

**THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF THE CONGO
REGIONAL REFUGEE
RESPONSE PLAN**

January 2019 - December 2020



CREDITS

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CONCEPT DESIGN

UNHCR, Office of the Regional Refugee Coordinator for the DRC Situation, in Kinshasa, DRC. With the support of Information Management Unit at UNHCR, Regional Representation in Kinshasa, DRC.

The maps in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of UNHCR concerning the legal status of any country or territory or area, of its authorities, or the delimitation of borders or boundaries.

All statistics are provisional and subject to change. Except where indicated otherwise, all population figures provided in this report are as of September 30, 2018.

WEB PORTAL For more information on the DRC situation go to: [UNHCR operational portal - DRC situation](#)

COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Zambia. Congolese refugee woman holds her two-week-old baby outside her shelter at Mantapala refugee settlement.
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Table of Content

FOREWORD	4
REGIONAL OVERVIEW	5
Introduction	7
Beneficiary Population*	9
Regional Protection and Population Needs	10
Regional Response Strategy and Priorities	14
Planning Assumptions	18
Coordination	18
Regional Financial Requirements by Agency	19
ANGOLA	22
Background and Achievements	24
Beneficiary Population	25
Needs and Vulnerabilities	25
Response Strategy and Priorities	26
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	28
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	31
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	31
BURUNDI	34
Background and Achievements	36
Beneficiary Population	36
Needs and Vulnerabilities	37
Response Strategy and Priorities	37
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	39
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	40
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	40
THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO	42
Background and Achievements	44
Beneficiary Population	44
Needs and Vulnerabilities	44
Response Strategy and Priorities	45
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	46
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	48
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	48
RWANDA	50
Background and Achievements	52
Beneficiary Population	53
Needs and Vulnerabilities	53
Response Strategy and Priorities	55
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	57
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	58

2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	58
UGANDA	60
Background and Achievements	62
Beneficiary Population	64
Needs and Vulnerabilities	64
Response Strategy and Priorities	73
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	76
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	79
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	80
THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA	82
Background and Achievements	84
Beneficiary Population	84
Needs and Vulnerabilities	84
Response Strategy and Priorities	88
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	89
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	91
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	91
ZAMBIA	94
Background and Achievements	96
Beneficiary Population	97
Needs and Vulnerabilities	97
Response Strategy and Priorities	99
Planned Response for 2019 and 2020	101
2019 Financial Requirements Summary	104
2019-2020 Financial Requirements Summary	104
ANNEX	105
Regional Financial Overview 2019-2020	106

Foreword

In 2018, the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) drastically worsened, spreading to previously unaffected areas and impacting the Great Lakes region. The ongoing conflicts across much of eastern and central DRC continue to cause significant displacement, damage to property and tragic loss of human life.

While the majority of displaced people remain within DRC, tens of thousands of new refugees have fled across borders since the beginning of 2018. In particular, refugee flows to Burundi, Uganda and Zambia have increased significantly. New arrivals in those countries have joined refugees from previous waves of violence, the majority being women and children, many of whom are crossing borders unaccompanied or separated.



The unstable security and socio-economic situation in the DRC was further aggravated by an unpredictable political environment and outbreaks such as the Ebola virus disease. The risk of further displacement remains high, and thus would have a disastrous impact on the precarious humanitarian situation and raise the specter of increased regional instability if the crisis is not contained. The underlying drivers of humanitarian needs, including protection, are not expected to change in the coming year. At the same time, DRC continues to host over half a million refugees from neighbouring countries, many of whom have been displaced due to waves of ongoing violence.

Looking forward, the 2019-2020 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) for the DRC situation aims at addressing the needs of new arrivals of Congolese refugees in the region, and those in protracted situations. By supporting livelihoods opportunities and through a resilience-based approach, refugees will be able to contribute to the development of their host countries, and of their country of origin upon their return. Given the limited capacity of host communities to support the impact of massive numbers of refugees, the response strategy will also address the needs of local populations, strengthening peaceful co-existence and building social cohesion.

Effective interagency cooperation and coordination is imperative to provide strong leverage for peaceful solutions, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and support to sustainable development. As such, we are pleased to see that the number of RRRP partners has increased from 44 in 2018 to 57 for 2019-2020. However, despite the gravity of the crisis, the refugee response in 2018 was underfunded, raising concerns over basic needs, including food security, health, access to education, and other minimum standards that are often not met, such as proper accommodation in overcrowded refugee settlements.

In the spirit of solidarity, I would like to invite the international community, including UN agencies, international and national NGOs, government counterparts, and donors, to reaffirm their commitment to support the persons in need. We have a shared responsibility to refugees and host communities, to contribute to the delivery of protection and humanitarian assistance, and seek opportunities for development.

Only by joint efforts can we tackle the challenges and achieve positive and lasting results.

Thank you for your support!

Ann Encontre

UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator for the DRC Situation

PLANNED RESPONSE

1.1 M

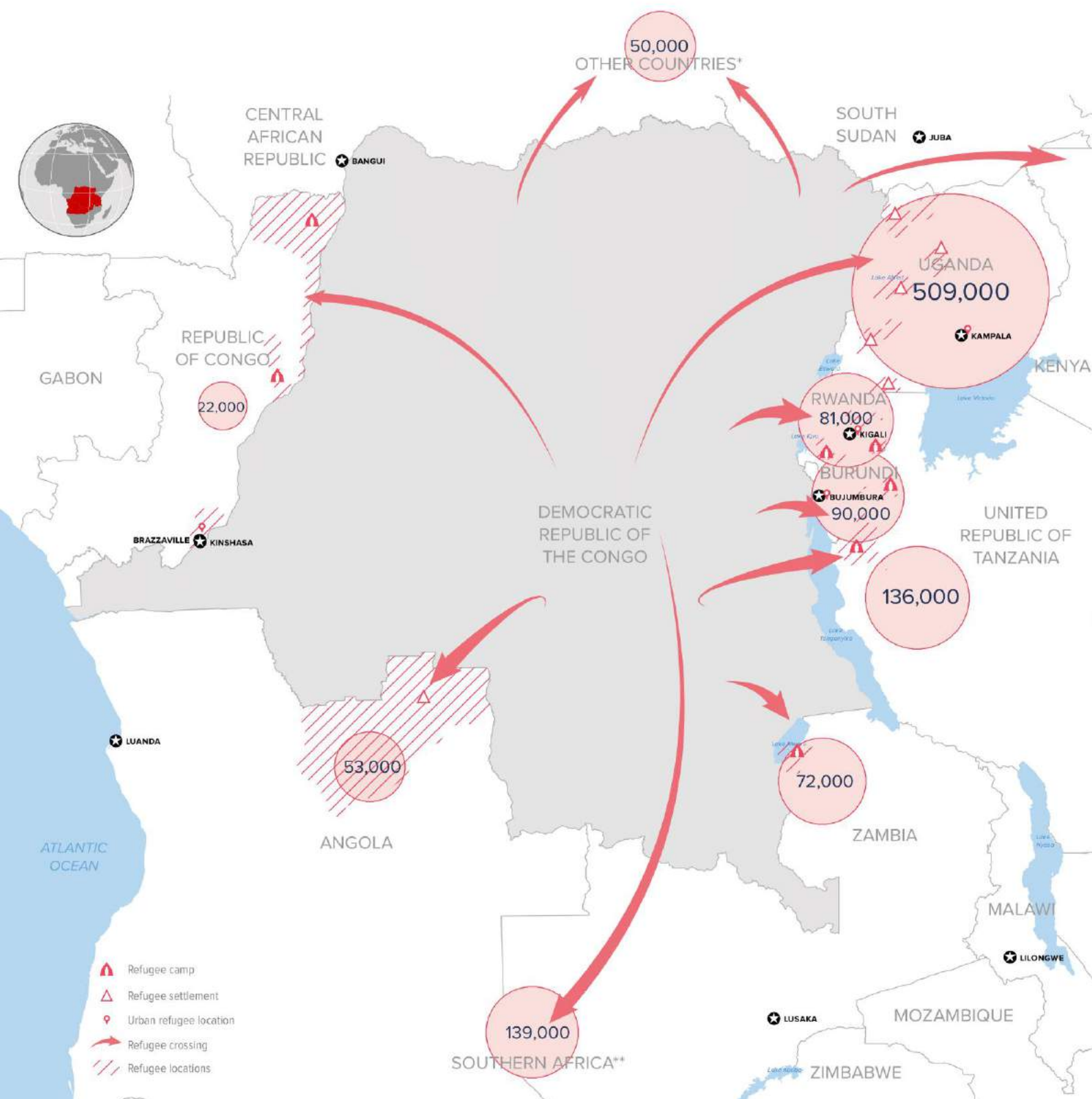
PROJECTED REFUGEE
POPULATION BY 2019

US\$ 743 M

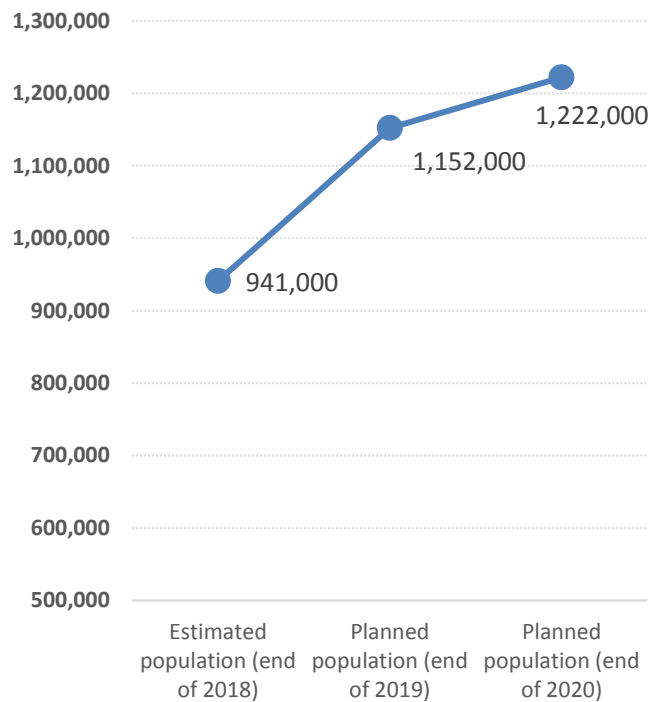
REQUIREMENTS FOR
2019

57

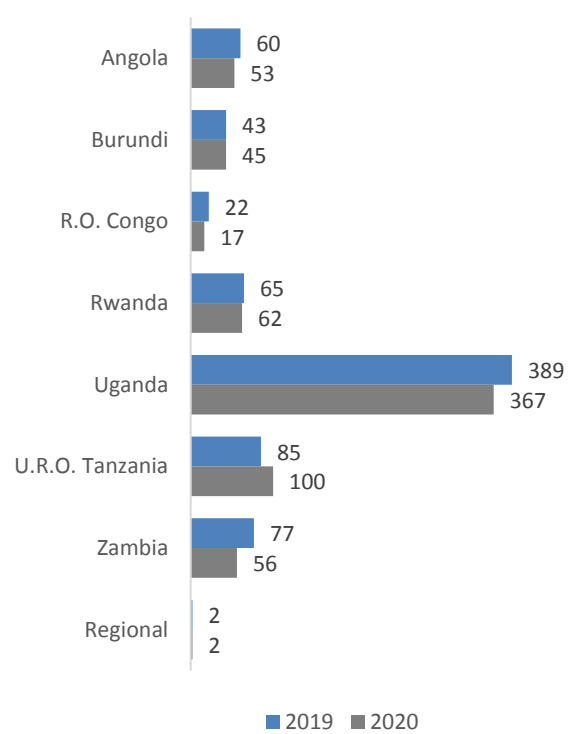
PARTNERS INVOLVED



Refugee Population Trends



Requirements | In millions US\$



Uganda. Refugees fleeing violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) wait at Sebagoro emergency centre in Uganda for buses to take them to Kyangwali refugee settlement. @UNHCR / Michele Sibiloni



Regional Overview

Introduction

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a protection crisis, fueled by ethnic and political conflicts. The situation has drastically worsened over the course of 2018, spreading to previously unaffected areas with a dramatic impact on the Great Lakes region. The on-going conflicts across much of eastern and central DRC have caused and continue to cause significant population displacement, human rights violations, including targeted attacks against civilians, a high prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence, and loss of human life and property. According to OCHA, the consequences have been devastating for 1.37 million internally displaced persons who are in need of humanitarian assistance. At the same time the DRC hosts over 533,000 refugees from Rwanda, the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Burundi who fled their countries seeking international protection.

While the main part of the displaced population has remained in the country, the Congolese refugee population in the region has increased with over 130,000 new refugees leaving the DRC since the beginning of 2018. In particular, refugee flows to Burundi, Uganda and Zambia have increased significantly, while several thousand refugees have fled further south towards Southern Africa and beyond. New arrivals have joined refugees from previous waves of violence, bringing the total number of Congolese refugees in Africa to some 765,000, as at September 2018¹. The majority of Congolese refugees are women and children and nearly 55 per cent are under 18, many crossing borders unaccompanied or separated from family members. About 8 per cent of the total population are persons with specific needs, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), persons living with HIV and AIDS and persons with disabilities.

The intensified presence of various non-state actors in the eastern provinces of the DRC continued during 2018. Local intercommunal fighting increased including

humanitarian needs, including protection, will not change in the coming year.

In Zambia, on 10 September 2017, UNHCR activated a Level 1 emergency requiring enhanced preparedness. On 16 February 2018, the refugee influx from DRC into Uganda declared as a Level 2 emergency followed the sharp increase in the number of new arrivals since 18 December 2017. On 13 August 2018, UNHCR activated an internal Level 2 emergency for North Kivu and Ituri provinces due to the deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions, amidst the outbreak of the Ebola virus. In Ituri, violence has displaced over 300,000 persons in the first half of 2018 and some 500,000 people have been displaced in North Kivu, since the beginning of 2018.

The 2018 Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRRP) for the DRC situation was the first regional inter-agency effort to capture the needs of Congolese refugees in neighbouring countries. Newly arrived refugees have joined existing refugee populations for whom resources have been decreasing in recent years and which are largely insufficient to cover food security, nutrition, health and other basic needs or meet minimum standards. In many countries of asylum, refugee settlements and camps are already at full capacity. Funds for livelihood interventions are limited, prolonging refugees' dependence on external support. In this context, providing protection and humanitarian assistance to thousands of new refugees seeking safety in the course of 2018 have been a challenge for host governments and RRRP partners.

Throughout 2018, RRRP partners strengthened their advocacy efforts and promoted access to asylum, as well as the maintenance of the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum. Given the large scale of displacement inside DRC coupled with the limited capacity of host communities to support the massive numbers of refugees on the move, the emergency response was limited to basic shelter, NFI assistance

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