

Democratic Republic of the Congo

December 2021

The DRC hosts **526,370** refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. Some 48% are men and 52% women. **The majority (73%) live outside of refugee camps or settlements.**

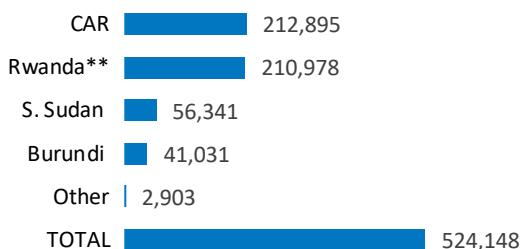
UNHCR provides protection and assistance for those forced to flee. We support people to find long-term solutions to forced displacement, and resume self-reliance.

Some **5.6 million** people are internally displaced in DRC while **1,009,179** refugees and asylum-seekers from the DRC are sheltered across the African continent.

POPULATION OF CONCERN

524,148 refugees and 2,222 asylum-seekers in DRC

Country of origin



** The DRC Government presented the number of 245,052 Rwandan refugees as the outcome of a pre-registration exercise by the National Commission for Refugees in 2014-2015. Following voluntary on-going repatriation operations, the number of pre-registered Rwanda refugees has decreased from 245,052 to 210,978.

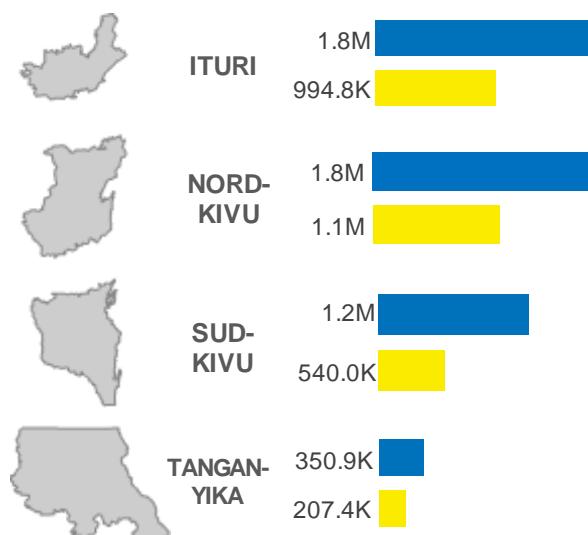
POPULATION OF CONCERN

5.6M Internally Displaced People (IDP)*

*Main provinces of displacement

Source: Commission Mouvment Populations (CMP), IOM, OCHA and partners.

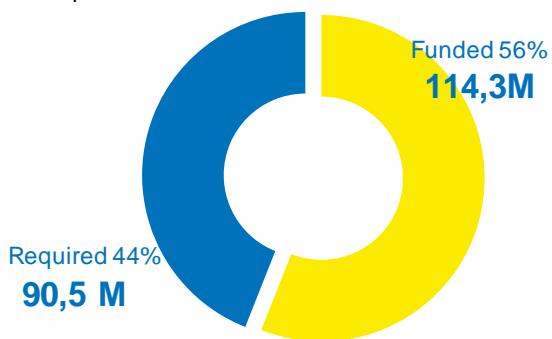
IDPs Returned IDPs



FUNDING AS OF 29 DECEMBER 2021

USD 204.8 M

requested for DRC in 2021



CAR refugees disembark at Port Amont, Bangui, following voluntary repatriation from Mole camp, South Ubangi Province © UNHCR/Ghislaine Nentobo

OVERVIEW

DRC hosts over half a million refugees from neighboring countries whilst also representing the biggest IDP crisis in Africa with over 5.6 million Congolese displaced within the country. The humanitarian situation in the county has deteriorated since December 2019, and complex, intersecting crises continue to force people to flee their homes. More than 1 million Congolese have sought asylum, mostly on the African continent, while the majority of displaced people remain within the national borders. The situation is exacerbated by recurrent natural disasters - like the recent eruption of Nyiragongo volcano near Goma in May 2021- which left an estimated 20,000 people homeless and hampered the humanitarian response.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

Protection

- UNHCR provides technical support to national, provincial and local authorities, including the **National Commission for Refugees** (CNR), and trains key counterparts on principles of refugee protection, human rights and international law. We collaborate with national authorities on the **biometric registration of refugees** and facilitate the provision of **refugee identity (ID) documents** by Congolese authorities, as well as access to **civil registration**. UNHCR also works with the CNR and the national police (PNC) to protect civilians.
- UNHCR monitors **arrivals**, the **protection environment** (rule of law, access to justice, non-refoulement), and specific needs, notably at borders and in refugee-hosting areas.
- To protect children from harm and ensure their rights are upheld, UNHCR provides psychosocial support and targeted programmes to meet their specific protection and developmental needs.
- UNHCR provides individual support and assistance to refugees, including the preparation of urgent **resettlement** cases. We facilitate **access to justice** through support for police in refugee-hosting areas, mobile courts, and legal aid.
- UNHCR supports access to land for agriculture and housing, which promotes self-reliance and **peaceful coexistence** between communities.
- To **prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV)**, UNHCR undertakes sensitization and capacity-building activities as well as **individual protection interventions** through referring survivors to relevant legal, medical or psychosocial structures, and distributing multi-purpose cash grants.
- To protect **internally displaced people (IDPs)**, UNHCR advocates with the Congolese government for the ratification of the **Kampala Convention** and to transpose it into national law. UNHCR has provided technical support to the drafting of a national law on the provision of assistance and protection of IDPs.
- UNHCR undertakes **protection monitoring and analysis** in displacement and return areas to inform the response. We also organize **training** for the local authorities, armed forces and police, as well as IDPs and host communities.
- To combat **statelessness**, UNHCR provides guidance and technical assistance to the Government to establish procedures to recognize stateless people, provide them with a legal status, and ensure their basic human rights. UNHCR also advocates with the Government for the ratification of the **1954 and 1961 UN conventions on statelessness**, and the implementation of the 2017 **Declaration and Plan of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) Member States on the Eradication of Statelessness**.
- Statelessness prevention activities include facilitating the identification of stateless persons and providing support to the civil registration system through **birth registrations** and issuing **birth certificates**.
- **UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster**, which coordinates and supports protection activities for IDPs and the protection and prevention component of the National Strategy on GBV. The Cluster is also responsible for protection and emergency shelter issues for IDPs and co-leads the coordination and management of IDP sites.

Education

- UNHCR works with partners and communities to support refugee access to education by **rehabilitating and constructing school buildings, distributing school supplies and paying school fees** for secondary and tertiary students.
- UNHCR supports the **integration of displaced and returnee children into the national education system**. UNHCR's education policy is aligned with the Government's 2016-2025 strategy on education and training.

Health

- The **primary healthcare programme** for displaced people is integrated into the national health system in order to facilitate refugee access to healthcare through providing medicines, equipment and capacity building for staff. UNHCR also contributes to strengthening access to **reproductive health services**, including prenatal and postnatal care, and to **HIV/AIDS programmes** for both displaced persons and local populations.

Food Security and Livelihoods

- Some 130,000 refugees receive monthly cash-for-food assistance the World Food Programme (WFP) with support from UNHCR in the cash distribution process. **Market-based livelihoods interventions** support refugee self-reliance, and **access to arable land** and agricultural, fisheries and livestock inputs such as **seeds and tools**. UNHCR also organizes **professional and vocational training** for urban and rural refugees and supports the creation of viable business plans for **income-generation**.
- UNHCR is actively involved in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework process.** Stakeholders in this field are committed to address the needs of refugees, IDPs, returnees and other persons of concern in the development of strategies as well as sectoral policies. These actions aim to contribute to sustainable inclusive economic growth driven by agricultural transformation and economic diversification in ways that are open to innovation and the promotion of youth and women's entrepreneurship.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- UNHCR supports WASH programmes for refugees, IDPs and host families to ensure **adequate access to clean water and sanitation**. UNHCR establishes water community management committees for WASH infrastructures, promotes the inclusion of WASH services into the national system, and improves WASH services in displacement sites and host communities.

Shelter and Core Relief Items

- UNHCR promotes the use of **local construction materials** and a **community-based approach**, using **conditional cash transfers** for shelter construction and rehabilitation. UNHCR's shelter strategy in DRC is tailored to respond quickly in emergencies, support local integration and reinforce local capacities and reduce risks of protection abuse, health issues and GBV.
- UNHCR distributes **essential household and hygiene items** to refugees and IDPs, including kitchen sets, sleeping mats and mosquito nets, and provides cash to buy basic items wherever possible.
- Through its partners **UNHCR provides shelter assistance to approximately 50,000 IDPs**. Over the course of 2021, some 22,000 IDPs received emergency shelter assistance and 28,000 people were supported with transitional shelters. In refugee settings, UNHCR provided assistance to 5,340 people with 4,716 emergency shelters and 624 transitional shelters to improve people's living conditions, and reduce risks related to protection, health and GBV.
- UNHCR also leads the Shelter Cluster and Non-food Items (NFI) working group for IDPs**. In 2021, shelter partners have provided shelter assistance to 290,000 people and 1,250,000 with household items, and another 100,000 will receive shelter assistance this year. This represents 22 per cent of the total shelter needs in DRC, leaving many people at increased risk, including GBV and health risks. **The Shelter Cluster remains one of the least funded sectors in DRC**.
- UNHCR and its partners are also carrying out **joint advocacy activities** which aim to raise awareness **on the essential risk mitigation and protection role that shelter provides to women and girls in conflict settings**

Site management

- UNHCR and the CNR collaborate to apply UNHCR's **Policy on Alternatives to Camps**, which aims to give refugees the opportunity to become active contributors to the community's wealth and development.
- UNHCR supports four camps hosting Central African refugees, three settlements hosting South Sudanese refugees, and one camp and one settlement for Burundian refugees. Together with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNHCR also supports the **management of a number of official IDP sites**, including in 13 in North Kivu and 59 in Ituri Province.
- UNHCR co-leads the **Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Working Group** in Tanganyika and North Kivu Province jointly with IOM, with a focus on solutions and supporting local communities.

Durable solutions and Reintegration

- UNHCR supports all forms of durable solutions, especially **voluntary repatriation, local integration** and **resettlement to third countries**. Since the start of the year, UNHCR has facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 1,920 Rwandan refugees and 7,296 Burundian refugees were repatriated from the DRC in 2021. UNHCR and partners have also facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 5,500 CAR refugees from North and South Ubangi Provinces between October and December 2021, whilst 210 Congolese refugees living in Zambia have voluntarily returned home to Haut Katanga in December 2021.
- UNHCR advocates for the issuance of **residence cards** for former refugees (Angolans and Rwandans), as well as for the issuance of **biometric travel documents**.
- To promote durable solutions for IDPs, UNHCR advocates for the Government's adoption of the **National Durable Solutions Strategy**, as supported by the Humanitarian Country Team.

Multipurpose cash grants

- In addition to sectoral cash assistance, UNHCR provides multipurpose cash transfers to refugee and IDP households through its financial service providers to help them meet their **basic needs**, prevent **protection risks** and strengthen their **livelihoods**. Multipurpose cash transfers allow beneficiaries to choose the way they spend the money and respond to their own priority needs according to their own livelihood strategies.

WORKING WITH PARTNERS

- The Congolese Government has a lead role in the response to the refugee influxes from Burundi, the Central African Republic and South Sudan, in line with the Refugee Coordination Model. **UNHCR coordinates the response, in close consultation with Government counterparts and in collaboration with partners**. With clear lines of accountability, the response is coordinated with a broad range of key actors to ensure predictability, complementarity and inclusiveness.
- UNHCR works closely with the Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés (CNR), with UN agencies and with national and international partners, including: ActionAid, ActionAid UK, Action et Intervention pour le Développement Social (AIDES), African Initiatives for Relief and Development, Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Association pour le Développement Economique et Social (ADES), Actions et initiatives de développement pour la protection de la femme et de l'enfant (AIDPROFEN), Association pour le développement social et la sauvegarde de l'environnement (ADSSE), Association des Jeunes pour le Développement Communautaire (AJEDEC), Caritas Bunia, Comité Technique Interinstitutionnel de Lutte contre l'Apatridie (CTLA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Femme main dans la Main pour le Développement du Kasai (FMMDK), Intersos Italy, Kadima Foundation, Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Solidarité Coopérative Agricole du Congo (SOCOAC), Solidarité des associations féminines pour la défense des droits de la femme (SAFDF), Terre et environnement pour le développement endogène (TEDE), Terre Sans Frontières (TSF), War Child Holland, War Child UK.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR is grateful for donor contributions to the DRC Operation.

Canada | CERF | Country-Based Pooled Funds | Education Cannot Wait | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Japan | Luxembourg | Norway | Other private donors | Spain | Sweden | Toyota Tshusho Corporation | Unilever (UK) | United States of America | UN COVID-19 MPTF | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS | UPS Corporate

UNHCR is also grateful for unearmarked contributions made at the global level, which allow UNHCR critical flexibility to reach people in the greatest need and at the greatest risk.

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