

Democratic Republic of the Congo

1 - 31 January 2018

Voluntary repatriation of Rwandan refugees in 2017 was at significantly higher levels than in previous years, with over **18,000** returnees. The programme continues in 2018.

In Lusenda camp, Burundian refugee produced **35 tons of biomass briquettes** as an alternative source of energy for cooking.

15 boreholes equipped with manual water pumps were set up and **2 water springs** were rehabilitated in **villages hosting new arrivals** from Central African Republic.

KEY INDICATORS

540,396

Refugees in DRC as of 31 January 2018

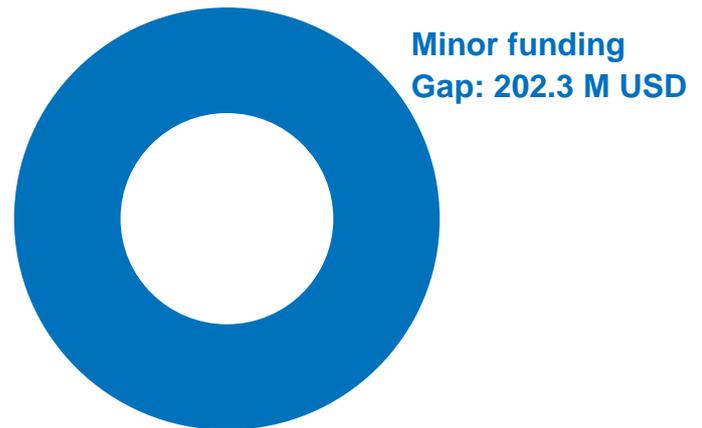
4.49 Million*

Internally Displaced People in DRC as of 31 December 2017

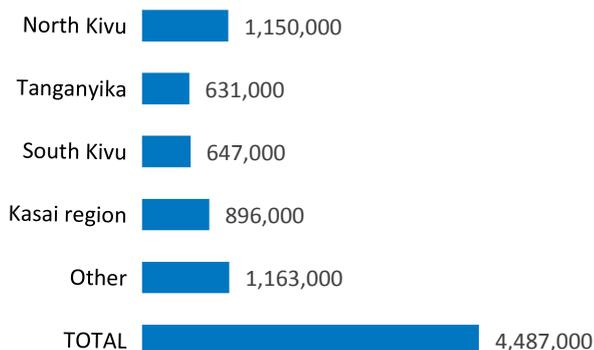
FUNDING 2018 (AS OF 29 JANUARY 2018)

USD 202.4 M

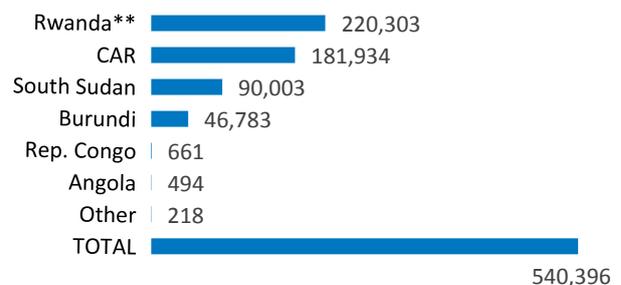
requested for the DRC (including special situations)



Internally Displaced People by Province *



Refugees by country of origin



* Source: OCHA (31 December 2017)

**This figure is based on a pre-registration exercise conducted by the National Commission for Refugees in 2014-2015. Biometric registration is ongoing. So far, 42,132 refugees were registered.

Update on Achievements

Burundian refugees

- In Lusenda camp, 9,777 refugees (2,591 households) were registered during the month with the biometric registration system (BIMS) with an improved fingerprint tool. The registration exercise started on 4th December 2017, with a total of 27,728 refugees registered in the 50 “villages” (districts) of the camp as of 26th January.
- Works at the new refugee site of Mulongwe (Fizi territory) continued. 11 common dorms were under construction to receive relocated refugees. 140 refugee households received their plots of land where they can build their own shelter. UNHCR partner AIRD was giving technical support through the constitution of a shelter committee and construction of a sample shelter.
- In Lusenda camp, 600 shelter kits were distributed over the month of January to households whose houses were destroyed during the big storm of October 2017.
- Refugees from Lusenda camp produced 35 tons of biomass briquettes which UNHCR plans to distribute to refugees instead of firewood. This pilot initiative, carried out by seven refugee associations across the camp, is part of activities initiated by UNHCR partner AIRD to preserve the environment, while helping refugees to generate an income. Since the beginning of the project in June 2017, 55 tons of biomass briquettes were produced.
- The food fair in Lusenda camp was delayed to 1st of February.



Stock of biomass briquettes made by refugees at Lusenda Camp, South Kivu © UNHCR/C. Veale

Central African refugees

- UNHCR provided equipment to three associations of 30 members each (refugees and locals) in the locality of Mobayi-Mbongo (25km from Gbadolite), to develop income generating activities such as soap-making, fishery and bakery. This initiative aims to promote self-reliance and peaceful coexistence.
- UNHCR provided primary schools of Ndokpondo and Yandangu (Yakoma Territory, Nord-Ubangi Province) with corrugated iron sheets to allow them to rehabilitate the roofs. This intervention is part of the support to social infrastructures in areas of recent arrivals. Around 1,500 students, among them numerous of refugees, benefitted from this intervention. Almost 9,000 newly arrived CAR refugees live in this area.
- UNHCR also provided stationery, bicycles and chairs to the civil registry's office in the territories of Yakoma and Mobayi-Mbongo where many new arrivals from CAR live. This provision is expected to facilitate registration of refugees born in DRC within the legal delay of 90 days from birth, thus reducing the risk of statelessness. This support will be extended to further civil registry offices in Nord- and Sud-Ubangi Provinces.
- Thanks to four new boreholes equipped with manual water pumps in Bili camp (Bosobolo territory, Nord-Ubangi Province), the average of drinking water distribution reached the UNHCR standard of 20 liters per person and day.
- 15 boreholes equipped with manual water pumps were set up and 2 water springs were rehabilitated in villages hosting new arrivals in the territories of Mobayi-Mbongo, Yakoma and Bondo, at the benefit of both local and refugee communities. Moreover, 156 family latrines were completed by UNHCR partner ADES in the locality of Ndu (Bondo Territory, Bas-Uele Province).
- 261 transitional shelters out of 368 planned were completed by UNHCR partner AIRD in order to accommodate new arrivals in Inke camp. Moreover, 269 latrines out of 368 planned were completed.
- UNHCR partner TSF completed 390 shelters out of 418 planned for new arrivals in the localities of Monga, Ndu and Kanzawi (Bas-Uele province) using a community-based approach.



Handing over materials for the rehabilitation of the primary school of Ndokpondo (Yakoma Territory, Nord-Ubangi Province) © UNHCR/G. Nentobo

Rwandan refugees

- The DRC authorities maintained their decision to not apply cessation of refugee status for Rwandan refugees at the end of 2017. The voluntary repatriation programme continued in January 2018.
- 340 Rwandan refugees returned voluntarily to their home country during the month, a significant drop compared to previous months (December 2,557, November 3,114). This could be due to the fact that most refugees are not informed yet that the programme is continuing in 2018. A radio campaign was launched in North Kivu Province to inform the refugees about voluntary repatriation programme in 2018, and it will be extended to South Kivu in February. Sensitization campaign carried out by National Commission for Refugees (CNR) will resume in February as well.
- A new biometric registration operation for Rwandan refugees in both Kivu provinces was under preparation and will be launched in the first half of 2018, with the aim of collecting data on return or local integration intentions and promoting durable solutions for Rwandan refugees.

South Sudanese refugees

- During January, 1,015 new refugees were registered (an increase compared to December with 830 registrations). Refugees arrived mainly from Yei River State, and reported continued attacks against civilians from both parties to the conflict, despite a ceasefire. Young men reported to be targeted as they were suspected to belong to militia.
- An increasing number of arrivals came to be registered in Biringi site near Aru (Ituri Province), thanks to sensitization campaign led by Congolese authorities and UNHCR. The campaign encouraged refugees to move away from the border, where incursions from South Sudanese belligerents are frequent as well as kidnappings.
- In Meri site (Bas-Uele Province), a cooperative of eight refugees and two locals opened a bakery, as a self-reliance pilot project. Another bakery is planned to open in Biringi site. UNHCR promoted other income generating activities for South Sudanese refugees, such as agriculture, milling, hairdressing and tailoring with provision of material and technical and management training.
- Thanks to UNHCR advocacy, the village chief of Biringi allocated an area of 140 hectares neighboring Biringi site to build shelters for the refugees. For the first time, authorities in Biringi allowed the refugees to collect building material from the surrounding forests without restriction.
- In the new allocated area of Biringi site, UNHCR's partners AIRD and ADSSE delimited, cleared and distributed plots to refugees who will be assisted by an engineer for the construction of their shelters.
- The first trucks transporting 1,000 Refugee Housing Units (RHUs) planned for deployment in Kaka site have reached the DRC border and are on their way to Dungu. The RHU will allow refugee relocation whilst avoiding usage of wooden sticks for constructions.
- UNHCR and a team from the National Program against HIV/AIDS (*Programme National Multisectoriel de Lutte contre le Sida - PNMLS*), assessed the emergency

response initiated in Doruma in 2016 to ensure continuity of antiretroviral therapy (ART) to 1,300 persons living with HIV/AIDS, in partnership with WHO, UNAIDS and the Global Fund. The project will be extended to the other health zones hosting South Sudanese refugees, Aru, Biringi and Aba, and includes capacity building for 45 healthcare providers on HIV/AIDS response in emergencies and 15 community relays and peer educators on awareness and early identification of adverse effects of ART. Currently, 51 refugees living with HIV in Biringi and 95 in Meri sites receive ART. Response and prevention capacities for HIV/AIDS remain weak in those health zones, particularly with regard to testing and prevention of mother-to-child transmission.



Distribution of fishing kits in Mobayi-Mbongo (Nord Ubangi Province) © UNHCR/G. Nentobo



New borehole equipped with a manual water pump in Yakoma (Nord Ubangi) © UNHCR/G. Nentobo

Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

- As of 31 December 2017, DRC had the largest internally displaced population in Africa: 4.5 million people. In 2017, 2.2 million new internally displaced have been recorded. Nord Kivu Province is the one with the highest number of internally displaced (1.15 million), while in Kasai region 1.36 million people returned during the year (source: OCHA).
- Clashes between FARDC troops and armed groups started in mid-January around Ubwari peninsula (Fizi territory), affecting civilians across South Kivu. According to OCHA, 13,000 people fled the area to take refuge in northern villages of the Fizi territory and in Uvira; but this figure remains unconfirmed due to the impossibility to send an evaluation mission on the ground. UNHCR offices in Burundi and Tanzania reported arrivals of Congolese asylum seekers (around 8,000 in Burundi and 1,200 in Tanzania).
- The Provincial Framework for Humanitarian Dialogue (*Cadre Provincial de Concertation Humanitaire – CPCH*) was established in North Kivu in late January, with the participation of the National Minister for Humanitarian Action and the Deputy Regional Representative of UNHCR. This new structure is meant to provide a platform for dialogue between humanitarian actors and provincial authorities.
- 1,406 persons with specific needs were identified and assisted with cash in the town of Tshikapa (Kasai Province).
- UNHCR Tshikapa conducted a mission to Kamako (Kasai Province border area) which has seen spontaneous refugee return from Angola. The mission observed strong tensions still present, and the population feared inter-ethnic clashes might begin again. Many returnees do not go back to their villages of origin due to fear of violence. There is a need to reinforce peaceful coexistence projects in the area, as well as to reinforce capacity of the local organizations and protection monitoring.

Cluster Activities

- The overall protection response was being reinforced in Tshikapa (Kasai Province) with the opening of an ICRC office and the arrival of UNFPA Gender-Based Violence specialist who will strengthen the coordination in SGBV response within the Protection Cluster.
- 15 UNHCR partner staff took part in training on the centrality of protection organized by the Protection Cluster of South Kivu.
- The Inter-Cluster in Kananga (UNHCR, PAM, FAO, UNICEF, OMS, OCHA) undertook a mission to Dekese (Kasai Province). The area hosted more than 32,000 IDPs from Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces according to local authorities, while it was not directly touched by armed conflict. They were in need of multi-sectorial assistance (healthcare, shelter, food security, education and protection). Concerning protection needs, cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), exactions, lootings, and unaccompanied children were reported and remain without response. There is a need to organize peaceful co-existence activities between host communities and displaced people.

Critical Needs and Priorities

- Lack of reception structures for repatriation candidates in remote areas where most of Rwandan refugees live (Mwenga Territory in South Kivu Province and Kasongo Territory in Maniema Province), as well as persistence of insecurity in many areas of South Kivu Province constitutes a challenge for them to reach UNHCR structures to benefit from voluntary return programme.
- Lack of funding significantly hampers UNHCR capacity to deliver protection and assistance to Internally Displaced People in both Kivu Provinces. There is also urgent need to extend response capacity in Kabambare and Kasongo territories (Maniema province), and the necessity to conduct investigations on the allegations revealing high levels of human rights violations which have been documented by humanitarian actors in the area.
- UNHCR health partner ADES conducted a nutritional screening of 1,200 refugee children aged from 6 months to 5 years in the Health Zones of Yakoma (Nord Ubangi) and Ndu (Bas-Uele). In Yakoma, malnutrition rates were slightly above the alarm threshold (10,8% for global malnutrition and 2,6% for severe malnutrition). Availability of nutrition supplements in the area is very limited, due to scarce coverage of the area by humanitarian actors.
- In Bas-Uele Province, in order to transport construction material for UNHCR offices, construction material for refugee shelters and medical equipment across Uele and Mbiri rivers, there is need to set up rafts.
- For South Sudanese refugees, living conditions remain critical, as 473 newly arrived refugees (80% women and children) live in common dorms with an original capacity of less than 200 people. Around 7,000 shelters are needed in Meri, Biringi and Kaka sites. In 2018, available funds allow to cover only 2% of the needs.
- To meet UNHCR standard of 20 l/p/d of drinking water, at least 40 additional water points are needed in Meri, Biringi and Kaka sites. In Meri, only 13 liters are currently available per person per day. Also latrine coverage remains very low (10%). Additional 10,000 family latrines are needed in Meri, Biringi and Kaka sites.

Working in partnership

- Together with the DRC Government, through the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), UNHCR ensures international protection and delivery of multi-sectorial assistance to persons of concern. UNHCR closely collaborate with other UN Agencies and other humanitarian actors for a coordinated and effective response. UNHCR works with 14 implementing partners (ACTION AID, ACTED, ADES, ADSSE, AIDES, AIRD, ADRA, COOPI, CNR, DRC, INTERSOS, NRC, SAVE CONGO, and TSF) and many operational partners.
- UNHCR leads the Protection Cluster, which coordinate the protection actors in their support of IDPs and other vulnerable. UNHCR co-leads the Protection and Prevention component of the National Strategy on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in DRC.

External / Donors Relations

Special thanks to the major donors of unrestricted and regional funds 2018

Sweden (98 M) | Norway (43 M) | Netherlands (39 M) | United Kingdom (32 M) | Denmark (25 M) | Australia (19 M) | Switzerland (15 M)

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LINKS

[DR Congo Emergency page](#) – [UNHCR DRC operation page](#) - [DRC Facebook page](#) – [UNHCR Story: South Sudan refugees in Congo make market vibrant success](#) – [UNHCR Story: Central African refugees, exiled across the river, long for home](#)

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
Refugees, Returnees and IDPs
as of 31 January 2018

