Democratic Republic of the Congo – COUNTRY RRP

Cover photograph:
Burundian refugees at Mulongwe settlement in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo – UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

COUNTRY RRP – January 2019 - December 2020
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2019-2020 PLANNED RESPONSE

546,123
PROJECTED REFUGEE POPULATION BY 2019

US$ 174,637,118
REQUIREMENTS FOR 2019

11
PARTNERS INVOLVED

Refugee Population Trends
As of 1st Sept. 2018

- Rwandan Refugees: 219,110
- Central African Refugees: 176,654
- South Sudanese Refugees: 93,995
- Burundian Refugees: 46,512

Requirements for 2019-2020 (In millions)$


- Budget 2019
- Budget 2020

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Background and Achievements

For decades, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has maintained an “open-door policy” to refugees, welcoming on its territory hundreds of thousands of people fleeing conflict and violence from neighbouring countries. DRC is party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, and the 1969 AU Convention. In 2002, the DRC adopted a national refugee law, establishing the CNR (Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés – the National Refugee Commission) to process asylum applications and ensure the protection of refugees.

To date, the overall political and security situation in the region remains highly volatile with little prospect for large-scale repatriation. Many of the DRC’s nine neighbouring countries face socio-political instability, while the DRC itself is going through a turbulent period, with a lengthy pre-electoral period complicated by internal conflict, large-scale displacement and a challenging humanitarian and development environment.

At the end of 2018, the total refugee population is expected to reach over 546,000, living in communities, in camps, as well as in urban areas.

Refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) are located primarily in the provinces of North and South Ubangi and Bas-Uele; South Sudanese are largely in the provinces of Haut-Uélé, and Ituri; Rwandans live mainly in the provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu, and Burundians mostly in the province of South Kivu. Urban areas across the country such as Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu and Lubumbashi also host refugees of other nationalities (including Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda and Somalia). Conflict and insecurity in neighbouring countries have resulted in continued arrivals of refugees into the DRC throughout 2018; this trend is expected to continue throughout 2019 and 2020, with high and low periods related to both security concerns and to seasonal changes that affect flight. These continued arrivals, coupled with a drop in voluntary repatriation numbers, create various protection and multi-sectoral needs.

In the Central African Republic (CAR), while there are some improvements in Bangui, and indications that refugees may wish to repatriate there in the coming months, new arrivals have continued to arrive in small numbers throughout 2018. It is expected that the CAR refugee population in DRC will reach around 187,000 individuals by the end of 2018. Discussions are underway regarding preparation for facilitated voluntary repatriation, which will commence if the political situation in CAR becomes more stable and refugees begin to see the situation as conducive for return. Some self organised cross-border movements serve partly to facilitate income generation for those who do not receive assistance, and partly to maintain contact with return areas to facilitate return when that becomes possible.

Despite the presence of armed groups in areas hosting refugees and IDPs, the security situation in South Kivu and the overall protection environment for Burundian refugees improved in 2018, notably in Fizi territory where Congolese forces regained control of large swathes of territory. Burundian asylum seekers continue to arrive in small numbers in DRC, with an expected refugee population of 50,000 individuals at the end of
2018. Despite considerable challenges, including late availability of funds, access and security challenges that restricted movement and an increasingly difficult security context, the new Burundian refugee site of Mulongwe (in Fizi territory, South Kivu province) opened at the end November 2017. The site aims to encourage self-reliance and community participation from the start.

Voluntary repatriation to Rwanda continued in 2018, albeit in much lower numbers than in 2017, when some 18,000 refugees were repatriated. At the request of the DRC Government, UNHCR started in 2018 a large-scale verification and biometric registration of Rwandan refugees in North and South Kivu in an effort to provide a baseline for durable solutions, paving the way towards the Cessation Clause. As of the end of September, some 75,000 Rwandan refugees had been registered in the operation, which is ongoing. With some 70% of registered Rwandans having been born in the DRC, preparations for the invocation of the cessation clause will need to involve steps to facilitate legal stay arrangements for those who have established ties. It is expected that the number of Rwandan refugees in the DRC will decrease significantly in the course of 2019.

In South Sudan, the security and humanitarian situation also remains volatile. With several violations of the cessation of hostilities accord and no agreement in the former Central Equatorial State and Western Equatoria State, current expectations are that arrivals into the DRC will continue in small numbers and that there will be relatively low rates of voluntary repatriation in 2019. The two existing refugee settlements are overcrowded and thousands of refugees are living in communities along the border, facing significant security challenges, as well as a lack of services and food insecurity. A new site has been identified for a refugee settlement, with access to farm land to support self-sufficiency within a limited period. An initial registration and mass information campaign is currently being conducted in the border areas as a precursor to moving refugees to the new site. Plans reflect the expectation that the population will remain at around 100,000 throughout 2019.

Many refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas face protection risks, including access to documentation and/or expired identity documentation often leading to harassment, violations of freedom of movement, as well as arbitrary, illegal detention, extortion, etc… The vast majority of refugees in the DRC will have participated in biometric registration by the end of 2018, while some smaller communities in less accessible areas will go through the process in early 2019. All refugees in camps and urban areas have been biometrically registered and have received refugee ID cards issued by the Government of the DRC. Although the right of freedom of movement and access to services including the justice system is guaranteed by law in the DRC, the government has identified designated secure areas (camps or settlements) where refugees can access regular assistance. The government does not prevent refugees who choose to do so from settling in host communities, provided these are sufficiently far from the border and do not pose a security threat for refugees themselves, or for the host country. The socio-economic situation in most of the rural zones hosting refugees is poor, with limited access to basic services, and very few employment opportunities. Medical care, education and other services are all paid for by the user, despite the national goal of making universal primary education and primary healthcare freely available. Refugees have access to the same services as nationals, on the same terms, but suffer from the same institutional weaknesses as their neighbours.

In urban areas, the cost of living is particularly high, access to services is limited, and there is a scarcity of civil society structures in place to address weak state institutions. Urban refugees rely on community networks to survive, and many seek material assistance from partners. A significant portion of education and healthcare services for Burundian and South Sudanese refugees depend on interventions by humanitarian actors, despite the possibility of access to land in rural areas. Camp-based Central Africans also benefit from food and services in the camps, while the majority live in communities and share what few resources and services are available to their hosts. Progress towards supporting self-reliance among refugees has been hampered
by lack of funding and by a paucity of experienced partners willing to engage in isolated areas. With limited resources available, Country RRP partners have been forced to focus almost exclusively on the delivery of assistance and have not been able to take advantage of plans for a more robust approach toward solutions and self-reliance in order to reduce dependency on humanitarian aid.

The overall refugee response is critically underfunded. Core refugee programming in the DRC in recent years has focused on registration and other protection activities, on the development of sites, and on the provision of basic assistance and services to newly arrived populations. The remoteness of certain operational zones combined with high security risks, poor roads and other infrastructural weaknesses represent critical challenges that jeopardize timely provision of assistance in a country around two thirds the size of Western Europe. In some areas, including Haut-Uele, Bas-Uele, and South Kivu, this is further aggravated by lack or limited presence of partners able to contribute to the response with their own funding.

Without sufficient funding to support Country RRP partners in DRC, provision of and better access to protection, shelter, health and nutrition services, cannot be fully delivered. Given the size of the country, with four different refugee populations settled in different regions, and the general lack of infrastructure to facilitate access, Country RRP partners continue to need logistical support to deliver assistance and other programming.

Despite these challenges, local markets in some hosting areas have the capacity and reactivity to respond to some of the refugees’ needs in terms of goods and services, allowing for the usage of cash-based interventions as a relevant and flexible response modality. The availability and reliability of private financial service providers to support cash assistance distributions to refugee populations still constitute a challenge, especially in the most remote areas, but the situation is improving: Some Country RRP partners have developed effective partnerships with the private sector to develop this area of work.

Although DRC has not formally adopted the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), many elements of this response are consistent with the 2016 New York Declaration and the practical application of the CRRF in other settings. The response is based on a legal framework which places very few restrictions on refugee inclusion in and access to functional services in hosting areas as well as to the labour market; application of the out-of-camp policy; the availability of irrigable land for crop cultivation, and the promotion of a culture of self-reliance in all aspects of refugees’ lives. The Country RRP in 2019 will emphasize relationships with development and peacebuilding partners to improve services for all who reside in hosting areas.
**Population Planning Figures**

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<tr>
<td>Central African refugees</td>
<td>187,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burundi refugees</td>
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<td>South Sudan refugees</td>
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<td>Rwanda refugees</td>
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<td>167,377</td>
<td>142,377</td>
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<td>Other refugee groups¹</td>
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<td>1,345</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>554,722</strong></td>
<td><strong>482,722</strong></td>
<td><strong>425,722</strong></td>
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| Assisted Host Population                               | 73,869                                | 67,469                              | 60,069                               |
| **Total**                                              | **628,591**                           | **550,191**                         | **485,791**                          |

¹ From Angola, Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda, Somalia
Needs Analysis

Global Analysis

It is expected that the South Sudanese refugee population will have reached 100,000 individuals by the end of 2018. The refugees mostly arrive to remote areas where provision of aid is limited due to high insecurity and limited infrastructure, and are then relocated to camps or settlements in Ituri and Haut-Uélé provinces. Approximately 40% are currently in recognised settlements (primarily in Meri and Biringi) where CRRP partners operate and where they share services and land with the host community.

The Meri refugee settlement near the town of Aba (Faradje Territory, Haut-Uele Province) hosts over 34,000 refugees, exceeding the planned figure of 20,000 and thus putting excessive pressure on available land and infrastructure, as well as on service provision and population management. Some of the border areas where refugees live in communities, particularly those in northern Dungu territory, are insecure due to activities of armed groups, including the Lord’s Resistance Army. The transfer of these refugees to the newly identified site remains of particular concern and UNHCR, in consultation with partners and competent authorities, is in the process of planning a potential relocation to a newly identified site.

Refugees are settled in areas largely untouched by development which suffer from poor services, weak governance structures and a fragile rule of law infrastructure. Both refugees and their hosts live with significant needs in all sectors including protection, shelter and infrastructure, WASH, livelihoods, food security and nutrition, education as well as health including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. Living conditions in settlements and access to services remain significantly below both SDG goals and humanitarian standards.

All health zones hosting refugees suffer from deteriorating infrastructure, lack of qualified staff, difficulties in supply, especially of vaccines and drugs, impacting negatively on access to satisfactory health care for refugees and host communities alike. Consistent with members of the communities that host them, only 48% of South Sudanese refugees have access to primary health care and more than 40% of school-going age children are currently out of school. The water and sanitation situation is a serious concern for refugees, with 14.8 litres of water available per person and per day (below standards) in both settlements and hosting communities. There is also a significant lack of latrines (family or communal) with only 23% of South Sudanese refugees having access to drop hole latrines. At the time of writing, 49% of the South Sudanese refugees do not have access to a decent shelter and, with limited means to develop livelihood opportunities, South Sudanese refugees in DRC rely heavily on food assistance. Programming in 2019 is designed to support improved access to land, improvements in agricultural practices and market management that will serve refugees and their hosts.

As in other hosting areas, security is provided through a team of national police who lack adequate support and training. UNHCR and CRRP partners are exploring how to better connect the police working in refugee settings with national capacity development programmes.

Over the course of 2018, refugees from the Central African Republic have continued to arrive in Bas-Uele and North Ubangi provinces. By the end of the year 2018, 178,401 CAR refugees will have settled in the DRC. Of the total CAR refugee population, 34% are located in 5 the refugee sites of Inke, Bili, Boyabu, Mole and Mboti, while the others have settled within the host communities, adding pressure on already limited
resources. Throughout 2018, needs were analysed through assessments and regular monitoring missions at general and sectoral levels with focus on protection and multi-sectoral assistance including health, education, livelihoods, WASH, shelters and infrastructure, nutrition and food security. As a result, access to effective protection systems and timely registration of both old and new arrivals as well as multi-sectoral needs (health, nutrition, WASH, shelter and self-reliance) were identified among the key essential needs. While 70% of refugee children living in camps are enrolled in primary schools and temporary learning spaces (38% for refugee children living outside of camps), this rate drops to 36% for the first category for secondary education in camps, and to just 3% for children in out-of-camp settings; approximately 20% of the in-camp CAR refugees are still in need of shelter support with refugees having seen their shelter damaged or destroyed and in need of continuous rehabilitation or the provision of new shelter materials. To date, only 27% of the overall population have access to latrines which has a strong negative impact on health and hygiene.

Access to many areas of Bas-Uele, where some 48,000 refugees are settled in communities, remains extremely difficult as a result of the security situation and the lack of roads. The area is affected by incursions by armed groups from CAR into the DRC in Bondo territory whilst the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and other groups remain active in other parts of the province.

A mapping of existing national infrastructure in areas hosting refugees is ongoing and will inform priority setting as CRRF partners focus more on support to hosting communities and to refugees living out of camps in 2019.

The security situation in South Kivu and the overall protection environment for Burundian refugees living in Fizi Territory improved in 2018, once the Congolese army dislodged Mai Mai militia. Some armed groups remain operational in the area, however, including a number of Burundi-affiliated groups. Some 33,500 Burundian refugees live in the Lusenda and Mulongwe sites, while an estimated 13,000 Burundian refugees live in communities outside of camps. A biometric registration of Burundian refugees living in communities started in October 2018 and is expected to be complete before the end of 2018.

Around 60% of the new arrivals are children. Adolescents and youth face a risk of forced recruitment by armed groups and sexual exploitation, while the whole population continues to be at risk of SGBV in an area that is still dealing with internal conflict and with weak state and security infrastructure.

The Lusenda refugee camp and its extensions located in Fizi Territory are overcrowded, putting severe pressure on the provision of basic services for refugees in the camp (including hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, infrastructure and shelter, etc.). To ease this situation, a new refugee settlement in the locality of Mulongwe, was opened in November 2017 based on an open-camp model and introducing a number of innovative approaches such as the provision of essential services through support for existing health and education facilities, and multisectoral cash assistance transferred through mobile money. Cuts in assistance, and in particular food assistance, have resulted in increased tensions between refugees and local communities. The health situation in the all areas hosting refugees remains challenging, with limited capacities and lack of funding to secure access to drugs to treat the most common diseases even with additional support to national structures. In addition, WASH standards remain below SPHERE standards with only 18 litres of water per person per day available and 45% of the overall population in need of latrines.

Due to limited resources, new arrivals are forced to spend a long time at transit centres before they can be assigned a plot for shelter and given access to small-scale farming activities to encourage self-reliance. Even in the sites themselves, limited resources, especially land, hamper self-reliance and livelihood opportunities, which heightens dependency on assistance.
The worsening security situation in North Kivu has further contributed to the deterioration of the overall protection environment in the province, therefore increasing protection risks. Rwandan refugees, who mostly live in rural communities, have suffered from the relentless armed conflict, with some 20% of them forced to displace in 2017. The voluntary repatriation programme continued with a sharp decrease in numbers since January 2018; less than 2,500 repatriated in the first nine months of 2018. Refugees report that the delay in the delivery of cash grant assistance after return to Rwanda, has “demotivated” potential candidates. In order to facilitate planning for comprehensive solutions, a large-scale biometric registration is underway in North and South Kivu.

Findings of the registration exercise indicate that access to education remains below humanitarian standards with basic needs not being met: about 46% of the school-going age children are currently out-of-school (49% for girls and 43% for boys). Women and children are overrepresented among persons at risk, representing more than 80% of the vulnerable individuals identified. Out of all vulnerable individuals registered, more than 40% are women and nearly 25% are children with specific needs, many affecting their access to education. Refugees live with little assistance in established host communities. Many are displaced regularly alongside their neighbours. Although UNHCR is not able to assess the needs of Congolese nationals in those areas, the registration exercise has provided an opportunity to gather data that will inform development and humanitarian programming in those areas as they become more accessible.

The registration process is documenting intentions to better inform planning for implementation of the Comprehensive Solutions Strategy for Rwandan Refugees. Some 70% of registered Rwandan refugees were born in the DRC and more than half expressed their intention to remain in the DRC after the invocation of the cessation clause, requiring clarity on the form of legal stay that will be available to them, as well as international support for national institutions and services in hosting areas, to address the economic, socio-cultural and civil-political dimensions of solutions within the DRC. The socio-economic integration of Rwandan refugees and of those who remain beyond the invocation of the cessation clause calls for an area-based approach that will privilege stabilisation, peaceful co-existence and development in hosting areas.

Legal options for “right to stay” after a Cessation Clause will be discussed at planned tripartite discussions between UNHCR and the Governments of Rwanda and the DRC, which will clarify also how Rwandan nationals will manage their connections to their country of origin after cessation. Discussions within the DRC will determine the possibility of naturalisation for mixed couples and for the children of Congolese nationals, as well as of residency visas for those without familial ties to the DRC.

Refugees and asylum-seekers in urban areas (mainly Rwandans and Burundians) in North and South Kivu face various protection risks and challenges, including lack of access to a functional and effective security sector, often leading to harassment, violations of freedom of movement, as well as arbitrary detentions, extortion, etc. The general socio-economic situation in both North and South Kivu has worsened in the past five years, despite the great mineral and resource wealth of the region, and its high fertility. Increases in prices of food supplies and general cost of living in urban areas such as Bukavu and Goma are high, while quality of life remains low for many refugees.
Needs by Sector

Child Protection

63.3% of the refugee population in DRC are children under 18, and 15% consist of youth between 15 and 24 years. Refugee children face a number of protection risks: family separation due to flight/armed conflict, sexual and gender-based violation, forced recruitment of boys and girls, sexual slavery, forced labour (mines), out-of-school children due to conflict, and lack of birth registration which creates protection risks for children seeking education, health, employment, school attendance, travel documents, difficulties during return, or marriage later in life.

Under the national Child Protection Strategy 2018-19, refugee children who experience forced displacement are recognised as being among the most vulnerable refugee groups in the DRC. Country RRP partners continue efforts to harmonise registration and case management information in the operation for all refugee caseloads. At present, child protection interventions consist of identification and support to children at risk, including Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC), family tracing and reunification activities targeting, as well as specific support to children with specific needs. In addition, and due to their particular protection needs, protection services include case management based on the following activities: report of cases of abuses, violence, neglect, and exploitation; assistance for identified children of concern, and child protection case management by case workers.

Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

SGBV is endemic in DRC and in particular in the eastern provinces. The high risk of SGBV in the refugee sites is compounded by a number of factors, including weaknesses of the justice apparatus, low participation of women and girls in decision-making processes, lack of livelihoods and education opportunities, the practice of survival sex, impunity for SGBV perpetrators, low levels of participation of communities in the prevention of SGBV, firewood collection outside of camp areas in a highly volatile security context.

Education

In addition to rising the risk of illiteracy and therefore diminishing future potential for self-reliance, lack of educational opportunities exposes children to an array of protection risks, including sexual and financial exploitation, early marriage, forced labour, and in some cases forced recruitment. Despite limited resources, Country RRP partners support access to primary and secondary education through direct support to schools, some cash-based help for parents to pay fees, and sensitization campaigns organized to inform parents and children about the importance of education especially designed to reach out to refugees living outside of camps. In order to ensure quality education in improved learning and teaching environments, construction and/or rehabilitation of school infrastructure will continue in 2019.

With the opening of Mulongwe site in 2017 (for the Burundian refugees), it was necessary to increase the number of schools in Mulongwe town and other existing villages to ensure access to education for both refugee children and children from the host communities.

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2 Children with specific needs refers to children identified with a protection concern or risk, and includes unaccompanied and separated children, child parents, child spouses, child carer or head of household, teenage pregnancy, child labourers, children with special education needs, children associated with armed forces or those in conflict with the law.
Support to education through CBI (conditional cash transfers or vouchers) is already in place and allows the payment of school fees and procurement of school uniforms and supplies in Goma, Bukavu, Kinshasa and in refugee sites (both in camps and out of camps). For CAR refugees residing out of camp, similar support will be necessary to raise primary school enrolment above 36%. Overall, integration of all refugee children in national education systems, in line with the CRRF principles, remains the highest priority with efforts being made to address this through advocacy towards the Government and local authorities.

Health

Currently, about 25% of the overall refugee population lives in camps across DRC with specific needs depending on the different refugee caseloads and contexts. The key health indicators are below threshold in most of the camps/sites hosting refugees. In the five camps hosting CAR refugees, the mortality of children under 5 years of age was 0.5 deaths/1000/month (threshold: 1.5). Measles vaccination coverage was 96.1%. In 2017, 100% of South Sudanese refugees under assistance had access to primary and secondary health care services. The CMR was 0.5/1000/month, the under 5 mortality rate was 1.01/1,000/month (standard less than 1.5). Amongst this population, measles vaccination coverage rate was 64.4%, which is unfortunately below the standard. For the Burundian refugee population, the CMR in 2017 was 0.2/1000/month. The measles vaccination coverage was 70% unfortunately below standard.

In the remote site of Meri (in Haut-Uele) hosting South Sudanese refugees, or Lusenda (Sud-Kivu) hosting Burundian refugees, overcrowded camps have had a concerning impact on the health of refugees with risks of outbreaks of communicable diseases, while refugees from Central African Republic (in Nord and Sud Ubangi and Bas Uele) living mainly in camps and surrounding host communities have a better access to camp-based health and medical care services. For instance, all health zones hosting South Sudanese Refugees (including Doruma, Dungu, Aba, Adi and Biringi health zones) still face enormous difficulties with health facilities below standards.

Malaria, waterborne diseases (diarrhoea, typhoid), and respiratory infections are the most common complaints in hosting areas. Weak capacity (deterioration of infrastructure, lack of qualified staff, difficulties in supply, especially vaccines and drugs) of the national health system impact negatively access to satisfactory health care for refugees and host communities; strong engagement by Country RRP partners will continue to be required to fill the existing gaps. In 2018 two major Ebola outbreaks occurred in DRC (one in the province of Equateur, the second and most recent in parts of Nord-Kivu Province) leading to serious concerns despite a rapid response implemented by relevant actors.

To ensure full access to quality health services, it is necessary to improve the existing local health infrastructure that meets MoH standards and continue to support international procurement of essential medicines in addition with the provision of trained staff in the health infrastructures.

Important progress has been made on the integration of refugees into the health systems as they are now counted in the key health strategic documents at national, provincial and health levels. Refugees are taken into account in most of the vertical programmes (EPI, Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS).

Nutrition and food security

Nutritional activities have faced difficulties related to the shortage in the stock of inputs towards the end of 2017. The national program is no longer able to supply these inputs, and this requires international procurement. Among the newly arrived refugees from all nationalities, many children between 6 and 59 months, who are malnourished do not have access to effective care services.
Water and Sanitation

The water and sanitation sector provides support to refugee and host communities across DRC, with the three-fold strategy of promoting refugees’ self-reliance in terms of water management, improving existing water and sanitation services to ensure access to water, sanitation and hygiene needs and remaining ready to respond to emergencies (cholera and ebola epidemics).

Country RRP partners’ support takes the following forms:

- Construction and rehabilitation of water points such as: water pumps, water towers, wells, natural water sources, if possible connected to existing government water distribution systems.
- Providing maintenance and reparations for water points through Water Management Committees and reparation workers.
- Providing conditional cash grants and/or materials for refugees to build their own family latrines and showers. In Transit Centres, UNHCR builds communal latrines and showers. Hygiene promotion activities to encourage the refugees to adopt good hygiene practices

At present, the average number of persons per latrine reaches 20, in line with global standards, though it is to be noted that disparities according to the refugee hosting set-up persist. In refugee sites, family latrines are being constructed through a CBI approach while communal latrines (Ventilated Improved Pit type) are constructed with separation according to gender.

Shelter

Currently, assistance for shelter is being mainly implemented in camp settings for all refugees (excluding urban refugees and asylum seekers), though the situation, depending on caseloads, varies. While Burundian refugees in Mulongwe and Lusenda have access to certain shelter materials (with a coverage close to 85% in camps, while those out of camps have not received shelter assistance so far), some gaps are noted for CAR refugees with 20% of this group of refugees not having access to decent shelter in camps, while this figure reaches 49% for the South Sudanese refugee population. In recent years, cash assistance has proven itself efficient in terms of cost reduction (a decrease from USD 500 per kit to an average of USD 250 for an average family size of 3/5 persons), but also in terms of timing with a stronger engagement by refugees to construct and maintain their own shelters.

Refugees in urban areas do not currently receive shelter support per se, as housing is available in the rental market, however some assistance is provided on an ad hoc basis to avoid protection risks during lean times.
Livelihoods

In 2018, agricultural and fishing equipment were purchased and distributed to refugee and host community groups in areas hosting Burundian refugees and Central African refugees to support their income generation activities (IGAs). South Sudanese refugees received financial support for IGAs, in support of agriculture, milling, hairdressing and tailoring businesses with the provision of materials, as well as technical and management training. Country RRP partners also supported South Sudanese refugees living in settlements with the preparation of the upcoming agricultural season, as well as livestock management and technical skills development with a priority on trainings for different ‘groupements’ (including both refugees and host community members) in the selected sectors and trades (agriculture, fishing, etc.) and IGAs. Advocacy was conducted for farmers’ groups’ access to land of.

Support for income generation in urban areas focuses on self-reliance livelihood activities and vocational training will be part of a self-reliance programme. In 2017 and 2018, more than 100 households were supported with cash to launch or supplement businesses; the remaining households will be included in the programme in 2019, and measures will be put in place to support the durability of these enterprises and their ability to sustain shocks. Refugees trained in agriculture and animal husbandry have successfully started associations in the outskirts of Kinshasa to maximize self-sufficiency and increase community empowerment/participation. Among the commercial enterprises are a beauty school, and an association that sells mobile phones and cable television packages.

Energy and environment

In many areas, refugees and host communities live together, having to share limited natural resources. This can have a significant impact on the environment, especially where refugees engage in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries. Increased human presence can also impact negatively on the fauna of the area. In addition, in refugee camps, some infrastructure (WASH systems, Health centres and other communal structures) depend on fuel generators which create high logistics costs and are not environmentally friendly. In some sites, efforts have been made to shift from generators to photovoltaic energy sources.
Response Strategy and Priorities

Overall Strategy

The Refugee Response Plan in the DRC in 2019 is centred around five objectives:

1. Preserve equal and unhindered access to territorial asylum and international protection, promoting the full enjoyment of rights, and the civilian character of asylum;
2. Improve the protection and solutions environment through stronger links to developing national systems and services through development and government partners, including police and justice, health and education, land management and others necessary for community-based responses, self-reliance in all sectors, and progression towards the full enjoyment of all rights;
3. Achieve minimum standards in the provision of multi-sectoral assistance to refugees and host communities with a view to anchoring the response in government systems; development plans; multi-year strategies; and regional protection frameworks and policies – paying particular attention to the needs of children and women;
4. Promote social cohesion and peaceful co-existence between refugees and host communities through the implementation of targeted self-reliance and resilience programmes and respect for the natural environment;
5. Foster economic self-reliance and durable solutions for refugees and host communities by expanding the use of cash in the short term, reducing dependency on humanitarian aid, and promoting peace and development in line with national and provincial plans.
In 2019, in close collaboration with all Country RRP partners, the DRC operation will focus on promoting a favourable protection environment while strengthening its emphasis on durable solutions, resilience and empowerment in order to gradually reduce assistance and support a more community-based response. A protection and solutions strategy has been developed which applies CRRF principles and UNHCR’s Alternatives to Camps policy.

The DRC has long maintained open borders and refugees benefit from a legal framework that enshrines the right to work, to live and move freely, access to justice and other services. The refugee status determination system needs support to better prepare for and manage the arrival of large numbers of refugees. There is also need for closer collaboration with border officials and with the national entities responsible for ensuring that refugee hosting areas retain their civilian character. Government leadership on registration and on the delivery of civil status documentation will be strengthened. UNHCR will gradually transfer registration and documentation competencies to national authorities with greater technical support throughout 2019 to enable government leadership in registration; the development of a national system, and the issuance of travel documents and identity cards to refugees. These priorities will see increased attention in 2019 and beyond.

In 2019, Country RRP partners in the DRC operation will increase programming with development and peacebuilding actors to better support community-based responses, will increase cash assistance where appropriate, and will continue to shift towards market-based approaches to livelihoods support for new arrivals and host communities. Burundian refugees in Mulongwe access healthcare via a clinic attached to the national healthcare system, rehabilitated by the Government of Germany in the context of the Provincial Development Plan and supported with additional medication by UNHCR. UNHCR will collaborate with UNICEF and others on the development of a programme that will facilitate greater inclusion of refugees in national education systems, permitting humanitarian interventions to phase out in favour of more sustainable approaches to support for developing systems. Partners, led by the Government, will support infrastructure rehabilitation near and around refugee hosting areas for the benefit of both the local and refugee community. Integration within national systems and the National Development Plan, will be prioritized, including through the enrolment of refugees in the mutual health insurance as well as the education system.

Collaboration with UNDP and others on local governance and on rule of law programming to support the justice sector, community-oriented policing, and civil administration, will help to break down the divides between camps and hosting communities. Joint programming with UNOPS and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is advancing refugee access to financial institutions. UNHCR’s global partnership with the World Bank has led to the World Bank’s considering a project under the IDA 18 window to address needs in areas hosting CAR refugees, and discussions are underway regarding how the needs of other hosting populations can be taken into account in the World Bank’s other programming. A mapping of interventions in the area has highlighted interventions by actors such as CARITAS, which serve both refugees and host communities – an approach that will be taken forward through more focus on non-camp hosting areas in 2019 and 2020.

Although not formally a ‘CRRF country’ DRC Operation’s strategies, policies and plan in response to the needs of refugees and host communities are consistent with the framework. The Commission Nationale pour les Réfugiés and UNHCR teams participated in the finalization of the National Development Plan and are contributing to the Provincial Development Plan process with the goal of including refugees in national priorities, starting with the inclusion of hosting areas in baseline assessments for Sustainable Development Goals. UNHCR and partners are also contributing to the UNDAF process, and to programmes implementing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus, with collaboration in hosting areas proposed as one pilot. Country RRP partners are increasingly using a community-based approach to pursue and build development
alliances that will facilitate peaceful and mutually beneficial coexistence. In this regard, joint programming opportunities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Transformative Agenda of the Government of DRC were identified and pursued with development actors to ensure that refugees are protected and assisted effectively and are able to achieve protection and potentially solutions outside camps.

In 2019 and 2020, the main emphasis of the response strategy for all refugee caseloads is to enhance community-based protection mechanisms, especially to support children and SGBV survivors and to build a safer environment for all, while gradually transitioning away from direct interventions. The Country RRP response strategy will also promote more targeted interventions as part of the basic needs approach to contribute to access to food and non-food items (through cash-based interventions), access to education, investments in livelihoods and income-generating activities, self-construction of shelter and latrines. Some Country RRP partners will particularly focus on youth in order to respond to their specific needs, and as a way to prevent forced recruitment.

In parallel, the interventions in 2019-2020 will aim at strengthening self-reliance through community mobilisation and participation in livelihoods activities (including agriculture, livestock and fishing activities), as well as through closer work with local authorities and host community leaders to support their leadership in civil administration, conflict resolution and the identification of needs and priorities. Partners such as ADRA are applying a community based approach to livelihoods activities in hosting areas. The goal is for refugees to be able to phase out of individual assistance within three years of their arrival in the DRC. This will benefit both refugee and local host community populations, and enable a more peaceful co-existence between the population groups.

Support for voluntary repatriation will continue, but large-scale operations are expected to be replaced in the course of 2019 with more targeted support for individuals, and for small groups. Once the available options become clearer, UNHCR and CNR in particular will focus on the steps needed to achieve legal stay arrangements for Rwandans and others who might be eligible to settle in the DRC. Resettlement as a protection tool will remain available to a small number of refugees with urgent needs.

The Government of DRC, through CNR, has the primary responsibility for ensuring access to territory, the legal and physical protection of refugees in the DRC, and the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. UNHCR and CNR work closely on all of these, with a focus in 2019 and beyond on the Refugee Status Determination system and on physical safety through collaboration with other CRRP partners on national institution support. Discussions are starting with Development and Peacebuilding actors on how the international community can work together with the national police (PNC) on improved community oriented policing and access to justice in and around refugee camps and hosting areas. Programming will include work with communities – including with refugees – on their rights and responsibilities, and with local authorities on civilian leadership in policing.

As part of its Multi-Year Protection Strategy, all refugee new arrivals into the DRC will be registered and provided with refugee ID documentation, in line with international norms. CNR and UNHCR will support mandated agencies to prioritise the provision of birth certificates within the mandated period. CNR, UNHCR, and other partners will also work with authorities on documentation of death, marriage and divorces through national civil registry offices. To address the limitations on freedom of movement and risk of harassment, exploitation and extortion from security forces and others that are faced by those without documents, CNR will complete the distribution of refugee ID cards.
Border monitoring will continue, as well as peaceful co-existence activities, training and capacity-building of local authorities, and community empowerment with a focus on the participation of women and youth in decision-making, including in the refugee committees.

Voluntary repatriation will be offered for all refugees who choose to return to their country of origin, although large-scale operations will be phased out in favour of more individual and targeted support according to need. Resettlement for protection purposes will continue to be available for small numbers of refugees with urgent needs.
2019-2020 Programmes by sector

Child Protection & Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

There are very few functional child protection structures in the DRC with the capacity to serve the communities that need them. Largely substinance-based communities facing significant security threats and very little support for struggling families mean that there are few opportunities for refugees to be included in local structures. Country RRP partners will continue to map and then to identify opportunities to strengthen what structures exist, so that refugees and their hosts can all benefit from the investment. Child protection activities (including support to host families) in sites will be put in place through local protection structures. Other programming will be undertaken through education activities.

The strategy for reducing risks of SGBV as well as gender inequalities focuses on 1) Prevention: reducing the risk of SGBV through community mobilisation and SAFE activities; 2) Identification: strengthening of protection monitoring with the aim of identifying the most vulnerable groups; 3) Response: improving the quality of response for SGBV survivors (medical care, psychosocial care, legal assistance, socioeconomic reintegration, including through cash-based interventions), reduce the discrimination and stigmatisation that survivors face and strengthen their self-reliance and livelihoods opportunities.

Country RRP partners will support mechanisms to enhance access to justice for survivors. Collaboration with Rule of Law actors will use protection monitoring analysis to orient support to the judiciary so that survivors can benefit from a robust and effective legal remedy system as part of the fight to end impunity.

It is also necessary to strengthen community participation in work to prevent SGBV, reinforcing existing SGBV committees and other support groups (incl. men, women, young people, and other community networks) in and out of the camps. In accordance with the national strategy, new structures and groups will be supported where they are not yet operational. A strong focus will be put on self-reliance of women and young girls, facilitating access to education for girls and to legal aid for cases of SGBV to reduce impunity.

Education

Currently, over 23,000 refugee children from all nationalities are enrolled in primary school (52% boys and 48% girls), and only 4,000 in secondary education structures (62% boys and 38% girls). Primary education should be free for all children by law but in practice schools require the payment of fees all over the DRC, which constitutes a major obstacle to accessing education for refugee children and asylum-seekers, particularly since refugee parents often lack the financial means for regular cash payments. Under the education response, Country RRP partners will support primary school education for urban refugee children but will be sensitive to opportunities and gaps in secondary, and vocational education.

Overall, integration of all refugee children in national education systems, in line with the CRRF principles, remains the highest priority with efforts being made to achieve this through advocacy with the Government and local authorities. In 2019, while individual and community assistance activities will continue, advocacy will also be conducted for better access to primary and secondary education as well as the development of activities/projects in favour of young people, particularly youth not attending school, and to enable access to vocational training and skills development programmes and support their self-reliance (both girls and boys).
Depending on the success of attempts to include refugee hosting areas in national and provincial development planning, and on access to land and other livelihoods initiatives, it is expected that Country RRP partners will be able to gradually withdraw from individual assistance for education over the course of 2020 and beyond.

Support to education through CBI (conditional cash transfers or vouchers) is already in place and allows the payment of school fees and procurement of school uniforms and supplies in Goma, Bukavu, Kinshasa and in refugees sites (both in camps and out of camps). For CAR refugees residing out of camp, similar support will be necessary to raise primarily school enrolment above 36%.

**Health**

For the coming years, an emphasis will be put on sustainable strategies with more participation of refugees to their own health. This will require the development of integration plans with agreed key milestones to be reached for more participation of refugees with phased exit by UNHCR from some support activities. This strategy will be piloted in urban refugee settings during the period covered by the Country RRP

Country RRP partners, as part of the CRRF principles, also promote the integration of refugee health services into the national structures which requires strong capacity building in parallel with better use and optimization of available health resources (i.e mapping of the nearest clinics in and out of camps to provide health services to not only refugees but also the host community). In parallel, efforts will be made to encourage and facilitate access to health insurance, including potentially via subsidization through conditional cash grants for the most vulnerable households.

**Nutrition and food security**

The comprehensive response for 2019 includes: strengthening community prevention of malnutrition by establishing a link with farming, market gardening and livestock farming; the integration of the "Community Assets Nutrition" (CAN) approach and the involvement of the community in the activities of prevention and management of malnutrition using local foods; prevention of anemia in pregnant women and children; availability of inputs (RUTF: ready-to-use therapeutic foods, RUSF: ready-to-use supplementary food, specific drugs, etc.) for proven cases of severe and moderate acute malnutrition requiring treatment.

Outside camps, the main approach will be to strengthen the national system through support in materials, inputs and capacity building through training workshops and joint supervision to improve prevention and treatment. The main objective of the refugee response in this sector is to improve the access of refugees and host populations to community-based management programmes for malnutrition and prevention and quality essential basic health care services in connection with agricultural, livestock and other productive activities. In order to measure progress, an emphasis will be also put on the implementation of nutrition surveys (SENS) in settings where the situation is still unstable.

Throughout 2019, food assistance will continue to be provided by WFP to refugees in all refugee camps and out of camp sites, transit and reception centres, through provision of cash or vouchers mainly, and in some areas in kind food distributions. Food assistance aims at providing the minimum standard of 2,100 Kcal per
person per day but decreased by 20% in 2018 due to financial constraints. In 2019, evaluations of the impact of income-generating activities are expected to lead to a drop in the population assessed as being in need of food assistance.

**Water and Sanitation**

Improvement of water and sanitation access in South Sudanese sites, support on construction of family latrines and capacity to ensure prevention and/or response to Ebola and Cholera, are the main priorities. Efforts are being made to ensure at least 20 litres per person per day in the four CAR refugee camps in North Ubangi and South Ubangi provinces; and also to support host communities through the construction of water points in the provinces of North Ubangi and Bas-Uele. In 2019, Country RRP partners will work to build the capacity of water committees which will receive targeted trainings on water management and will be equipped with repair kits for the care and maintenance of the installations.

**Shelter**

As part of the comprehensive response, all assistance for shelter in 2019 will be given through distribution of construction kits and/or provision of conditional cash transfers to ensure an increase in the coverage rate (up to 100%), depending on available funds. The strategy will also focus on encouraging and supporting self-construction of shelters by persons of concern using local shelter materials and local practices for the construction; improvement of houses for vulnerable refugees and those of some in the host communities identified as vulnerable, when possible, reinforce advocacy efforts towards local authorities and communities and reinforce the participation of local communities in all aspects of infrastructure.

Refugees in urban areas do not currently receive shelter support per se, as housing is available in the rental market, however some assistance is provided on an ad hoc basis to avoid protection risks during lean times.

**Livelihoods**

The goal of livelihoods programming in the DRC in 2019 and 2020 will be to support refugees to achieve a level of self-reliance that will permit a withdrawal of refugees' individual assistance for most households within the next three years. Among other approaches, this will require a more formal approach to access to land, as well as collaboration with expert actors on improved market chains. The strategy also aims to promote good relations between refugee and host communities as it will involve local communities and authorities as well as development actors at every stage. In order to reinforce existing economic bonds between refugees and host communities, Country RRP partners will also ensure the
provision of communal assets that can be used by both: rice mills, cassava processors, and produce dryers. These will be managed and maintained by joint community management teams.

In 2017 and 2018, more than 100 households in Kinshasa were supported with cash to launch or supplement businesses; the remaining households will be included in the programme in 2019 and the programme will be extended to Goma, Lubumbashi and to other urban centres. Measures will be put in place to support the durability of these enterprises and their ability to sustain shocks. Refugees trained in agriculture and animal husbandry have successfully started associations in the outskirts of Kinshasa to maximize self-sufficiency and increase community empowerment/participation. Among the commercial enterprises are a beauty school, and an association that sells mobile phones and cable television packages.

**Energy and environment**

Clean and sustainable sources of energy permit lightning and power for essential infrastructure such as health centres, ensuring that life-saving medication is refrigerated and equipment can work. In addition to this, solar lighting is being used in refugee hosting sites to contribute to an enhanced protection environment, particularly for women and girls who can move safely at night.

**Non-Food Items**

In 2016 and 2017, UNHCR invested heavily in the institutionalisation and capacity building with regard to cash and voucher modalities. In line with global policies and the Grand Bargain commitments, the feasibility and relevance of a cash or voucher modality to enhance refugee and host populations access to basic goods and services and support self-reliance, are now systematically assessed and cash-based interventions (CBI) prioritized wherever feasible. To date, cash or vouchers are being used in support of Burundian, Central African, South Sudanese, and urban refugees within the following sector responses: shelter, WASH (construction of family latrines), food assistance, livelihoods, Core Relief Items, Education, support to persons with specific needs and multi-purpose cash.

Providing monetary rather than in-kind assistance to refugees, IDPs and returnees, greatly contributes to self-reliance in all sectors, giving households the opportunity to meet their basic needs, access services, and invest in livelihood strategies with more flexibility and dignity, according to their own priorities and capacities. Enhancing their purchasing power also has the potential to contribute to the local economy and peaceful coexistence. Moreover, Cash-Based Interventions are critical in progressively reducing dependency on humanitarian assistance, covering only a part of the expenses of refugee households. Finally, using non-restrictive multipurpose Cash-Based Interventions, in lieu of direct provision of in-kind goods (eg food and non-food items) and services, often leads beneficiaries to save part of the provided amount in order to invest in productive means, thus contributing in the reinforcement of their livelihoods.

In Mulongwe site (South Kivu), the strategy relies largely on cash assistance to support Burundian refugees in the self-construction of their family shelter and latrines, payment of school fees and supplies, the launch of income generating activities, and soon to support households’ access to non-food items. Food assistance is currently provided through voucher fairs organized by WFP and partners, with UNHCR’s support for eligibility. In Mulongwe, UNHCR is piloting its first direct implementation of cash transfers through mobile money (Vodacash). Since March 2018, over 1,500 newly relocated Burundian refugee households have received a mobile phone and SIM cards, opened a mobile money account, and started receiving cash assistance through their mobile phone. The opening of mobile money accounts for refugees will not only
permit the transfer of UNHCR cash assistance, but also assistance from other agencies (eg. WFP), and to access other financial services, contributing to their financial inclusion. Through this operation, the mobile money ecosystem in Mulongwe area is being strengthened, and it is estimated that this will also enhance financial inclusion and access to financial services for host population.

The operation has also been shifting towards assistance in cash for most of non-food items. Feasibility studies conducted in Nord and Ubangi, as well as months of successful distribution in Lusenda and Mulongwe sites concluded that cash-based interventions in lieu of NFI distributions in-kind was not only possible but also relevant and preferred by refugees. It also appears as the most cost-efficient modality while stimulating local market economy. Therefore, the strategy in 2019 will focus on enhancing cash-based interventions for provision of essential NFIs (unless feasibility studies show that articles are not available in the local markets or that access or protection issues can constitute an obstacle), leaving them with the choice and more flexibility in household investments to cover their most immediate needs. This will particularly be the case for all new arrivals and for persons with specific needs (PSNs).

**Strengthening Livelihoods and Resilience**

The arrival of large numbers of refugees puts pressure on agricultural lands, water, firewood, health care services and education, often in a context of high insecurity where the need to walk for long distances puts travellers at risk, with the potential to increase tensions between the refugee and host communities. To avoid this, Country RRP partners ensure that local communities are partly included in the assistance programmes and that peaceful coexistence activities are always intergrated in the response plans. To this end, all livelihoods activities are designed to benefit both host and refugee populations, all refugee health centres are being used by both refugees and host populations, and both refugees and host communities use new or rehabilitated WASH infrastructure (i.e. water points or public latrines in market areas etc.). Refugees attend public schools and partners are assisting the Government with stipends for teachers not yet on the government payroll. Where schools are established to address the needs of large refugee populations, they are designed to work with the public school network, and to serve the host community also.

Refugees and interested host community members will be supported with livelihood support and vocational training to decrease reliance on humanitarian assistance, to progressively become self-reliant and pay for basic services such as health and education on their own. Throughout DRC, local populations have some access to land for refugees, either for camp and settlements or for those living in communities. Such arrangements will be formalised in 2019, so that refugees can start to invest in land that they will manage for the period of their sojourn in the DRC. Refugees in urban areas rely on Country RRP partners for livelihood and vocational training, juridico-administrative support, and advocacy with governmental bodies such as the national job placement agency. In 2019, the national employment office (Office National de l'Emploi – ONEM)
Democratic Republic of the Congo – COUNTRY RRP

will make its new computerised candidate placement system available, so that refugees in Goma, Lubumbashi, Kinshasa, and Bukavu will be registered and appropriately matched with organization and/or corporations in the private or public sector.

**Partnership and Coordination**

The Country Refugee Response Plan in DRC is driven by the recognition that while the initial arrival of large numbers of refugees provoked immediate humanitarian needs, both sustainable responses and any eventual durable solutions must involve improvements in the protection environment which will serve refugees, returnees, IDPs, stateless populations, and host communities together. To this end, CRRP partners include both refugee expert and humanitarian actors, as well as the inclusion of development programming in hosting areas. In the context of DRC, avmeaningful and sustainable impact can only be achieved by complementary action by humanitarian, peacebuilding and development actors, notably in sectors crucial to the protection of people of concern such as justice and security, land management and shelter, infrastructure, health and the reinforcement of state capacity to deliver services without discrimination.

Partnerships with stakeholders beyond the humanitarian community, including Government, donors, UN agencies, development agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society, private sectors, and research institutions, will be pursued on this basis. CRRP partners participate in the Local and Provincial Development Plan discussions and will advocate for the inclusion of areas that host refugees in the update of the Government’s five year plan (2018-2022). Consultations for the CRRF roll out, and defining the next steps to formalizing a multi-year, multi-partner planning is foreseen with national authorities.

A World Bank mission to the region in the second half of July 2018 assessed the potential for a Social Protection project to address development needs in the region hosting Central African refugees, and UNHCR’s participation in the development of the UNDAF and outreach to UNDP and other development actors, and to MONUSCO for collaboration on local governance, rule of law and possibly livelihoods programming in all hosting areas is intended to strengthen the Alternatives to Camp approach and to implement CRRF principles in this part of the response. The presence of Development actors in hosting areas is essential for the full implementation these approaches.

Working in accordance with the Refugee Coordination Model, the refugee response in DRC brings together 11 operational Partners, including the Government of DRC’s National Refugee Commission supported by UNHCR, in coordination with UN agencies (including WFP, FAO, UNICEF, UNDP, MONUSCO, and UNFPA), national and international NGOs (World Vision, Danish Refugee Council, Solidarité des Volontaires pour l’Humanité, AFPDE, Malteser International, and Ligue de la Zone Afrique pour la défense des droits de l’enfant et de l’élève) to ensure protection and assistance for refugees.
Planned Response

Within the framework of this Plan, a comprehensive monitoring framework with indicators and targets for 2019 has been developed to ensure systematic monitoring of the planned programmes.

The framework consists of lists of indicators and targets for each Sector both at the impact and performance levels.

The framework is accessible online and can be consulted at any time here.
## 2019 Sector Financial Requirements Summary

### By Organization & Sector

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<th>Education</th>
<th>Food security</th>
<th>Health and Nutrition</th>
<th>Livelihoods and Resilience</th>
<th>Durable Solutions</th>
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Democratic Republic of the Congo – COUNTRY RRP
# 2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary

By Refugee Population and Organization

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