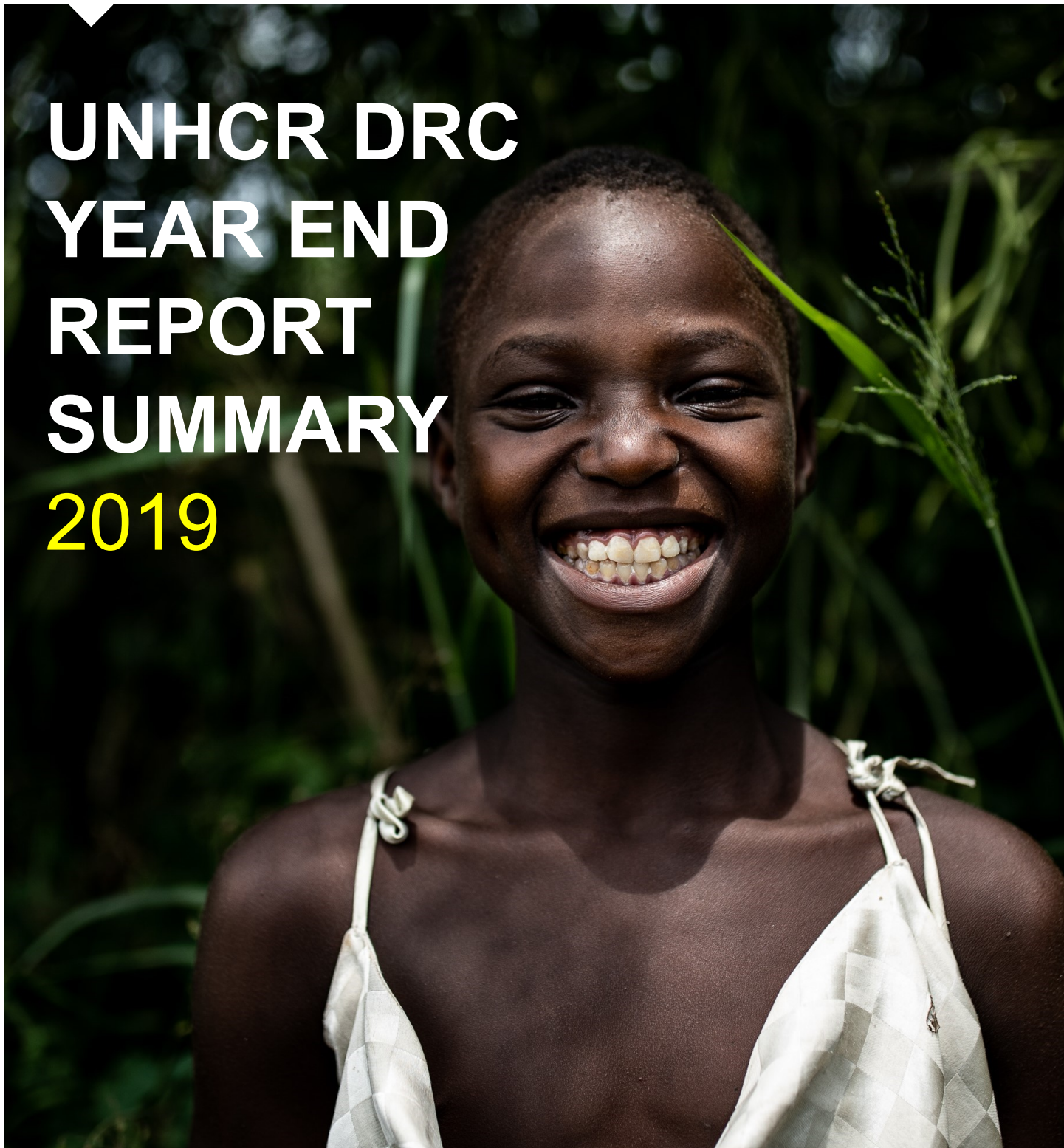


UNHCR DRC YEAR END REPORT SUMMARY 2019



2019 at a glance

523,734

refugees in DRC as of the end of 2019

The number of refugees in DRC decreased by **5,327 persons** from Dec. 2018 to Dec. 2019

3,197

asylum-seekers in DRC as of the end of 2019

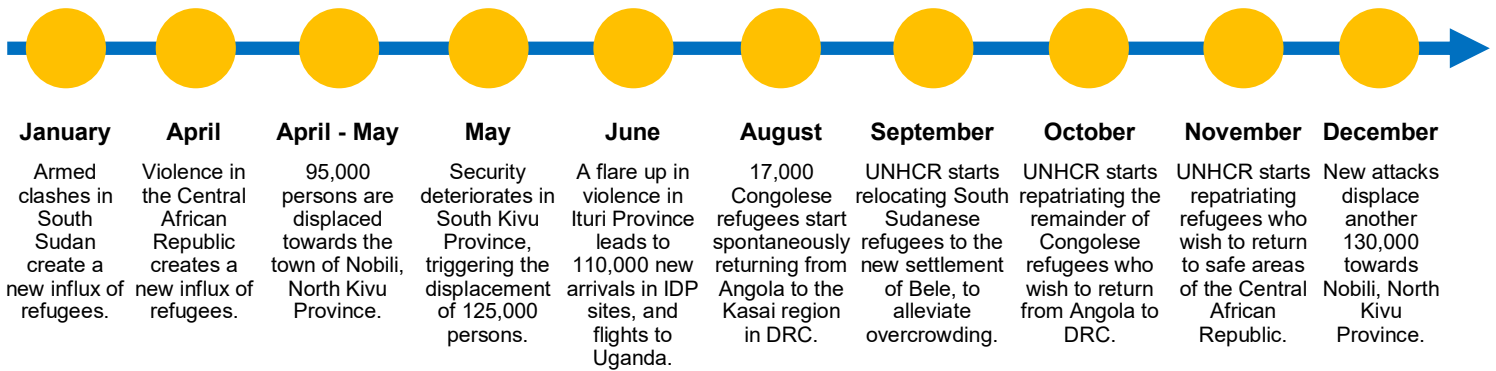
The number of asylum-seekers in DRC decreased by **2,570 persons** from Dec. 2018 to Dec. 2019

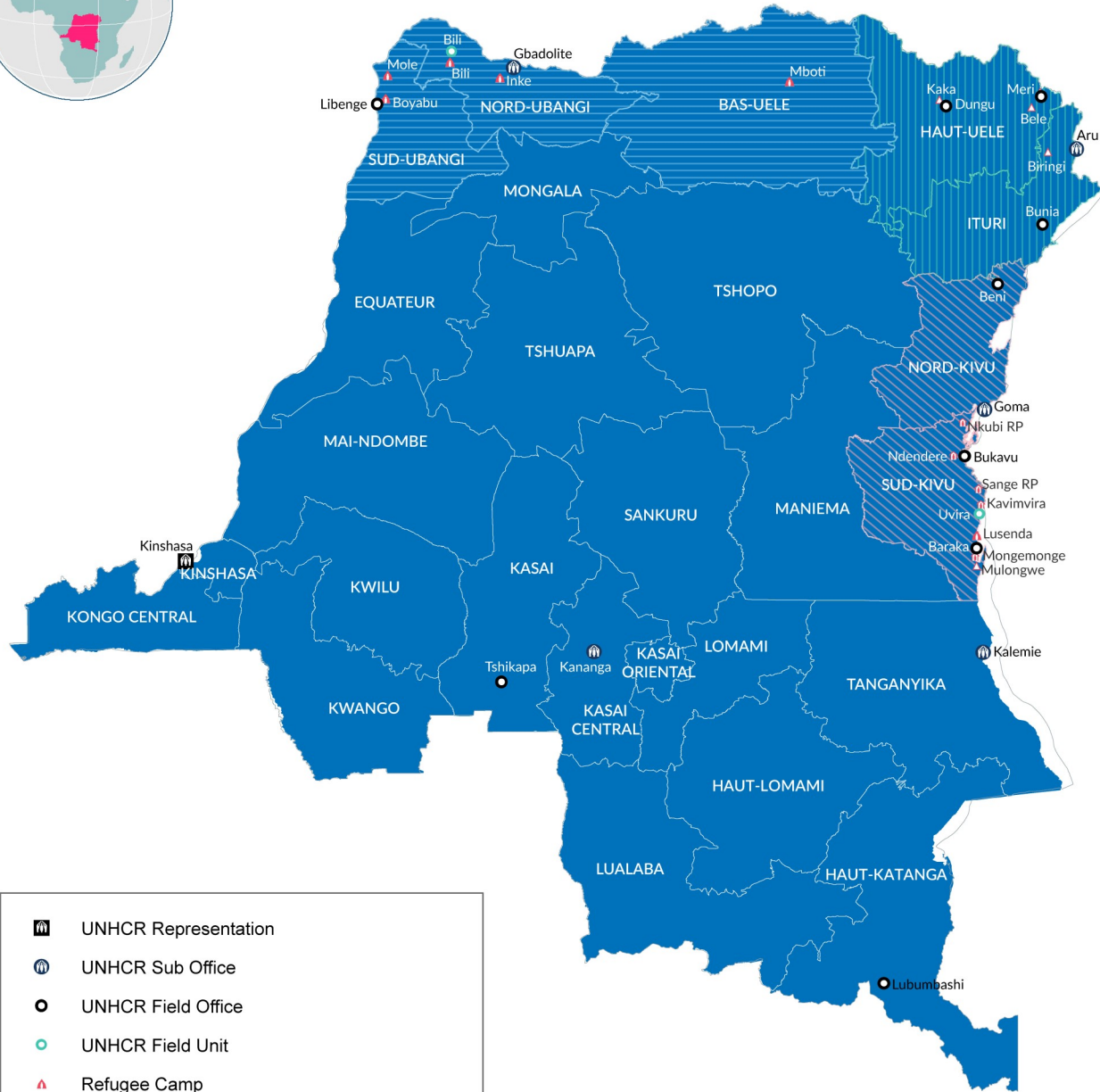
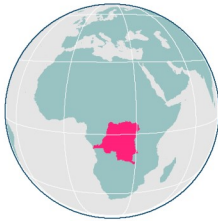
5.01 million

internally displaced persons in DRC as of November 2019

There were **4.7 million** internally displaced persons in DRC as of December 2017 (OCHA).

2019 timeline





	UNHCR Representation
	UNHCR Sub Office
	UNHCR Field Office
	UNHCR Field Unit
	Refugee Camp
	Refugee Center
	Refugee Settlement
	Main Area of Rwandan and Burundian Refugees
	Main Area of Central African Refugees
	Main Area of South Sudanese Refugees
	Limit of provinces



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

Foreword from Liz Ahua, UNHCR Representative in the DRC

This summary year end report on UNHCR's activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo highlights some key activities that UNHCR has implemented together with its partners and in close coordination with the DRC Government during 2019. In response to the daunting challenges faced by refugees, internally displaced persons in the DRC, as well as host communities, UNHCR offered vital support ranging from shelter for newly displaced persons, protection of persons who face human rights violations, to support to refugees to become self-reliant. The report also highlights needs that they are still facing in 2020, especially with conflicts in several areas of the DRC leading to further internal displacements and causing new emergency needs. I would like to take the opportunity to express gratitude to UNHCR's donors, whose generous support allows us to continue to assist and offer protection to those in need. Thank you for allowing UNHCR to continue the activities that are highlighted in this report.

Liz K. Ahua

Context in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Although a peaceful transition of power followed the presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in December 2018, the security and humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate, mainly in the east, in what is one of the most complex and long-standing humanitarian crises in Africa. While the Government made efforts to promote returns for refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs, areas in the east, already affected by Ebola, continued to experience attacks against civilians and a high prevalence of gender-based violence. Approximately 1.67 million people were newly displaced in 2019, while insecurity had an impact on aid delivery. UNHCR declared an internal L3 emergency for North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces in November 2019 to address the large-scale internal displacement and acute humanitarian needs.

Refugees continued to be welcomed within host communities and no serious human rights abuses against refugees were recorded. However, towards year's end, expulsions took place of 1,609 Rwandan nationals, some reported to be combatants. In Ituri and Haut Uele provinces, UNHCR started the relocation of South Sudanese asylum seekers from border areas to the settlements further inland, including to the new settlement of Bele (Haut Uele Province). In 2019, there was no major conflict in the Central African Republic, and only 1,254 new asylum seekers arrived in the DRC's Nord-Ubangi Province. Burundian and Rwandan refugees are mainly located in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, which have been the scene of armed conflict that is occasionally targeting refugees suspected of belonging to armed groups. Since August 2019, thousands of Congolese refugees have been returning from Lovua settlement in Angola, some spontaneously, others through the organised repatriation following the signature of a tripartite agreement between the governments of DR Congo, Angola and UNHCR. In late 2018 and early 2019, neighbouring Angola expelled over 400,000 people in several waves of an operation targeting illegal migrants. UNHCR identified a total of 43,352 expelled persons, among whom 3,268 refugees, and referred them to partners for transportation and assistance.

UNHCR' successfully implemented a multi-stakeholder approach, including: national and local authorities, international organizations, civil society partners (including faith-based organizations and academia), the private sector, media and the refugees and IDPs themselves.

UNHCR engaged in national development and peacebuilding planning, the DRC UNDAF, the Regional Initiative for Peace and security in the Great Lakes, and World Bank support for refugee-hosting areas through the IDA18, which was approved and will focus on refugees from the Central African Republic and their host communities.

UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) supported refugees, as well as IDPs and returnees, in their inclusion in Provincial Development plans, and by December 2019, UNHCR was co-lead with UNDP of one of three Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus pilots in an area that includes all population groups.

UNHCR is adopting a three prong-approach consisting of i) **strengthening and formalizing UNHCR's role in rapid response**; ii) **further expanding UNHCR's protection work in prevention, community-based approaches, resilience, and social cohesion** and iii) **durable solutions, including through a triple-nexus approach**. The three approaches aim to be mutually reinforcing and to tackle all phases of the displacement cycle, in a part of the country where cyclical displacements with peaks of large-scale displacements that overwhelm existing capacity are the norm.

UNHCR continues to support the Government in taking over responsibility for registration and effective management of the asylum system. As part of these efforts, a case management tool called proGres v4 was successfully launched, that will enable the Government to register asylum seekers and refugees. Improvement of Refugee Status Determination (RSD) systems started with a self-evaluation survey by the CNR.

In collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UNHCR is developing a strategy for refugees to become self-reliant in terms of food security and nutrition. Livelihood initiatives were implemented across the country through income-generating activities, but also and above all, the intensification of agricultural activities where refugees were given access to arable land. To support self-reliance projects with grants, UNHCR is using different cash assistance models, building on UNHCR and CNR's initiatives with the Central Bank of Congo.

UNHCR strengthened protection monitoring with a community-based model, with support available for local initiatives. Leadership of the Protection Cluster and of the Shelter and Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) task forces opened opportunities for increased connection with national (Government and civil society) actors.

To reinforce the civil documentation of refugees, UNHCR supported the construction/ refurbishment of buildings for the civil registry offices; improving working conditions for civil registrars, ensuring timely issuance of birth certificates thus benefitting refugee children born in the DRC, as well as Congolese children.

Main achievements in the DRC

PROTECTION



17,283 refugees benefitted from registration in 2019

UNHCR collaborates with national authorities on the **biometric registration** of refugees, and facilitates the provision of refugee ID documents by Congolese authorities, as well as access to civil registration. UNHCR continues to support the Government in taking over responsibility for registration and effective management of the asylum system. As part of these efforts, a case management tool called ProGres v4 was successfully launched, that will enable the Government to register asylum seekers and refugees. For **internally displaced persons**, (IDPs) there is a lack of a national system to register them and track their movements, however UNHCR carried out several operations leading to the registration of 239,504 IDPs in eastern DRC alone.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS



5,374 refugees were repatriated from the DRC by UNHCR in 2019

Of a total of 5,374 repatriated refugees, 58% returned to the Central African Republic, 40% to Rwanda, and 2% to Burundi. In addition, 23,779 Congolese refugees returned to the DRC in 2019, a majority from Angola (18,611), while 1,961 came back from Uganda and 1,482 from Tanzania. Where possible, returnees received cash or other forms of assistance from UNHCR. UNHCR mainly supports two forms of durable solutions for refugees in DRC; **voluntary repatriation** and **local integration**. Although some resettlement to third countries has been organized, this remains at a very limited scale. UNHCR has advocated for the issuance of residence cards for former refugees (Angolans, Rwandans). For **internally-displaced persons**, UNHCR advocates for the Government's adoption of the National Durable Solutions Strategy, and is conducting advocacy for the DRC to ratify the 2009 Kampala Convention and to transpose it to national law.

CHILD PROTECTION



1,352 unaccompanied or separated refugee children were registered from 2017 to 2019

To strengthen child protection, UNHCR and its partners conduct assessments to establish the best interest of unaccompanied and separated children, as well as detention monitoring. From 2017 to 2019, UNHCR and partners carried out 1,047 best interest assessments and 109 best interest determinations, which lead to tracing family members, family reunifications, placing the child in an institution or host family, or assisting children with specific needs. For **internally displaced children**, UNHCR monitors human rights violations committed against children, such as recruitment into armed groups, exploitation, early marriage, etc. In 2019, 13% of the almost 54,000 human rights violations recorded amongst IDPs were perpetrated against children.

PROTECTION



16,713 cases of SGBV were recorded amongst refugees and internally displaced persons from 2017 to 2019

This includes 1,200 cases recorded amongst refugees and 15,513 amongst IDPs. In response, 4,356 persons benefitted from medical, psychosocial, judicial or material assistance. For refugees, UNHCR monitors the protection environment (rule of law, civilian character of asylum, access to justice, non-refoulement), and specific needs, notably at borders and in refugee-hosting areas. Individual support and assistance is also provided, including advocacy and the preparation and submission of resettlement cases. UNHCR also facilitates access to justice through support for police, mobile courts, and provision of legal aid. For IDPs, UNHCR works with authorities to promote the full restoration of the rights of IDPs and returnees. UNHCR undertakes protection monitoring and related analysis, the results of which are a evidence-based source of information for the humanitarian community, and serve as the basis for advocacy to local and national authorities.

SHELTER



23,448 households received UNHCR shelter assistance in 2019

This includes **18,858 internally displaced households** and **4,590 refugee households**. About 40% of the assistance consisted in cash-for-shelter, while 60% was delivered in kind. A large majority of the refugees who received shelter assistance lived inside refugee camps (93%), leaving significant needs for those outside camps. Almost half of IDPs who received shelter assistance lived in Ituri Province (46%). 24% of the beneficiaries of shelter assistance lived in the Kasai provinces and included IDPs, returnees and members of the host community.

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION



186,970 camp-based refugees received food assistance every month in 2019

In collaboration with UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides food assistance to refugees in camps and settlements every month and has also provided food assistance to repatriated Congolese refugees. In collaboration with WFP and FAO, UNHCR is developing a strategy for refugees to become self-reliant in terms of food security and nutrition. Livelihood projects and income-generating activities were implemented across the country.

CASH BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)



178,000 individuals received cash assistance from UNHCR in 2019

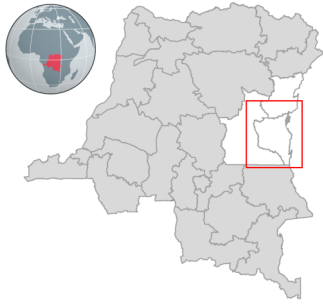
UNHCR provides different types of cash assistance, which range from multipurpose cash grants (MPGs) to cash-for-shelter or cash for protection. 33% of the cash assistance provided in 2019 consisted of MPGs for voluntary repatriations, 31% consisted of MPGs for refugees and IDPs, and 22% consisted of cash-for-shelter assistance.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT & SELF RELIANCE



17,665 young refugees were enrolled in a "Sport for Protection" project as of 31 Dec. 2019

The "Sport for Protection" project, funded by the Olympic Refugee Foundation, uses sport to achieve two main objectives amongst refugees aged 10-24. First, to enhance the protection of refugee girls, young women, boys and young men living in refugee camps against abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence including sexual and gender-based violence. Second, to enhance the protection of young refugees through strengthened social cohesion between refugees and host populations living close to the camps.



Burundian refugees

At the end of 2019, there were 47,570 Burundian refugees in the DRC, mostly in South Kivu province. Burundian refugees are mainly hosted in Lusenda refugee camp and Mulongwe settlement. There were 1,030 Burundian asylum-seekers awaiting their refugee status determination. Refugees in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement are integrated into local structures such as schools and health centres. In Mulongwe settlement, refugees build their own shelters, latrines and showers, with raw materials and technical support.

PROTECTION



66 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) identified

Incl. **41** survivors of rape



49
received medical assistance

52
received legal assistance

6
perpetrators were arrested

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)



2,901 shelters were built

1,268 Burundian refugee households received cash-for-shelter assistance to help them rehabilitate their shelters

SELF-RELIANCE



35,718 Burundian refugees received cash assistance to enhance their self-reliance

EDUCATION



17,500 primary and secondary school pupils received assistance for school fees



A Burundian refugee proudly shows the progress she has made in building her own house, using UNHCR's cash-for-shelter assistance in Mulongwe settlement, South Kivu Province. © UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans

Remaining needs in 2020

The overall **volatile security situation** in South Kivu Province, and the DRC's **presidential elections** at the end of 2018, had a negative impact on the implementation of UNHCR and partners' activities for Burundian refugees. Burundian refugees, particularly those living outside of camps, continued to face **violations of their rights**, such as arbitrary arrests and violations of their freedom of movement. Due to security constraints, it was not possible to complete the **physical verification** of all Burundian refugees living in host families outside Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement in 2019. 1,000 Burundian refugees were still awaiting verification and the renewal of their refugee identity cards in Fizi Territory (South Kivu Province). The absence of civil status offices in areas with high concentration of asylum seekers posed another challenge. The long **refugee status determination** procedures for asylum seekers resulted in overcrowded transit centres, with asylum seekers facing uncertainty and often settling outside transit centers.

In terms of **reproductive health and HIV**, the quality of services require improvement. Capacity building is needed for medical staff (training of junior doctors), as well as equipment. International procurement of essential medicines was a major challenge in 2019. Due to the delays in refugee status determination, many asylum-seekers could not sign up for the health insurance.

There is a need to **relocate refugees** from the overcrowded Lusenda camp to Mulongwe settlement, to reconstruct shelters that were destroyed by extreme weather in 2019, and to rehabilitate bridges to facilitate access to Lusenda camp. Insufficient **school infrastructures** result in overcrowded classrooms for Burundian refugee children.

There is a continuous **lack of land available for agriculture** around Lusenda camp, while there are tensions with local communities on land issues around Mulongwe settlement. The **lack of development actors** in the area continue to be a challenge that hinders progress towards self-reliance and sustainable peaceful coexistence with local communities. In addition, a **reduction of UNHCR's budget** in 2019 meant that self-reliance activities were limited in scope and further self-reliance activities are needed.



Refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR)

In 2019, only 1,254 new arrivals from CAR were pre-registered in Nord-Ubangi Province. As of 31 December 2019, there were **171,234** Central African refugees in the DRC. **53% were women** and 47% men, **61% were children**, 37% adults and 2% elderly. **65% lived in rural areas** of the provinces of Bas-Uele, Nord-Ubangi and Sud-Ubangi. 34.5% lived in camps and less than 1% in urban areas. 632 Central African asylum seekers were awaiting the decision on their asylum claim.

PROTECTION



144 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) identified
Incl. **94** survivors of rape



85% received psychosocial counselling

41% were referred to the police for legal follow-up

94% of rape survivors received medical assistance

3,986 persons with specific needs (mainly elderly persons and persons with disabilities) received assistance



160 received cash for shelter and latrine construction

180 received assistance to launch income-generating activities

3 tricycles were provided to persons with disabilities

SELF-RELIANCE



1,250 refugees from CAR received seeds and agricultural tools to sustain a farming livelihood. **452** members of the host community also received this assistance.

254 refugees (and 86 locals) received vocational training, which can range from tailoring to carpentry or baking.

EDUCATION



1,724 refugee pupils had the cost of their end-of-year exams covered by UNHCR, both at primary and secondary level.

Over 7,500 pupils benefitted from “Instant Network Schools” in four refugee camps. These schools enable pupils to follow lessons on tablets, teaching them basic IT skills but also facilitating the learning process.

One new school was built outside a refugee camp, so that refugees and locals can learn together, promoting peaceful coexistence.



Two refugee pupils from the Central African Republic attend class at an “Instant Network School” in Inke refugee camp, Nord Ubangi Province. © UNHCR/Hugh Kinsella Cunningham

Remaining needs in 2020

Budget constraints limited the support to refugees living outside the camps, who constitute about 70% of the Central African refugee population. As a result, challenges remain significant both for refugees and host communities **outside of camps**, which lacked sufficient infrastructure to cover the needs of the local population and bear the burden of refugees, who outnumber the local population in some areas. Protection challenges remain significant, especially for refugees living outside of camps:

- **Physical inaccessibility** prevented the biometric registration of refugees in some localities in Bas-Uélé Province.
- The absence or remoteness of **civil registration services** in several refugee-hosting areas has not allowed the registration of all refugee children born in the DRC.
- Weakness in **family tracing** due to limited capacity in the field.
- Insufficient prevention and response activities for **sexual and gender-based violence** outside the camps.
- Insufficient support for **primary and secondary education** outside the camps.
- Lack of **vocational training** for young adolescents/ adults.
- Insufficient resources for **livelihoods** and income-generating activities.



South Sudanese refugees

In 2019, Haut-Uélé and Ituri provinces received 7,121 new refugees and asylum seekers from South Sudan. Meanwhile, there was a decrease of the overall number of South Sudanese refugees in DRC because some 16,000 persons were deactivated from the database after not showing at verification exercises. The South Sudanese refugee population is composed of 53% women and girls and 47% men and boys. The majority are children (64%) while 3% are elderly. South Sudanese refugees are located in Haut-Uele and Ituri provinces, where 37% live in Biringi and Meri settlements, and 63% with the host community. At the end of the year, eight South Sudanese asylum-seekers were still awaiting a decision on their asylum claim.

PROTECTION



198 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) identified



100% received psycho-social support

83

were referred for medical care

34

received support for socio-economic reintegration

25

were referred for legal and judicial support

4,561 South Sudanese refugees received civil documentation in 2019.

10,308 attestations of family composition were distributed to South Sudanese refugee families.

SELF-RELIANCE



67 hectares of land were allocated to South Sudanese refugees to enable their farming activities.

2,222 persons received seeds and agricultural tools

EDUCATION



8,878 pupils received assistance to access education, including 1,511 Congolese pupils.

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)



940 new households received shelters

Construction of:

- 4** waystations
- 3** hangars for medical screening
- 3** hangars for registration

14 bridges were rehabilitated to ensure access to refugees in need in remote locations

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)



20.8 litres/person/day is the average amount of water available in South Sudanese refugee settlements.*

*This meets the humanitarian standard of 20 litres/person/day.

515 latrines and showers were built using a cash-based approach. Refugees received money and materials to build the facilities themselves.

HEALTH



5 health centers, catering for both refugees and locals, were rehabilitated and provided with medical equipment.



A newly-arrived South Sudanese refugee child is being registered at the Transit Center of Aru, Ituri Province, in March 2019. © UNHCR/Siegfried Modola

Remaining needs in 2020

Although certain activities have contributed to improving South Sudanese refugees' well-being, not all **school-age children** could be sent to school. In primary schools, assistance covered only 51% of school-age refugees, while no refugee children attended secondary level.

Also, there is a need for at least **78 additional classrooms** in Bele, Biringi and Aba, with so far five schools rehabilitated during the past two years.

The most pressing need remains the **lack of shelters** for refugees. Of the 10,418 households (consisting of 34,808 refugees) in all the settlements, only 58% have access to adequate shelter. There is a need for 4,376 additional shelters.

Efforts should also be made to improve **access to healthcare** by making medicines available in time, but also by integrating the health zones of Aba, Adi and Doruma in the national HIV/AIDS prevention plan.

The **economic empowerment program** should also be further supported to enable refugees to avoid dependency on humanitarian aid.

The refugee settlement of Meri, in Haut Uele Province, is **overcrowded** as 35,000 people lived there as of the end of 2019, while it has a capacity of 20,000 people. Relocations to the new settlement of Bele, which started in 2019, aim to alleviate Meri, while refugees from the area of Dungu.

Internally displaced persons

The context in eastern DRC was marked by continued violence by armed groups, the DRC army's operations against them, and serious human rights violations, causing increased population displacements. On 27 November 2019, UNHCR declared an internal L3 emergency for North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri provinces. UNHCR's reinforced its protection monitoring and community-based work while also providing shelter support and Core Relief Items. In Kasai and Tanganyika, UNHCR also provided assistance and protection support to displaced persons as well as those trying to reintegrate in their places of origin.

PROTECTION



53,784 human rights violations were documented
Incl. **6,992** cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)



At least **10,487** individuals received assistance

Including **2,898** survivors of SGBV

312 community-based protection groups* were created or supported

239,504 internally displaced persons benefited from registration in eastern DRC alone

Registration facilitates the collection of individual information on IDPs, which helps UNHCR and partners better tailor their response. Not all IDPs can be registered as many are in inaccessible areas, or means are insufficient to register them. The number of IDPs registered does not reflect the total number of persons who are internally displaced.

157,433 persons were reached by peaceful coexistence campaigns

**Community-based protection groups are crucial points of contact between displaced communities, and UNHCR and partners. Their volunteer members receive training and technical support, and help raise alerts on human rights violations, and sensitize their peers on prevention.*

CHILD PROTECTION



11,288 internally displaced children were assisted in obtaining birth certificates.

SELF-RELIANCE



2,098 households participated in income-generating activities.

198 SGBV survivors or women at risk participated in socio-economic reinsertion project

61,258 households received cash assistance across DRC. Incl. **1,618** persons with specific needs (PSN).

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)



25,045 internally displaced households received shelter assistance.

23,000 internally displaced households received CRI kits.



Incl. **8,153** women and girls of childbearing age who received menstrual hygiene kits.

Remaining needs in 2020

In eastern DRC, there continues to be an immediate **risk of loss of lives**, and of a rapid expansion of epidemics such as cholera. There is an increased need for **shelter** to address overcrowding, and for core relief items.

Women and girls are at increased **risk of sexual violence and exploitation**, while **access to justice** for survivors is not possible due to a lack of courts and magistrates.

There is no **national system to register and track** displaced persons, which poses significant operational difficulties given the vastness of the displacement areas.

A solid presence of **development actors** is necessary to tackle the chronic problems that trigger displacements and strengthen the resilience of IDPs.

There is a continuous need to allocate land to expand displacement sites and **build shelters** and allow IDPs to cultivate and **increase their self-reliance**.

Psychosocial services are needed in conflict zones where SGBV rates are particularly high as well awareness-raising amongst the civilian population for prevention.



A displaced woman gets help from a UNHCR staff to transport her newly-received core relief items in the displacement site of Kasenyi, Ituri Province. © UNHCR/John Wessels

Other refugees and asylum-seekers

In 2019, UNHCR's strategy for refugees and asylum-seekers focused on empowering the almost 4,000 refugees living in urban areas (as of 31 December 2018) and finding durable solutions for the 214,000 Rwandan refugees. The latter have lived in the DRC for more than two decades and have seen assistance from UNHCR decreasing. Activities for this population group were implemented mainly in North and South Kivu provinces, and focused on legal and administrative protection with the aim of promoting access to fair and equitable trials, and access to legal remedies. The access to refugee status determination procedures was enhanced, while UNHCR also worked on access to civil status documentation, including identity documents, and on improving the quality of registration.

UNHCR promoted access to primary education for refugee children living in urban areas as well as coverage of refugees by health insurance. UNHCR implemented activities to empower refugees in urban areas were carried out, such as income-generating activities and the enrollment of young people in vocational training, as well as their access to employment opportunities. Awareness-raising activities were carried out to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and to create a favorable child protection environment. In addition, financial assistance was provided to persons with specific needs, while UNHCR and the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) supported refugees' inclusion in Provincial Development plans.

PROTECTION



45 survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) were identified in the cities of Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Goma



28
received assistance for socio-economic reintegration

17
received medical assistance

4
received legal assistance

12,376 Rwandan refugees had their refugee certificates renewed in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces

EDUCATION



8 scholarships were obtained from two private banks, for 7 secondary school pupils and one university student.

1,853

refugee pupils received assistance to access education in the cities of Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Goma and Bukavu.

Incl. **43** students enrolled in tertiary education in Kinshasa.

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)



6 community infrastructures were rehabilitated to improve peaceful coexistence in areas with high numbers of Rwandan refugees.

Incl. **2** health centers, **3** water sources and **1** primary school, used by both refugees and locals in North Kivu.



Claire fled her home during the Rwandan genocide in 1994. She moved to Bukavu, South Kivu Province and decided to follow her dream of becoming a chef. She now has two restaurants and employs 17 people. © UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans

HEALTH



1,474 refugees were enrolled in health insurances in cities in North Kivu and South Kivu provinces.

Remaining needs in 2020

The porous borders in the DRC make it challenging to identify asylum-seekers arriving through unofficial routes and to maintain the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. The centralization of the processing of refugee status determination files causes delays and bureaucratic bottlenecks, which do not allow the applicants to be informed of decision processes within the legal deadline of 6 months.

Two years after the registration of Rwandan refugees in the DRC, most are still present in North and South Kivu provinces. The voluntary repatriation operation for Rwandan refugees had a limited success, due to problems of physical access (bad roads or remote locations), insecurity, and refugees' limited enthusiasm to return. For Rwandan refugees who no longer wish to return to Rwanda, legal and socio-economic integration strategies need to be implemented by the Government.

Meanwhile, urban refugees continue to express the need for assistance, for their children to access secondary and tertiary education and provide a better future to their children. However, these requests remain unmet due to a lack of funding. Some chronic illnesses and other health problems are not covered either by urban refugees' mutual health insurance, which only covers their health needs twice a year, while between 40% and 50% of costs must be covered by the beneficiary.

Statelessness

UNHCR's work towards ending statelessness in the DRC focuses on three objectives; strengthening civil registration and civil status documentation, improving the identification of statelessness, and promoting that international and regional legal instruments applied in the DRC. In terms of civil registration and civil status documentation, UNHCR conducted advocacy with the Interior Ministry to add information on statelessness in the civil registration reform. UNHCR also facilitated birth registrations across the DRC. Capacity building was conducted for civil registry offices, and a forum on statelessness was organized in North Kivu province. The DRC also made pledges for the ratification of the UN conventions, and decreed the establishment of an Interinstitutional Technical Committee to combat statelessness. There has been significant progress in the fight against statelessness; two draft laws were submitted on the accession to the 1954 and 1961 conventions, a technical meeting was held with the Congolese Law Reform for the harmonization of the Congolese legal framework, a civil society network was established to fight statelessness, and an analysis of the DRC's legal framework was finalized.

9,400 birth certificates were delivered to children, including refugees, IDPs, returnees

4 civil registration offices were built to facilitate the deliverance of civil status documentation

21 civil registration offices were provided supplies and equipment in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri

Remaining needs

In the DRC, **forced displacement** remained a major factor in heightening risks of statelessness in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu provinces. Archive systems in civil registry offices are virtually non-existent, as it is difficult to centralize data manually, especially when civil registry offices are vandalized during conflicts. The **loss of documentation** during displacement makes it difficult to verify someone's data. Thousands of children are in need of **birth registration** and birth certificates. It is paramount to strengthen the capacity of authorities, civil registration officers and of the population located in remote areas to facilitate information sharing, ensure constant data archiving, and raise awareness on the importance of birth registration. UNHCR organized a **forum on statelessness** in North Kivu province in 2019, but more forums are needed in different regions to work with key actors on the prevention of statelessness.

Returnees

Since the end of 2018, there has been an increase in the number of spontaneous returns of Congolese refugees living in Uganda according to the DGM, the DRC Agency of Migration. As of December 31, 2019, 1,961 Congolese refugees have returned spontaneously from refugee camps in Uganda. UNHCR and its Government partner, the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) carried out several assessments in 2019 to identify protection needs of returnees. A significant number of spontaneous returnees experienced problems with legal documentation and transportation to their return areas. In April 2019, UNHCR and the Rwandan Ministry of Emergency Management held a cross-border meeting together with the CNR. It was then reported that 65% of the Congolese refugee population in Kiziba refugee camp (Rwanda) expressed their desire to return to DRC. In the Kasai region, UNHCR carried out protection activities and supported the repatriation of Congolese refugees from Angola. 18,611 Congolese returnees from Angola were assisted (of these, 15,601 were spontaneous returnees and 3,010 had returned through UNHCR facilitated voluntary repatriations). Awareness-raising and capacity building on peaceful coexistence were carried out to promote the reintegration of returnees. Cash assistance, medical and food support were allocated to returnees.

PROTECTION



23,779 Congolese refugees returned to DRC in 2019, including **17,346** from Angola.

17,137 persons who returned from Angola to the DRC's Kasai region received cash assistance.

12 participative theatre plays were organized to raise awareness on peaceful coexistence amongst **4,370** returnees in the Kasai region.

SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)



2 transit centers were built to receive refugees on their way back from Angola.



Congolese children look out of the truck that is bringing them home to the DRC, after years living as refugees in Angola. © UNHCR/John Wessels

Remaining needs in 2020

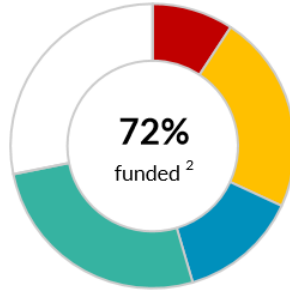
More systematic collection of data on returnees is needed in order to ensure **reintegration** programmes for Congolese returnees. A tripartite agreement is in place between the governments of the DRC, Rwanda and UNHCR, which provides a framework for the voluntary **repatriation of Rwandan and Congolese refugees**. However, the agreement has not been fully put into practice for Congolese refugees due to the precarious security situation in the eastern DRC. For the Kasai, it is important to: implement **socio-economic reintegration** activities including vocational training and livelihood activities, train staff, strengthen partners and community structures capacities, take into account the areas which are not covered by monitors or partners and increase funding for appropriate responses.



FUNDING UPDATE | 2019

\$155.9 million

UNHCR's financial requirements 2019 ¹



DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO, REG OFF

as of 31 January 2020

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)



Neema, a South Sudanese refugee, sells the cabbage that she managed to grow thanks to new agricultural techniques that she learned as part of the assistance for income-generating activities, which she received from UNHCR. © UNHCR/John Wessels

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UNHCR DRC

YEAR END REPORT SUMMARY

2019

January—December 2019



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