

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO SITUATION



Hanifa is an internally displaced Congolese woman who has found refuge in Tshikapa in the Kasai region of south-central Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

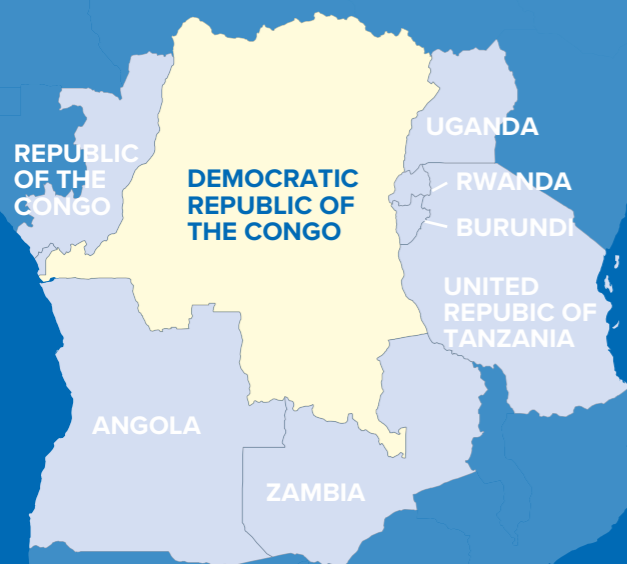
© UNHCR/JOHN WESSELS

Although a peaceful transition of power followed the presidential elections in December 2018, the security and humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has continued to deteriorate, mainly in the east, in what is one of the most complex and long-standing humanitarian crises in Africa.

Approximately 1.67 million people were newly displaced in 2019, despite Government efforts to promote returns for refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs. UNHCR continues to support IDPs (including through shelter, building of schools, health centres and other community infrastructure, and provision of cash assistance) along with some 919,234 Congolese refugees and asylum-seekers in neighbouring countries and the wider Southern Africa region.

UNHCR's overall requirements for the DRC situation in 2020 stand at \$343.5 million. As of 25 August 2020, \$26.8 million has been received. Flexible and country-level funds received by UNHCR have allowed the organization to allocate an additional \$93.6 million to the DRC situation, raising the current funding level to 35%. These low funding levels have forced UNHCR's operations in the DRC and in neighbouring countries to cut programmes across a range of sectors, including shelter, cash assistance, durable solutions, education and water, sanitation and hygiene, with additional cuts to programmes expected in the second half of 2020 should further funding not be received.

AFFECTED COUNTRIES



KEY POPULATION DATA (AS OF 30 JUNE 2020)

919,234
Congolese refugees and asylum-seekers in the region

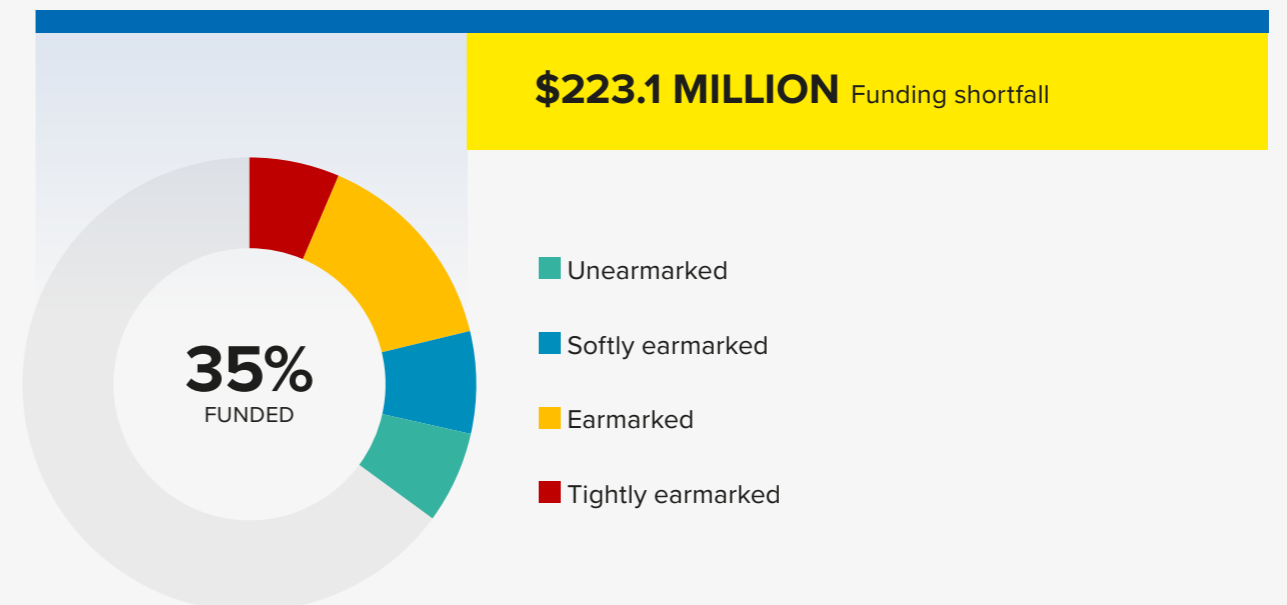
7.2 million
IDPs

22,788
refugee returnees

2.1 million
IDP returnees

\$343.5 MILLION

UNHCR's financial requirements 2020, as of 25 August 2020



Activities that have already been reduced or cut as a consequence of underfunding

Shelter and cash assistance for IDPs in the DRC



Emergency shelter interventions for IDP families in South Kivu Province were stopped in January 2020 due to the shortfall in funding, while cash programming for IDP women at risk was reduced, with only 680 women being supported. Highly vulnerable displaced people continue to live in substandard and undignified shelters, exposed to environmental hazards, while women at risk, without opportunities for financial independence, may resort to negative coping mechanisms and are exposed to SGBV and other protection risks.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
 8,000 IDP households in need of shelter and 100,000 IDP women at risk

Funding needed:
 \$22 million

Education in Burundi and Zambia



Planned construction and rehabilitation of schools and classrooms in refugee camps in Burundi and Zambia were suspended as of February 2020 due to lack of funds. In Zambia, only four out of a planned 80 classrooms were completed meaning some students were unable to resume their studies in the context of COVID-19. In Burundi, the existing lack of funding for education was worsened due to reprioritization of funds to respond to COVID-19, exposing out of school children to protection risks including SGBV, while crowded classrooms also increase the risk of COVID-19 contamination.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
 35,000 refugee students in Burundi and 6,000 refugee students in Zambia

Funding needed:
 Burundi \$600,000; Zambia \$800,000

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

JULY

Voluntary repatriation from the Republic of the Congo



Although a priority in 2020, assisted voluntary repatriation of Congolese refugees from the Republic of the Congo to the DRC could not be carried out from January 2020 due to unavailability of funds, in addition to COVID-19 related issues. As a result, refugees ready to return home to the DRC continue to wait for assisted repatriation, delaying durable solutions.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
 10,000 Congolese refugees

Funding needed:
 \$1.7 million

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania

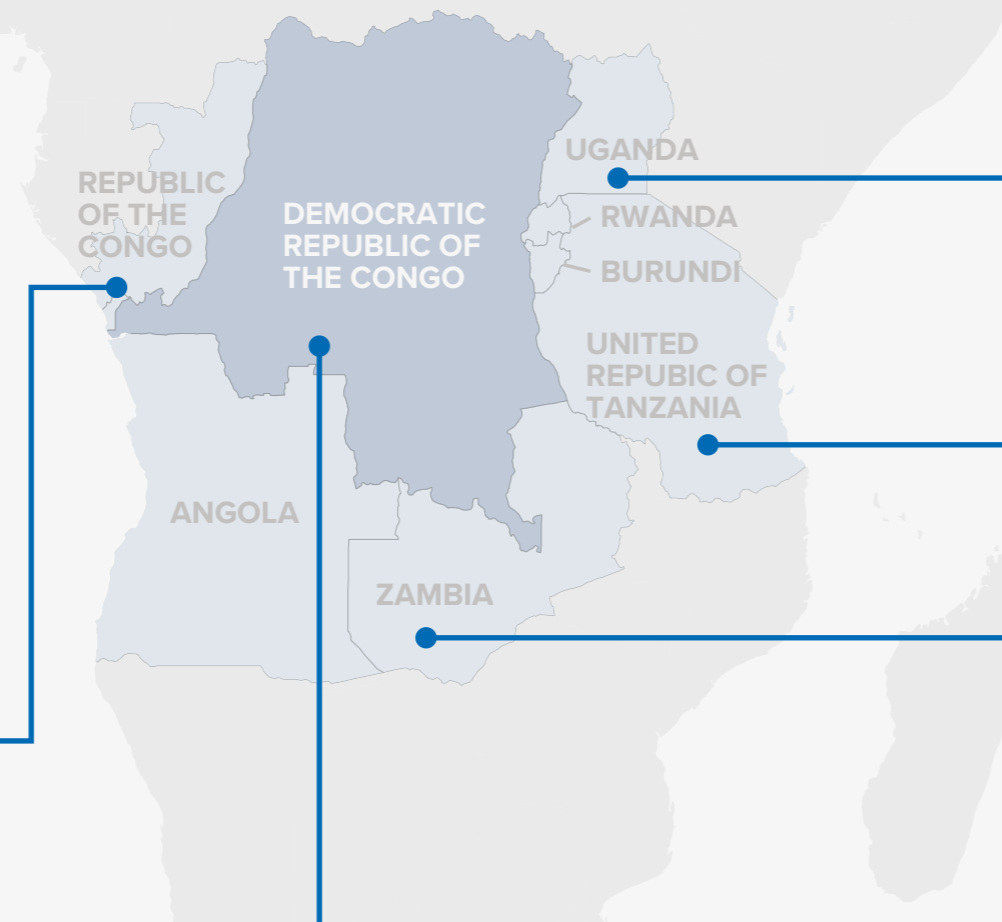


Due to underfunding and reprioritization (including in the context of COVID-19), planned construction of retaining walls for shower facilities in camps in Rwanda to prevent their structural collapse was not implemented as of July 2020. Funding shortfalls in the United Republic of Tanzania led to 25% of refugee households not receiving family latrines as planned, and delays in the decommissioning of filled, collapsed and communal latrines in the three refugee camps.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
 Over 76,000 Congolese refugees in Rwanda, and 4,815 Congolese refugee households in the United Republic of Tanzania

Funding needed:
 Rwanda \$200,000; the United Republic of Tanzania \$2.3 million

Activities that could be reduced or cut from August 2020



WASH in the Republic of the Congo



Due to lack of funding and reprioritization of funds towards the COVID-19 response, the planned construction of family latrines for refugees and asylum-seekers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been put on hold, however with sufficient funding could be resumed in the second half of 2020. The ratio of people per latrine is high at 32, compared to the recommended 20, resulting in public health risks.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
8,000 individuals

Funding needed:
\$450,000

Emergency shelter programme for IDPs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo



The funding shortfall will prevent UNHCR from implementing essential emergency shelter interventions for IDPs in North Kivu Province from October 2020. Highly vulnerable displaced people are currently forced to live in substandard and undignified shelters and are exposed to environmental hazards.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
6,000 IDP households

Funding needed:
\$2 million

Reception arrangements in Uganda



As of September 2020, underfunding will result in the suspension of core relief item distribution for new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Uganda, and halt construction and expansion of collection points, transit centres and reception centres (including quarantine facilities). Without core relief items – including soap for hand washing during COVID-19 – refugees lack basic necessities and may face additional health and protection risks.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
50,000 people

Funding needed:
\$2.8 million

Health and nutrition in the United Republic of Tanzania



Provision of specialized equipment such as x-ray machines, incubators, pediatric vital sign monitors and automated external defibrillators to facilitate secondary and tertiary health care referrals have not been procured so far in 2020 due to underfunding, meaning that some people will not have access to needed medical care in the second half of 2020. Provision of supplementary nutrition to people at risk in the three refugee camps will also be required due to reduction of the food basket.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
17,640 people in the health sector and 6,135 people at risk of malnutrition

Funding needed:
\$750,000

Livelihoods in Zambia



An initiative to strengthen access to employment opportunities for youth and women by supporting development of artisanal skills, as well as visual and vocal artistry, in the three settlements in Zambia will not be implemented in the absence of further funding from September 2020. This intervention would in part mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 on refugee livelihoods.

Number of impacted beneficiaries:
1,500 people

Funding needed:
\$500,000



SPOTLIGHT: BEYOND THE NUMBERS

Emmanuelle Ochaya, 56, is among an estimated 45,000 people who fled attacks in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) that erupted in May 2020. She was part of a group who became stranded in a remote and inaccessible area, as the borders between the DRC and Uganda remained closed due to the COVID-19 lockdown. When Uganda temporarily re-opened two border crossing points through Guladjo and Mount Zeu in Zombo district in July 2020, some 3,000 asylum-seekers (including Emmanuelle) crossed into Uganda. UNHCR and partners, in coordination with the Office of the Prime Minister, the Health Ministry and the district local government, have been working around the clock in Zombo district to strengthen reception capacities, including quarantine facilities at the border, and to ensure adequate levels of emergency assistance are available. However, funding constraints are limiting UNHCR's ability to respond to the needs of new arrivals, including for vulnerable individuals like Emmanuelle, who are fast-tracked for assistance.

“The needs are huge and growing.”

*- Joel Boutroue,
UNHCR's Representative in Uganda*



LEARN
MORE