

Southern Africa

January 2023

UNHCR serves 8.4 million people across 16 southern African countries, including 1.1 million refugees and asylum-seekers, mainly from Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan.

UNHCR contributes to protection and solutions for 7.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the region who have been forced to flee due to conflict or climate-related disasters – 5.8 million are in the DRC and 1.1 million are in Mozambique.

By the end of December 2022, around 21,000 refugees voluntarily repatriated to their countries of origin from asylum countries in southern Africa. UNHCR also assisted some 3,000 people to depart on resettlement in 2022.

KEY FIGURES (as of 31 January)

783,473

Refugees

281,689

Asylum-seekers

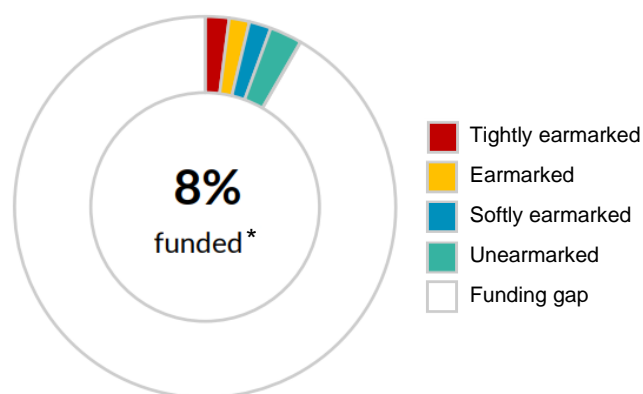
7,272,145

Internally displaced persons

FUNDING (as of 31 January)

USD 471.5 million

UNHCR's financial requirements in Southern Africa for 2023

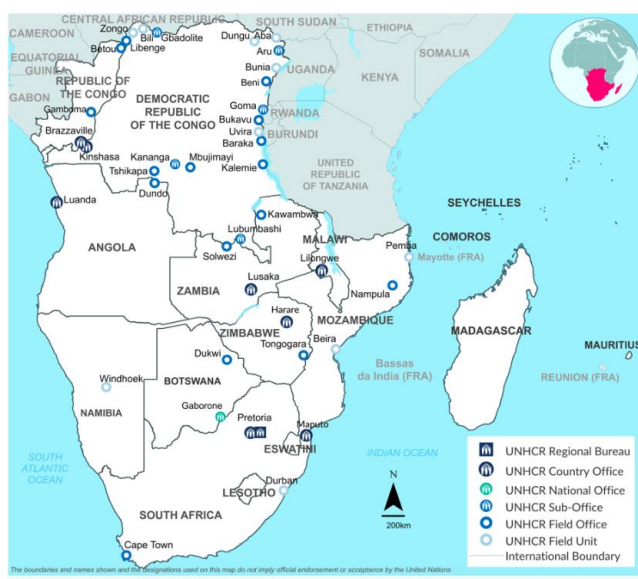


* Including indicative allocation of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions.

PRESENCE AND STAFF (as of 31 January)*

Regional Bureau and HQ	92
Angola	43
Democratic Republic of the Congo	434
Malawi	77
Mozambique	123
Republic of the Congo	47
South Africa Multi-Country Office (Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa)	81
Zambia	101
Zimbabwe	43
TOTAL	1,041

*Figures reflect regular UNHCR staff and affiliate workforce.



Regional Overview

Context: As of January 2023, Southern Africa was home to **8.4 million people UNHCR serves**. The region comprises the largest IDP situation in sub-Saharan Africa, while refugee camps and settlements in multiple countries, along with some urban areas, host long-term refugee populations – some displaced for many decades. **Complex crises** cause millions to flee their homes and prevent their safe return. The situation is further complicated by the **growing impact of climate change and natural disasters**.



Refugees from the DRC receive support from the Government, UNHCR, and partners in the Republic of the Congo. ©UNHCR/Ibrahima Diane

Emergency Situations: About two-thirds of forcibly displaced people in Southern Africa have fled conflict in the **DRC**, mainly in the eastern parts of the country, where violence, compounded by natural disasters, has internally displaced 5.8 million people and caused some 1.2 million to seek asylum. **In northern Mozambique**, more than 1.1 million people are internally displaced, including those affected by tropical storms and cyclones.

Solutions: **Local integration and voluntary repatriation** are the focus of solutions efforts in the region, as opportunities for **resettlement** remain limited to a small percentage of the population. Options to expand complementary pathways are being explored. **Steps towards ending statelessness** in the region include reforming nationality laws, policies, and procedures and supporting access to documentation.

Strategic Directions

The High Commissioner's Strategic Directions, renewed for 2022-2026, continue to guide UNHCR's efforts in Southern Africa to enact sustainable achievements for forcibly displaced and stateless people and the States and communities that host them. Priorities within the scope of the Strategic Directions include:

- Protect** **Strengthen** the protection environment; **improve** the quality of registration and information management; **reinforce** asylum systems and legal protection frameworks.
- Respond** **Strengthen** emergency preparedness; **innovate** to improve operational responses.
- Include** **Enhance** partnerships; **invigorate** the humanitarian-development nexus.
- Empower** **Empower** refugee communities; **improve** two-way communication; **support** decision-making.
- Solve** **Promote** and **facilitate** comprehensive solutions; **alleviate** poverty; **foster** self-reliance.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support of donors who contributed to its operations in the Southern Africa region with unearmarked and earmarked funds in 2023: African Development Bank Group | Algeria | Australia | Austria | Belgium | Bulgaria | Canada | CERF | Denmark | Estonia | European Union | Finland | Germany | Japan | Iceland | Ireland | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | Netherlands | New Zealand | Norway | Open Society Foundation for South Africa | Philippines | Profuturo | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Sweden | Switzerland | Thailand | Türkiye | United Kingdom | UN Peacebuilding Fund | UN Programme On HIV/AIDS | Uruguay | Private donors

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