

South Sudanese Refugee Situation Democratic Republic of the Congo

November 2017

Highlights

- UNHCR launched a **biometric registration exercise in Dungu** city (Haut-Uélé Province) for South Sudanese refugees arrived during 2016 and 2017. UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) registered 1,270 individuals. The main aim of the exercise was to have biometric data of refugees previously pre-registered or non-biometrically registered.
- During the **visit of Special Advisor to the High Commissioner for Refugees and Regional Coordinator for South Sudanese Refugees**, Arnaud Akodjenou, refugees and the host communities shared their concerns about the deteriorating situation in South Sudan, expressed their needs for more humanitarian assistance and appealed to the international community to strengthen the capacity of refugees to acquire socio-economic self-sufficiency.
- **South Sudanese refugees continued to arrive in the DRC**, namely in Haut-Uélé and Ituri Provinces. The newly arrived refugees reported human rights' violations (killings, rapes, forced recruitment) as well as lootings and burning of houses in the neighboring South Sudanese provinces as reasons for flight. In November, some 1,120 South Sudanese refugees were registered in the DRC.

KEY INDICATORS

88,140

South Sudanese refugees registered in DRC (as of 30th November 2017)

53 %

Women and girls

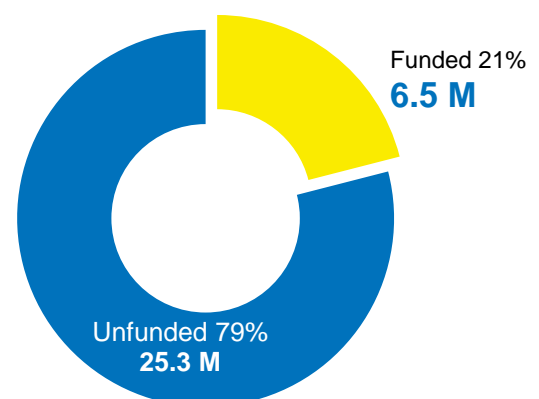
32,792

Refugees **living in the refugee sites of Meri and Biringi** as of 30th November 2017

FUNDING (AS OF 28 NOVEMBER 2017)

USD 31.8 M

requested for SSD refugees in DRC



Update on Achievements

Operational Context

Latest development

The security situation in Dungu Territory (Haut-Uélé Province) became increasingly problematic over the course of the month, with the presence of armed groups reported on all main roads, before returning to relatively calm again at the end of the month.

UNHCR's access to most of the refugees and asylum seekers located in the border areas of Dungu Territory remained very limited due to the security situation.

The security situation in the border areas of the Aru Territory (Ituri Province) remained volatile and unpredictable with alleged militias activities and incursions from South Sudan but had no significant impact on UNHCR and its partners' operations, particularly the relocation of refugees from the border to Biringi refugee site.

Funding update

The UNHCR South Sudanese refugee situation in the DRC remained severely underfunded at 21% of the total requirement of USD 31.8 mio. Funding constraints strongly impacted the provision of all basic services, including shelter, education, water and sanitation, nutrition and healthcare services.



The Nyalanya Primary School in Aba (Haut-Uélé Province) is one of nine local schools that host refugee children from Meri site © UNHCR 2017 / A. Cadonau

Achievements



PROTECTION

Achievements and Impact

- **Registration** – UNHCR and its partners launched the biometric registration in Dungu city. 1,270 refugees arrived during 2016 and 2017 were biometrically registered. A quarter of them were identified as having specific needs, such as women who are head of households with young children.
- **Vulnerability** – Meri site received for the first time a group of refugees who had fled from Amadi State (South Sudan). Amadi State is considerably further away from the border than the areas where the majority of refugees at this site come from. The refugees arrived in a visibly exhausted state after a ten-day journey on foot and without any possessions. They declared being precursors and that others, including elderly and children whose journey takes longer, will follow. Given that these refugees from the Moro ethnic tribe lack ties to the previously arrived refugees at the Meri site and were deprived of all their possessions, UNHCR provided them with hot meals for a prolonged period of time instead of the initial 48 hours after arrival, as well as with some essential household items.
- **Age, gender and diversity assessments** – UNHCR conducted participatory assessments based on age, gender and diversity criteria at Meri and Biringi sites and in Dungu city, with the aim to better understand the particular protection risks and needs of different refugee groups. This assessment represent one of the basic pillars of UNHCR programme planning. Through this approach, UNHCR gives a voice to those who have less access and are less visible to humanitarian actors, and seeks to ensure that all persons of concern are involved in the design and evaluation of the programmes whom they are the beneficiaries. The most pressing needs expressed were primary education, subsistence, shelter and healthcare.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)** – In November, 14 SGBV cases were reported in Meri site and five in Biringi site. Since January, there were 121 reported cases in Meri and 79 in Biringi. UNHCR provides the survivors with medical and psychosocial assistance. Moreover, sensitizations on prevention of sexual and gender-based violence are carried out by community networks mobilized by partner ADES. A major problem remains access to justice: the jurisdiction in which Meri site is situated lacks a functioning prison to detain suspects and means to transport them to the nearest court. For this reason, no charges have so far been brought against any of the perpetrators of SGBV at Meri site, while prosecution remains crucial for deterrence.



EDUCATION

Achievements and Impact

- **Language classes** – 340 refugee children in Biringi and 50 in Dungu city benefited from French language classes. These classes are crucial to acquire the necessary

language skills to integrate into the regular primary school. The courses in Meri were still on hold as infrastructure (hangars) has been destroyed.

- **School material** – UNHCR distributed school kits consisting of uniforms, pens and notepads to 2,180 refugee children in Meri. In Biringi, 240 primary school children received uniforms, 190 participants of the French language classes received writing tools and three local schools that host refugee children were given 180 boxes of chalk. In Dungu, eight local primary schools were supported with office supplies and stationery.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Classrooms** – Additional classrooms are urgently needed in Meri site, where there is only one primary school with three classrooms, hosting 360 refugee children in a morning and an afternoon shift. The remaining eight local primary schools that host refugee children are located outside the site at a considerable walking distance, which – in addition to the strain for young children – poses a potential protection issue. Some 5,000 children of primary school age in Meri and 600 in Biringi are out of school due to the lack of funds.
- **Secondary education** – Additional funding is needed to support 4,700 refugees in secondary school age in Meri and Biringi who remain deprived of education opportunities.
- **Child-friendly spaces** – The Meri and Biringi refugee sites lack child-friendly spaces, libraries and sufficient recreational activities for all age groups to foster development and social integration.



HEALTH

Achievements and Impact

- **Referral** – At Meri and Biringi sites, a group of refugees was trained as community health workers. They identify and refer patients to the respective health centers, distribute certain medications and provide translation services between the South Sudanese refugees and the Congolese medical staff.
- During the month, 3,400 medical consultations were conducted in Meri and 1,250 in Biringi. UNHCR covered the costs of consultations and medications.
- **Awareness** – Health community relays conducted mass awareness campaigns on antibiotic resistance as a serious threat to global health at the Meri and Biringi sites on the occasion of World Antibiotic Awareness Week. They reached out to over 3,000 refugees and members of the host communities in Meri and Biringi.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Malaria** – Malaria remained the most prevalent pathology at all refugee sites with 30-50% of all diagnosed diseases. 20,000 refugees in Meri and Biringi do not have access to a mosquito net due to underfunding.
- **HIV/AIDS, medication, referral** – Serious gaps remained in Meri's and Biringi's respective health zones with regard to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, the availability of specific drugs including for chronic diseases, ambulance

service and medical evacuation, specific referral and the treatment of premature infants.



FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Achievements and Impact

- **Cash distribution** – UNHCR and its implementing partners supported the World Food Programme (WFP) in the distribution of the monthly cash grants. Some 29,000 refugees in Meri and 3,200 in Biringi received the equivalent of 16 USD to purchase food staples. UNHCR assisted over 200 elderly refugees and persons with reduced mobility in receiving their cash grants.
- **Food distribution** – 3,500 refugees in Dungu city, Duru, Bitima and Mogoroko benefited from some 78 tons of staples from the WFP for the months of November and December. Each person received 11 kg of food staples per month. In addition, 1,700 refugees in Meri and 100 in Biringi received food rations, including the newly arrived refugees.
- **Hot meal distribution** – UNHCR's partner ADSSE prepared and distributed hot meals to over 1,700 refugees in Meri and 600 in Biringi. The beneficiaries included the newly arrived refugees, in-patients at the hospital, detainees and other particularly vulnerable refugees.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Nutrition** – Refugees continuously reported that the amount of the monthly cash grant of 16 USD per person does not allow for a balanced diet during the whole month. Malnutrition remained a serious concern with some 2,000 acute cases in Meri and 200 in Biringi. UNHCR distributed a premixed corn-soy blend and vegetable oil to the expecting and breastfeeding mothers with acute malnutrition and the chronically ill, and the ready-to-use food supplement plumpy'sup™ to the malnourished children aged six to 59 months. Additional funds are urgently needed for agrarian tools and seeds to reinforce farming which could significantly increase food security and reduce the risk of malnutrition.



WATER AND SANITATION

Achievements and Impact

- **Latrines** – UNHCR installed 100 pit latrines and showers at the recently allocated Kaka refugee site in Dungu.
- **Water** – conversion of three springs into protected water sources was ongoing at the Kaka site. In Meri, three sources were being converted at the site, as well as one at the new health center Nyalanya and one in the host community of Aba. In Biringi, two additional sources were under construction at the site and one at the refugees' fields on the verge of the site, and three others were being rehabilitated.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Water and sanitation** – The availability of water remained below standard with 15-16 liter/person/day at the Biringi and Meri sites for drinking, cooking, personal hygiene and washing clothes and dishes. Water quantity is expected to further decrease during the upcoming dry season.
- **Latrines** coverage in Meri and Biringi was at 11-16%, leaving a gap of some 9,200 latrines at the two sites and representing a serious threat to the health and protection of the refugees.



SHELTER AND NFIS

Achievements and Impact

- **Shelter** – With the work force of a group of refugees, UNHCR's partner AIRD cleared the land to construct an initial 170 emergency shelter and 200 transitional shelters at the Kaka site. Construction of all emergency shelters and half of the transitional shelters started during the course of the month.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Shelter** – Over 6,000 families urgently require family shelters in Meri and Biringi. These families live in overcrowded communal hangars under precarious conditions or are hosted by other refugee families in their modest huts. Only 39% of the families in Meri and 61% in Biringi have an appropriate family shelter.
- **Non-food items** – Basic household items are urgently needed for more than 17,000 refugees at the Meri site. Since January 2017, no sleeping mats, blankets, jerry cans, cooking utensils, buckets, soap or mosquito nets could be distributed due to the lack of funds. As a consequence, a majority of refugees sleep on the bare ground. Refugees are highly exposed to malaria, as well as other diseases as utensils to safely transport and boil water and conduct personal hygiene are lacking.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- **Agriculture** – The provision of more agricultural tools and seeds could significantly increase the refugees' self-sufficiency, improve their nutritional condition and health, and help them gain an income which could in turn enable them to construct a shelter and purchase basic consumer goods. At the Meri site, 15% of the households were assisted in 2017 with agricultural tools provided by UNHCR and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). T to underfunding. Meanwhile, the local authorities provide the refugees with the possibility to receive a plot of land for farming.
- **Income generating activities** – 120 beneficiaries received from UNHCR sewing machines, cloth, scissors, thread, solar powered hairdryers, hair salon chairs and mills to start their own small businesses in tailoring, hairdressing and milling. Moreover, the beneficiaries continued the construction of studios and shops to house their businesses.

Working in partnership

- UNHCR coordinates its assistance with a variety of humanitarian actors, working together to ensure refugee benefit from dignified and efficient protection mechanisms.
- For this operation, UNHCR's partners are: ADES, ADSSE, AIRD, CNR and INTERSOS. Other partners include FAO, WFP (with its partner TSF), MALTESER and TROCAIRE/CARITAS.

External / Donors Relations

Donors for SSD refugee response in DRC in 2017

United States of America (6.2 M) | Belgium (0.3 M)

Other donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2017

United States of America (32.7 M) | CERF (3.3 M) | Japan (2.5 M) | Belgium (1.1 M) | Republic of Korea (1.5 M) | European Union (1.1 M) | Sweden (1.1 M) | UNIQLO Co. Ltd (1.0 M) | DRC Humanitarian Fund (0.8 M) | Canada (0.7 M) | Private Donors Germany (0.5 M) | France (0.5 M) | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints (0.2 M) | U.N. Foundation (0.2 M) | Private Donors Republic of Korea (0.09 M) | Private Donors Spain (0.07 M) | Vodafone Foundation (0.05 M)

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United States of America (266 M) | Sweden (76 M) | Private Donors Spain (54 M) | Netherlands (52 M) | United Kingdom (45 M) | Norway (41 M) | Private Donors Republic of Korea (26 M) | Japan (25 M) | Denmark (23 M) | Australia (19 M) | Private Donors Italy (17 M) | Private Donors USA (16 M) | Canada (16 M) | Switzerland (15 M) | France (14 M) | Germany (12 M) | Private Donors Japan (12 M) | Private Donors Sweden (12 M) | Italy (10 M)

CONTACTS

Chiara Cavalcanti, Associate Reporting Officer, DR Congo - RR Kinshasa,
cavalcan@unhcr.org, Tel: +243 996 041 000, Cell +243 810 403 901

Anita Cadonau, Associate External Relations and Reporting Officer, DR Congo -
SO Aru, cadonau@unhcr.org, Cell +243 817 788 422

LINKS

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