Democratic Republic of the Congo

December 2022

Highlights

- **UNHCR facilitated the safe return of 670 Congolese refugees from Zambia into the territory of Pweto, Upper Katanga province.**
- **1,900 emergency shelters were built by UNHCR and 16 community kitchen sheds were constructed at Buchagara Site, North Kivu.**
- **5,556 refugees benefited from soap distribution to improve hygiene conditions in North Ubangi.**

A group of fishermen happy to receive fishing equipment from UNHCR ©UNHCR/WassyTshikama

Context

In December the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continued to face violent clashes by non-state armed groups and inter-communal conflicts. It hosted 5.6 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs), 524,700 refugees and asylum seekers.

In North Kivu, tension between the Congolese Army (FARDC) and the *Movement mars 23 (*M23) continued affecting Rutshuru and neighboring territories, with more than 521,000 people being internally displaced from March-December. The majority of these individuals fled to Nyiragongo Territory (233,000) where they are temporarily accommodated in host families, churches, schools, stadiums and improvised sites along the highway.

Clashes between armed groups in South Kivu resulted in serious human rights violations including abductions, violent attacks, gender-based violence, and the killings of civilians. In Ituri, armed militia attacks forced thousands to flee and more than 28,000 children were deprived of schooling as a result of the destruction of some 80 schools in the territories of Djugu and Mahagi

In refugee hosting provinces such as North and South Ubangi and Haut Uele, the security situation remained fairly calm. In Haut Katanga conditions were sufficient to welcome the last voluntary returnees of 2022 in safety and dignity from Zambia. In both conflict and refugee hosting regions, UNHCR and partners continued working closely with local authorities to ensure that the needs of both displaced and host communities were addressed.

Results

PROTECTION

- In North and South Ubangi, the CNR (*Commission Nationale pour les refugiés*), in collaboration with UNCHR, initiated an awareness raising campaign for Central African refugees in the camps of Mole, Boyabu, Bili and Inke and in various development hubs on the current political issues in during this pre-elections period.
- In December, UNHCR Sub-Office in Kalemie and partners received five convoys of 177 Congolese families (670 individuals), who are returning from Zambia to the territory of Pweto, Haut Katanga province..
- In Kasai, UNHCR trained 37 girls from the "Zaida Catalan" scholarship programme on how to teach others about the prevention of Gender Based Violence and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse during the 16 days of activism. These trainers then sensitized 3,621 people, including women and students on these topics.

EDUCATION

- In December, UNHCR's partner ADSSE (*Association pour le Développement Social et la Sauvegarde de l'Environnement*) in North Ubangi supported 19 Parent Teach Associations with seed funding to help start school-based income-generating activities, such as community gardens in Yakoma and Mobaye Mbongo.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- In Yakoma (North Ubangi), UNHCR partner ADSSE distributed soap to 5,556 refugees (1,366 households) living in the Development Hub of Modale to improve their hygiene conditions.
- In South Ubangi, 15 new family latrines were constructed for people with special needs by groups of refugees and local artisans under the supervision of UNHCR NGO partner *Comité International pour l'Aide d'Urgence et le Développement*. This brings the total number of functional latrines in the Mole camp to 231.

UNHCR staff in Kalemie leading a discussion on gender norms and sexual harassment in schools ©UNHCR/Irakarama

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- UNHCR through its partner ADSSE, distributed solar lamps to households in the Inke camp, some 45 km from Gbadolite. Thanks to this support, over 600 households in the camp now benefit from lighting in their homes.
- In North Kivu, UNHCR in partnership with AIDES (*Actions et Interventions pour le Développement et l'Encadrement Social*), built 1,900 ready-to-live in shelters and 16 community kitchens at Buchagara IDP site.
- In Kasai-Central, Tshilumbu locality, UNHCR started handing over of 90 semi-durable shelters to returnees, internally displaced persons and vulnerable persons of the host community this month.

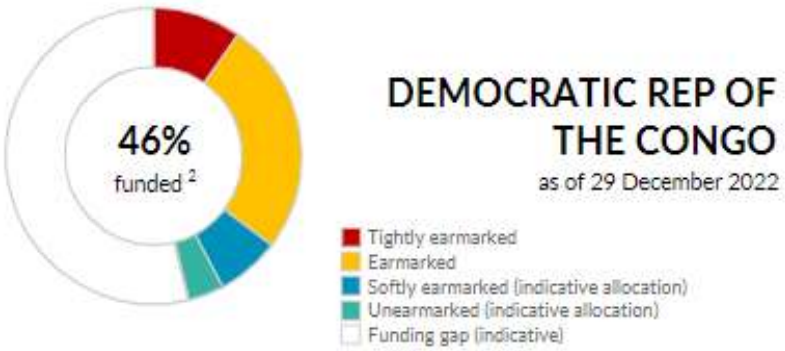
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

In North Ubangi, UNHCR supported six associations of fishermen made up of 30 households (18 refugee and 12 host community households) to benefit from the distribution of fishing equipment consisting of 9 dugout canoes, 9 paddles and 200 rolls of nylon for fishing nets.

UNHCR staff discusses making fishing nets from nylon © UNHCR/ClarisAchu

- AVEC (*Association Villageoise d'Epargne et de Crédit*) started sharing funds saved by the refugees of the Bili camp in Bosobolo territory. In total, 3 out of the 11 savings groups, supervised by UNHCR, reached 10 million Congolese Francs (equivalent to 4 900 USD) in yearly savings in North Ubangi.
- In Kasai province, UNHCR planted 1,044 trees that will benefit 600 households (1,500 individuals). The community receiving the trees is composed of returnees from Angola, IDPs and members of the host community. The project was implemented in line with UNHCR's environmental protection policy, awareness-raising and reforestation efforts in in the province, which is prone to droughts, deforestation and soil erosion.

Donor Contributions



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[1] *Funding update as of 29 December 2022 in USD*