, South Kivu. © ADES/ Gaylord Kuhana*



### SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- In December, **UNHCR and partner ADSSE distributed core relief items such as blankets, soap, mosquito nets solar lamps and buckets to 1,888 CAR refugees (466 households) who have recently relocated to the Wenze development hub**, one of the pilot villages where UNHCR is implementing its Alternative to Camp policy in South Ubangi Province. In addition, 569 CAR refugees among those who relocated in Wenze also have received cash-for-shelter and cash for the purchase of core relief items.
- **UNHCR partner African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD) completed 272 transitional shelters across the DRC for refugees with special needs.** 165 transitional shelters were built in Modale development hub (North Ubangi), 68 family shelters rehabilitated in the permanent settlements of Mulongwe and Lusenda, whilst additional 39 durable shelters for people with specific needs have been built in the Biringi site, Ituri Province, to enhance their protection.
- In January, **UNHCR and partner AIRD finalized the construction of a primary school in Kalemie territory, and two social centers for women and youth** built in in Moba territory which will be soon handed over to the Tanganyika provincial authorities.



### CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)

- In Bosobolo Territory, North Ubangi Province, UNHCR and its partner AIDES distributed **cash assistance for the purchase of core relief items to 3,716 refugees households and 195 of host community members** households. Women of childbearing age received an additional amount of USD 15 for dignity kits.
- During the month of December, **UNHCR assisted 275 Burundian refugee households** in Mulongwe settlement with a **cash distribution for the construction of their shelter, latrines and toilets.**



### COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

- **Refugee's received income generating start-up kits within the framework of a joint WFP/UNHCR resilience project.** The same project provided support to 9,900 refugees and host community members for the implementation of market gardening initiatives in Yakoma and Modale, North Ubangi. UNHCR partner AIDES also distributed seeds and farming tools to two farmers' cooperatives in Modale for market gardening activities.
- In December and January, **15 young urban refugees who completed their vocational training in Goma (North Kivu) and 32 in Bukavu (South Kivu), received a kit to start their activity** and be self-reliant. They were trained on several fields cutting and sewing, culinary art, shoe making and leather working, mechanics, aesthetics, hairdressing and welding.
- in order to strengthen peaceful coexistence between the South Sudanese refugees and the host communities, **UNHCR's partner TSF officially handed over in December two community market structures at the Biringi and Bele markets**, Ituri and Haut-Uélé Provinces respectively, to accommodate both communities.

## Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)



### PROTECTION

- In December, **UNHCR's protection monitoring partner INTERSOS recorded 2,842 protection incidents in Ituri Province and 2,081 in North and South Kivu Provinces.** The most documented violations were looting, physical assaults, violation of the right to freedom and sexual violence. Of these incidents, **270 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) were reported in Ituri, including 96 cases of rape.** All rape survivors received medical assistance, including post-exposure prophylaxis kit and psychological counselling.

- UNHCR Sub-Office in Kasai continued the biometric enrolment of vulnerable people in close collaboration with the provincial government, the CNR and partner AIDES. From October 2021 to mid-January 2022, a **total of 71,554 people (16,711 households) has been enrolled in Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces**. The collected biometric data will serve to facilitate the provision of evidence-based targeted assistance whilst significantly reducing the risk of fraud to increase donor and community confidence.
- **In the framework of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women campaign, UNHCR INTERSOS, AVSI, CNR, The Panzi Foundation, AIDES and ADES organized awareness raising activities in South Kivu Province**. This was done through radio broadcasting with messages on the prevention and response to GBV and the organization of three community days around the prevention of sexual violence bringing IDPs and members of the host community to discuss on women's rights, gender equality, fight against early marriage and benefits of investing in both young girls and boys.
- From 17-19 January, in Kananga, Central Kasai Province, the **UNHCR DRC Representative carried out a mission as part of the official launch of a programme to support vulnerable young women in the Kasai region**. This programme's main objective is help young women achieve a long-term vision for their future through the provision of life skills and university education financed by UNHCR. This programme was initiated by UNHCR in 2021 with 60 women who benefited from scholarships in the universities of Kananga. For 2022, 70 vulnerable girls will be selected to benefit from the same support.
- Between 19-21 January, **60 military and police officers in Kananga, Kasai Central Province, received capacity-building training** in the interpretation and application of the legal texts of the DRC with the aim to strengthening justice, peaceful coexistence, and social cohesion in post-conflict communities. This training was delivered by UNHCR partner FMMDI (*Femme Main dans la Main pour le Développement Intégré*) with the support of UNHCR in the context of a project jointly implemented with World Vision and the UNJHRO.

## SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- During the month of January, **UNHCR handed over core relief items such as tarpaulins, kitchen sets, jerrycans and buckets to the provincial authorities in Aru to care for approximately 2,000 displaced persons** living with host families in the Ndevu area, Aru Territory, Ituri Province.
- UNHCR, together with its partner AIDES, launched the **construction of 1,489 transitional shelters in South Kivu**, with 349 in Mwenga, 650 in Walungu, 382 in Fizi, and 108 in Uvira for the benefit of both internally displaced people and host communities.
- In Kasai Province, UNHCR and partners continued the **construction of shelters and infrastructures in the villages of Shamusanda and Kapinga Nkundi** for households of returnees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable members of the host community who are being relocated in the two villages. During the period under review, UNHCR and its partner AIRD built **128 transitional shelters, including 14 shelters for people with specific needs** and started the construction of a school in the village of Shamusanda comprised of four classrooms, school with four classrooms, a teacher's office and two latrine blocks.
- In December, **UNHCR and partners AIDES, AVSI and INTERSOS distributed CRIs and dignity kits** in the 13 IDP sites under UNHCR coordination as well as four IDP sites under IOM coordination in Masisi and



*An internally displaced family in the territory of Walungu is building a transitional shelter. © UNHCR / Duga Amani*

Rutshuru territories. **They reached 57,347 persons, with a special focus on girls and women** as well as host communities.



### **FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

- To support agricultural activities and the fight against food insecurity in Kasai, **UNHCR distributed agricultural inputs (maize, groundnut, cowpea) and farming tools (hoes) to approximately 900 people (144 households)**, composed of vulnerable people from the host community, returnees, internally displaced persons and returnees recently relocated in the village of Kapinga-Nkundi, Kasai Province. This distribution was coupled with training sessions on management of tools and seeds to improve agricultural techniques.



### **CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)**

- To support the socio-economic reintegration of returnees and vulnerable households in Kasai, during the month of January, **UNHCR via VODACASH assisted with cash 2,046 people (341 households) recently relocated to the site of Shamusanda, near Tshikapa**. This cash served for the purchase of metal sheets, the payment of labour for the construction of shelters and transport costs for their relocation from Tshikapa to Shamusanda.

## Clusters and Working Groups

- In January 2022, **the Protection cluster under UNHCR leadership organized a three-day workshop on conflict sensitivity in the Tanganyika Province. The workshop brought together 34 actors from 23 organizations** and aimed to improve the quality of humanitarian assistance in conflicts contexts. Participants developed a roadmap on conflict sensitivity and "do no harm" approaches to reduce the negative impact of conflict and reinforce the positive impact of humanitarian assistance in contributing to peacebuilding in Tanganyika.
- In January 2022, **the Shelter Cluster organized a detailed shelter needs and capacity assessment in Beni area, North Kivu Province**, with the support of its partners, AIDES, NRC, REACH, HelpAge and ECODEDU.

## External / Donor Relations

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