

Democratic Republic of the Congo

1 – 15 December 2019

This document provides a mid-month update on major developments between the publication of UNHCR's monthly Operational Update.

Refugees

- As of 15 December, **2,086 Central African refugees (444 households)** were voluntarily repatriated to the Central African Republic (CAR), as part of an operation launched by UNHCR on 21 November. A total of around 3,500 refugees will be repatriated through this operation. In the meantime, new repatriation candidates have expressed their intention of going back to the CAR in 2020.
- From 5 September to 15 December, UNHCR and partner CNR conducted a **verification of the number of South Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers** living in settlements and reception centers in Haut Uele and Ituri provinces, with the aim of updating UNHCR's database. UNHCR found that **33,701 refugees and asylum-seekers** (10,248 households) were living in settlements and reception centers in both provinces. The verification also recorded 1,770 persons with specific needs, including 84 children at risk, 619 elderly persons at risk, and 138 persons with serious medical conditions.
- The result of this verification shows a **significant drop** compared to the almost 48,000 refugees (let alone asylum-seekers) who were registered in settlements and reception centers in August. This could be due to a combination of factors, notably that some refugees may have moved to anglophone Uganda from francophone DRC, or that some were absent during the verification. UNHCR is following up on the latter.
- Following the start of a military operation by the DRC army against militias in eastern DRC, UNHCR received an increased number of **Rwandan candidates for Voluntary Repatriation** to Rwanda, due to fighting taking place in areas hosting Rwandan refugees. In addition, some 2,100 persons (among them an estimated 648 refugees, women and children included) were **expelled to Rwanda** on 15 and 21 December, under the assumption by the DRC army that they were combatants. UNHCR is monitoring the situation.
- UNHCR and CNR **biometrically registered 882 Burundian asylum-seekers** (273 families) at three different Transit Centers (TCs), namely 65 in Mongemonge, 614 in Sange, and 203 in Kavimvira. They will remain in the TCs until they are recognized as refugees by CNR. Most of them arrived in DRC in late 2019, fleeing political tension and violence around the upcoming May 2020 elections in Burundi.
- UNHCR handed over a **civil registration office** to Congolese authorities in Pambwa, Mobayi Mbongo Territory, Nord Ubangi Province, to ensure proper birth registrations and the delivery of birth certificates, and reduce the risk of statelessness. The area hosts many Central African refugees in and around Inke camp, many of whom do not have access to birth registration, exposing babies to remain undocumented and to risk statelessness. This is the fourth office handed over by UNHCR in Nord and Sud Ubangi.

Congolese returnees

- The **voluntary repatriation of Congolese refugees from Angola was interrupted** in December, due to poor weather and road conditions. As of the end of November, 2,588 Congolese refugees had been repatriated to DRC from Angola, through UNHCR's organized repatriation process.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

- On 12 and 13 December in Ituri Province, unidentified armed men attacked the villages of Mutanga and Kafe (Djugu Territory) killing 14 civilians and leading to the **displacement of an estimated 65 households** to the neighboring locality of Nyamamba, while others from Kafe fled to Uganda.
- This insecurity is **affecting the return movements** of displaced people going home, a trend that had been observed in previous weeks in Djugu Territory. Indeed among those killed, seven had returned to their villages on 5 December from Kasenyi displacement site.

- In the second week of December, UNHCR and partners conducted a joint mission to **evaluate protection needs in displacement sites on the Katoto-Lita axis**, in Ituri Province's Djugu Territory. According to the report, 3,991 households were living in the Sesele (566), Luvangire (632), Bahwere (447), Mbala (900), Tsere (359), Landa (237) and Nyama-Ziza (850) sites. Communities reported shelter and site management as their biggest needs, followed by WASH, food, health, hygiene kits for women and girls, and non-food items such as kitchen sets.
- From 19 November to 12 December in Bunia (Ituri Province), 585 households (2,810 individuals) were **relocated from the General Hospital site to the new IDP site of Kigonze**. Some 2,250 households (9,000 individuals) remain to be relocated to the new site.
- In the second week of December, UNHCR distributed 304 mats, 306 blankets, 169 menstrual hygiene kits, 184 jerrycans and 262 laundry soaps in the new displacement site of Kigonze, in Bunia (Ituri Province).
- In North Kivu Province, following the storming of the townhall and of MONUSCO's base in Beni at the end of November, and evacuations of humanitarian staff, essential **UNHCR staff are starting to be redeployed**.
- In the first half of December in North Kivu Province, elements of the DRC army **raided displacement sites** in Kibundi and Katale (Rutshuru Territory), threatening the civilian character of displacement sites. They looted IDPs' goods, in retaliation for displaced people's alleged collaboration with armed groups.
- In response to recent displacement towards IDP sites in Masisi Territory, UNHCR and partners completed **213 emergency shelters**, while 103 are under construction in Bukombo and Kalinga sites.
- As of 8 December, UNHCR's **shelter project for returned IDPs** in North Kivu Province, implemented by partner AIDES, was completed. 1,700 family shelters were completed in return areas in Masisi, Rutshuru and Lubero territories. In Beni Territory, the construction and equipment of **four classrooms** at the Mwangaza school was also completed.

Clusters and Working Groups

- During its plenary meeting on 6 December, the Protection Cluster (led by UNHCR) exposed its priorities for 2020, which included continued advocacy for the **nationalisation of the Kampala Convention** in DRC, and for a **reinforced response to Housing, Land and Property (HLP)** issues in DRC.
- The Child Protection Working Group (a sub-group of the Protection Cluster) established **common vulnerability criteria** for the implementation of child protection projects in areas affected by Ebola. The CPWG also finalized a **glossary of vulnerabilities specific to children**, for a better understanding of child protection terms.

External / Donor Relations

As of 9 December 2019

Donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2019

United States of America (32.3 M) | CERF (3.7 M) | European Union (3.2 M) | Japan (2.5 M) | Belgium (2.3 M) | Sweden (2.2 M) | Finland (1.7 M) | France (1.6 M) | Canada (0.76 M) | United Nations Foundation (0.43 M) | Australia for UNHCR (0.43 M) | International Olympic Committee (0.27 M) | Spain (0.19 M) | UNAIDS (0.03 M) | Private donors (0.14 M)

Major donors of regional or other funds with soft earmarking 2019

Germany (32 M) | United States of America (27.8 M) | Private donors Australia (12.5 M) | Canada (6.8 M) | Private donors Germany (6.2 M) | Sweden (4 M) | Private donors Spain (3 M) | Norway (2.8 M) | Private donors Republic of Korea (2.6 M)

Major donors of un-earmarked funds in 2019

Sweden (99.8 M) | Private donors Spain (73.8 M) | United Kingdom (44.6 M) | Norway (44.5 M) | Netherlands (43.1 M) | Private donors Republic of Korea (37.9 M) | Germany (26.7 M) | Japan (25.7 M) | Denmark (24.4 M) | Private donors Japan (20.5 M) | Private donors Italy (17.5 M) | Switzerland (15.1 M) | France (14 M) | Private donors Sweden (12.3 M) | Private donors USA (11.7 M) | Ireland (10.2 M) | Italy (10 M)

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