Southern Africa Operational Update

May – June 2022

Highlights

Communication with communities and consultations rolled out in Angola, Malawi and Republic of the Congo

Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) awareness-raising and programming continued

World Refugee Day commemorated in refugee-hosting communities across Southern Africa

Away Hamath, 40, receives cash-for-shelter from UNHCR at a distribution point in Nzakara, some 25km from Gbadolite town in North Ubangi Province © UNHCR/Claris Achu

During May and June:

11,408 people received household items and shelter materials in the **Republic of the Congo**

8,433 people reached with PSEA awareness in **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**

6,000 people affected by floods received emergency assistance in **South Africa**

2,617 people received official identity documents and birth certificates in **Zambia**

1,730 people provided with legal assistance to obtain official documentation in **Mozambique**

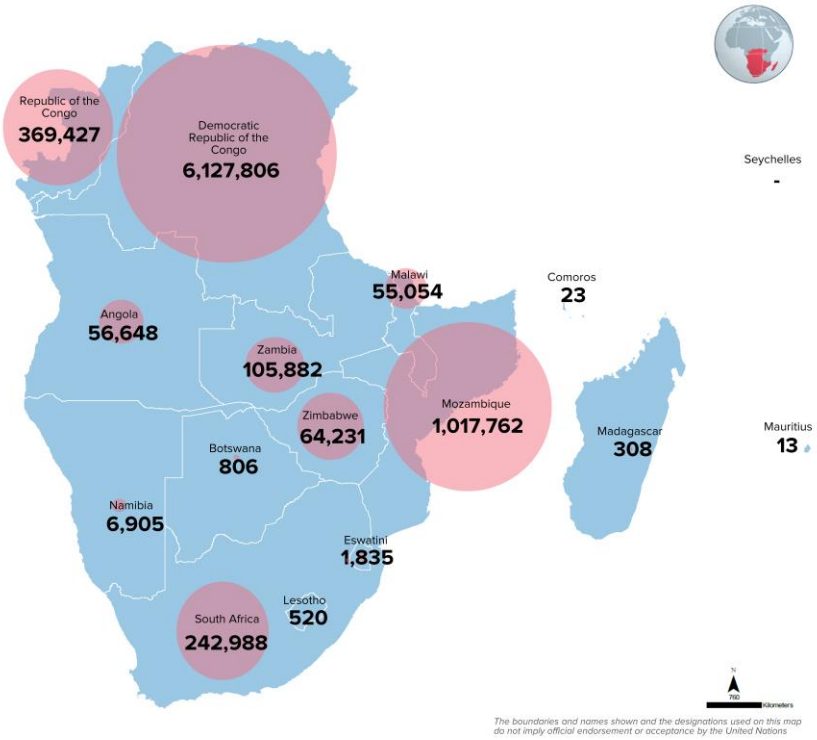
67 farmers received agricultural inputs and cash assistance in **Zimbabwe**

People of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa

8,050,208 people of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa, including:

- **787,251** refugees and **282,900** asylum-seekers
- **6,943,628** IDPs
- **211** returnees*
- **36,218** other people of concern

(as of 30 June 2022)



Regional context: Key developments

- **Volatile security environment and displacement in the DRC**: The security situation was volatile in May and June, with the eastern provinces of the DRC continuing to face intercommunal conflicts and repeated attacks from armed groups. While the number of incidents across the territories covered by UNHCR protection monitoring showed signs of decreasing in June, killings, abductions, lootings and destruction of properties continued to occur. Night-time attacks on villages in Ituri resulted in dozens of deaths. Abductions, looting and gender-based violence (GBV) provoked further displacement. In North Kivu, fighting between the Congolese Army and elements of the M23 militia resumed in several locations forcing over 200,000 people to flee, including tens of thousands who sought refuge in Uganda by the end of June.
- **Fresh attacks and displacement in Mozambique:** The security situation in Cabo Delgado province continued deteriorating, with a wave of violent attacks and road ambushes by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in June, in both northern and southern districts of the province. The expansion of attacks to the province's southern districts, especially in Ancuabe, represents a new and concerning dynamic in an area that has historically served as a safe haven for families fleeing violence in the northern districts, and where UNHCR had reliable access. From 2 to 26 June, a wave of attacks in Ancuabe and other southern districts displaced more than 30,000 people, according to IOM.
- **Impacts of the Ukraine crisis in Zimbabwe**: The ripple effects of the conflict in Ukraine are already being felt in Southern Africa. Zimbabwe is increasingly hard-hit, with the possibility of a bread shortage as supplies dwindle sharply and prices soar. Basic commodity shortages are also returning to the country, prompting consumers to hoard goods, resulting in empty store shelves. The growing food and commodity shortage is impacting refuges alongside their Zimbabwean hosts, who increasingly struggle to put food on the table and access basic household necessities.

World Refugee Day across Southern Africa

Angola: Several initiatives took place in Luanda and Lunda Norte to mark World Refugee Day, including a round table on the right to seek asylum and the refugee situation in Angola; seminars and awareness-raising sessions; photo exhibitions; and a debate on the radio about refuge, cultural, sporting, and artistic activities. The events were attended by refugees, embassy and government members, UN and NGO representatives.

Eswatini: About 450 people attended a World Refugee Day event in Malindza, which brought together refugees with members of the host community. The Minister of Home Affairs delivered a keynote speech on the theme of the right to seek safety, in which she reaffirmed the Kingdom's commitment to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

World Refugee Day event in Malindza, Eswatini. ©UNHCR

Malawi: UNHCR and partners marked World Refugee Day at Dzaleka refugee camp, where hundreds of refugees and people from the host community, as well a UN, NGO and government representatives, gathered at football ground. The event started with the 'Right to Seek Safety March', followed by traditional dances, songs, and acrobatic performances.

Mozambique: UNHCR in Maputo organized a press conference to kick-off World Refugee Day and launched the UNHCR Global Trends Report. In Nampula, World Refugee Day was marked by a celebration in the main square of Maratane refugee settlement, displaying the cultures and skills of different refugee communities.

Sandra Zaca is interviewed on SABC Morning Live on World Refugee Day.

South Africa: World Refugee Day began with a special SABC Morning Live show presented by UNHCR's Goodwill Ambassador Leanne Manas, who interviewed former Congolese refugee Sandra Zaca, who is now a life coach and a finalist in 'Mrs South Africa'. Zaca spoke about her family's experience living in a refugee camp, their journey to safety and how she has overcome challenges towards integrating in South Africa. A World Refugee Day event was also held at the Catholic Archdiocese of Johannesburg, where several hundred refugees, asylum-seekers and partner organisations attended the event organised by the South African Refugee-Led Network with support from UNHCR.

Zambia: All four refugee-hosting locations in Zambia held commemorations for World Refugee Day, including a video documentary, dances, songs, poems and speeches by officials and refugee leaders. Several radio and television programmes were held to discuss matters related to refugees in Zambia.

Zimbabwe: World Refugee Day events took place in Tongogara refugee camp, and included performances of traditional dance groups, refugee children reading poems and singing the national anthem. The Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, contributed food hampers containing basic necessities for an average family to all residents in the refugee camp.

Rwandan refugee dance group performing at Tongogara refugee camp, Zimbabwe. © UNHCR / Sonia Gonzalez

Operational highlights

Angola

- **Voluntary repatriation**: In May, UNHCR concluded the first phase of the return intention survey ahead of the resumption of voluntary repatriation. In June, UNHCR met with authorities to address pending issues related to vaccination, documentation, transportation, and border crossing. Protection and registration teams conducted an information campaign about the process and the return assistance package. As of 30 June, more than 685 individuals confirmed their intention to return to the DRC. Among them, three-quarters wished to return to their places of origin, while the rest wished to return to other areas of the DRC.

- **Communication with communities**: On 20 June, UNHCR launched a bulk SMS project to reach people of concern via messaging service. The project enables UNHCR to work even more closely with the community and facilitates thousands of refugees, asylum-seekers and persons at risk of statelessness to receive information simultaneously and provide feedback directly to UNHCR.

- **Peaceful coexistence**: In June, the traditional authorities of communities neighbouring Lóvua settlement attended a meeting with representatives of the refugee community. It was the first time that village chiefs were invited to the settlement, which served as a positive step in building the relationship between refugees and the local community. The meeting was aimed at discussing disputes between refugee farmers and cattle breeders in the villages. A series of measures to promote peaceful coexistence, along with practical solutions to existing disputes, were agreed upon as an outcome of the exchange.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- **Voluntary repatriation**: In May and June, UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 5,096 refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR), Burundi and Rwanda in safety and dignity. A total of 3,304 Central African, 1,972 Burundian and 1,057 Rwandan refugees have been repatriated to their home countries so far in 2022.

- **Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)**: UNHCR and partners organized awareness raising activities on PSEA, including training sessions and radio broadcasts. The initiatives reached 3,988 people in May and 4,445 in June, including students, teachers, IDPs and community-based protection structures.

UNHCR, together with partners restarted voluntary repatriation from South Kivu. By June 2022, 175 Burundian refugees have been repatriated in safety and dignity. ©UNHCR/ Antonia Vadala

- **Improved learning environment**: In May, UNHCR and partners in North Ubangi completed the construction of two primary schools in Sidi and Boroto and six classrooms in Nzakara development hub serving Central African refugee and Congolese students. UNHCR also completed the construction of two primary schools in the villages of Shamusanda and Kapinga-Kundi in the Kasaï, that host returnees and IDPs. In June, UNHCR handed over six classrooms, an administrative office, and two latrine blocks built at Ayiwa Primary School in the Bele refugee site, Haute Uele. In addition, UNHCR and partners in Ituri began constructing two schools with 12 classrooms in Biringi and Ngota, which will serve both South Sudanese and host community students.

- **Shelter and core relief items (CRI)**: In May, UNHCR in North Ubangi distributed cash-for-shelter to 911 refugees living in the Nzakara development hub, supporting them to replace makeshift structures with semi-durable transitional shelters, which provide more decent and secure living conditions. Meanwhile, in Ituri and Haut Uele, UNHCR's partner provided dignity kits to 7,941 South Sudanese refugees while UNHCR provided tarpaulins and dignity kits to 12,587 displaced people. In June, UNHCR's partner completed 126 transitional shelters for people with specific needs living in the development hubs in Wenze, South Ubangi. A further 140 transitional shelters were completed in the three development hubs of Modale, Nzakara and Sidi, North Ubangi Province.

Malawi

- **LGBTIQ+**: Marking the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, UNHCR and its partner organized a half-day awareness-raising session with youth on LGBTIQ+ issues in forced displacement. Topics of discussion included understanding diversity; UNHCR's age, gender and diversity approach; and creating safe spaces.

- **Community consultations**: UNHCR met with refugees in Dzaleka refugee camp on 30 June to discuss issues affecting refugees living in the camp. Topics raised included protection, resettlement, refugee status determination and GBV. The meeting facilitated a two-way communication channel between UNHCR and refugees, during which UNHCR received feedback from the refugee community and was able to provide timely response to the concerns raised.

Mozambique

- **Shelter and CRI:** UNHCR and its partner began distributing CRI kits consisting of blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, plastic sheets, jerry cans, and buckets to IDPs in the affected districts. By the end of June, 83 households had received the kits, with the distribution of 417 CRI ongoing. Since January 2021, UNHCR and partners have distributed CRIs to 79,150 individuals and provided emergency and transitional shelter, as well as shelter toolkits, to 8,100 individuals.

Displaced families who received transitional shelter in Corrane IDP site, Mozambique © UNHCR/Joan Allison

- **Joint mission to Mueda district**: From 17 to 18 May, UNHCR and UNICEF undertook a joint mission to Lianda site in the Mueda district to conduct child protection assessments through focus group discussions and to strengthen the capacity of child protection partners and other humanitarian actors in identifying child rights' violations and referral mechanisms. UNHCR and UNICEF delivered a one-day training on Child Rights Violations Monitoring and Protection, which was attended by 27 partner staff and focused on UNHCR's mandate, persons with specific needs, protection approaches and principles, and child rights monitoring.

- **Access to documentation**: UNHCR and its partner provided legal assistance and support in accessing documentation to 1,023 people in May and 707 people in June from displaced and host communities in Ancuabe and Pemba districts. Since December 2020, 24,038 IDPs and people in host communities have been assisted with legal assistance and access to civil documentation.

- **Protection training:** in May, UNHCR and partners trained 202 people, including protection focal points, community leaders, GBV responders and midwives from the districts of Ancuabe, Chiure and Mecufi, Metuge, Montepuez, Mueda and Pemba. Training covered the topics of GBV prevention and response, case management, survivor-centred approaches, PSEA, intimate partner violence and Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines. In June, UNHCR trained 64 staff from NGO and academic partners on protection approaches and principles, persons with specific needs, child and youth protection, GBV/PSEA referral pathways, data collection methodologies. In addition, UNHCR further provided training on GBV prevention and response and PSEA to 55 protection focal points from across the southern districts. With this GBV training, UNHCR completed the provision of four separate rounds of GBV/PSEA learning sessions to all protection focal points in Cabo Delgado.

Republic of the Congo

- **Visit by the UNHCR Regional Director**: From 16 to 22 June, the UNHCR Regional Director for Southern Africa visited the Republic of the Congo. He engaged with members of the UN Country team and met with government including the Minister of Justice, the Minister in charge of Decentralization, and the Secretary General of Foreign Affairs. The Director underlined the conducive protection environment for refugee local integration in the Republic of the Congo and took the opportunity of his field visits to refugee sites to engage in further advocacy for the inclusion of refugees in the Local Development Plans of host localities.

- **CRI distribution**: UNHCR launched a CRI distribution for 11,408 Central African refugees residing in Bétou. The distribution included tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, jerrycans, mats, buckets, solar lamps, and soaps. In addition, 3,264 women and girls of reproductive age received hygiene kits.

- **Protection outreach and awareness-raising**: in June, UNHCR conducted awareness-raising sessions through community relays on the importance of registering births, reaching 4,218 people including 1,233 refuges, to prevent and reduce of the risk of statelessness. In addition, to mark the Day of the African Child, 11 Congolese and refugee secondary school students in Bétou delivered a presentation on the eradication of harmful practices affecting children.

South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO)

Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa

- **Support to flood response in South Africa**: UNHCR supported the flood response in KwaZulu Natal by contributing CRIs for affected families. This included 3,000 semi-collapsible jerry cans, 600 kitchen sets, and 300 plastic tarpaulins. Though a partner, UNHCR also provided cash assistance for 600 households. Overall assistance benefitted about 6,000 individuals among South Africans and foreign nationals including refugees.

The official handover of CRIs by UNHCR for flood victims in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. © UNHCR/Meshack Hobwane

- **Representative meets relocated refugees in Lesotho**: In June, the UNHCR Representative travelled to the Kingdom of Lesotho to meet refugees who had recently been relocated from the Comoros. She expressed appreciation for the Government's openness to receiving these refugees at risk. During the visit, the Minister of Home Affairs reiterated Lesotho's willingness to receive the refugees from Comoros and expressed continued willingness to have a regional protection hub in Lesotho.

Zambia

- **Refugee camp verification**: A verification exercise was conducted in Meheba refugee settlement beginning in April and concluding in May. Preliminary reports indicate 31,812 refugees verified of a total target population of 35,997 persons. Staff from the government's Department of National Registration, Passports and Citizenship were also present, and issued 1,376 alien cards, while 1,241 birth certificates were issued to children of various nationalities. In addition, 3,880 people representing their households participated in a socio-economic survey. High traffic at the livelihoods desk demonstrated the economic difficulty faced by residents of the settlement, but importantly the high level of interest in livelihood activities and income-generating activities.

UNHCR and Office of the Commissioner for Refugees conducting the verification exercise in Lusaka, Zambia. © UNHCR/Kelvin Shimo.

- **Higher education opportunities**: UNHCR in June advanced the project 'UNICORE 2022', which is offering 69 refugee students the opportunity to attend a master's degree programme in Italy. UNHCR's partner began identifying suitable candidates and guiding them in the application process. The opportunity was advertised though various networks to reach as many eligible candidates as possible. Successful applicants will be enrolled in one of 17 universities in Italy and will have a chance to apply for asylum or work permits in Italy.

Zimbabwe

- **Menstrual hygiene:** UNHCR and partners commemorated Menstrual Hygiene Day in Tongogara refugee camp on 9 June. The aim of the day was to help reduce the stigma related to menstruation. The event also saw the handover of menstrual hygiene-friendly toilets at the secondary school. To ensure privacy for school children during menstruation, toilets and washing facilities are accessible under one roof. During the event, UNHCR's partners provided hygiene packs to 293 female students and 18 female teachers, which included soap, cotton underwear and disposable sanitary pads, among other items.

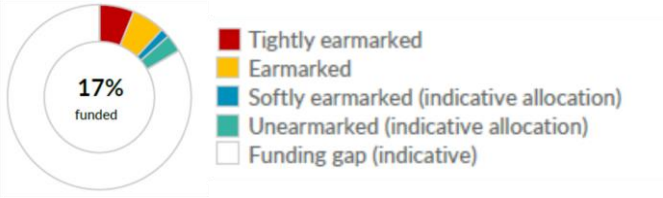
- **Nutrition garden**: With support from UNHCR, 67 farmers planted sugar beans, tsunga and spinach at the nutrition garden in Tongogara refugee camp. In addition, the 67 farmers received cash transfers, out of whom 41 used the cash to enhance their household income including by establishing small shops. This initiative will enhance communities' resilience to shocks and stresses as they will have projects to fall back.

- **Tongogara Youth Fitness Club**: Young refugees in Tongogara have demonstrated their motivation to revitalize their community and engage in meaningful activities for the benefit of all residents in the camp. They have started a project to promote fitness and physical wellness through the establishment of a fitness club, offering aerobics, yoga and bodybuilding sessions. The young refugees selected fitness coaches among them to provide these services.

Refugees practice yoga at the newly created fitness club in Tongogara, Zimbabwe. © Tongogara Youth Fitness Club/Anicet Sulu Mukadi

Financial Requirements

UNHCR's financial requirements for the Southern Africa region in 2022 total **USD 436.5 million**. By the end of June, **17 per cent** of needs have been funded. UNHCR is grateful to donors who have supported operations in Southern Africa in 2022, including[1]:



United States of America 20.3M | Japan 6.4M | Sweden 3.7M | CERF 2.7M | Country-Based Pooled Funds 2.6M | European Union 2.3M | Giuliana Lagetto 2M | UN Peacebuilding Fund 2M | Education Cannot Wait 1.8M | Canada 1.7M | France 1M | UNO-Fluechtlingshilfe | UN Programme On HIV/AIDS | The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives | Norway | UNIQLO | Republic of the Congo | Vodafone Foundation | Qatar | Profuturo | Germany | Migration MPTF | UN Trust Fund for Human Security | Private donors

Flexible financial support greatly facilitates UNHCR being able to kick-start an emergency response, bolster forgotten or under-resourced crises, and enable the fullest possible implementation of programmes. They enable UNHCR to plan and manage its resources efficiently and effectively, contributing to the collective success in every life that is transformed and saved. UNHCR is grateful to the donors that have provided unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions in 2022, including:

Other softly earmarked contributions (USD)[2]: United States of America 14.5M | Canada 7.8M | Private donors USA 4.9M | Private Donors Australia 4.9M | Norway | Private donors

Unearmarked contributions (USD)[3]: Sweden 99.3M | Norway 72.5M | Netherlands 37.2M | Denmark 35.6M | Private donors Spain 32.7M | United Kingdom 28.1M | Germany 27M | Private donors Japan 21.8M | France 18.5M | Switzerland 18.4M | Private donors Republic of Korea 16.4M | Private donors USA 15M | Belgium 11.9M | Ireland 11.8M | Italy 10M

Notes: 1. Where a donor has contributed USD 1,000,000 or more, the total amount is shown. 2. Due to their earmarking, other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used in Southern Africa. Where a donor has contributed USD 2M or more, the total amount is shown 3. Donors contributing USD 10M or more are listed.

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