



THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO REGIONAL REFUGEE RESPONSE PLAN

January-December 2018

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CREDITS:

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Cover photograph:

A young Congolese refugee girl outside one of the shelter blocks of Nyarugusu Refugee Camp in Tanzania
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FOREWORD

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is at the centre of one of the most complex, but forgotten refugee crises globally. Recently, worrying dynamics have manifested with conflicts breaking out in previously peaceful provinces and existing conflicts degenerating. The situation in DRC is a matter of grave concern, affecting more and more people as it continues.

Civilians, particularly in the eastern provinces and Kasai region of DRC, continue to flee their homes, seeking safety, protection and assistance in the DRC, and in neighbouring countries. Because of this, the Congolese refugee population is now among the ten largest in the world.



At the end of 2017, over 713,000 Congolese refugees were seeking protection in neighbouring countries, including Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, the Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia, as well as in countries in Southern Africa and beyond. Of these, more than 100,000 new refugees were forcibly displaced in 2017, as a consequence of the deterioration of the situation in the country. Already since the beginning of 2018, tens of thousands of Congolese refugees have fled to neighbouring countries bringing the total number of Congolese refugees in Africa to some 770,000. The risk of further displacement remains high, with a disastrous impact on the precarious humanitarian situation in the DRC and the region.

The Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) for the DRC situation is an opportunity to address numerous gaps in the ongoing delivery of protection, assistance and services to Congolese refugees. It ensures a coherent and comprehensive inter-agency response, particularly through productive relationships with governments, non-governmental organizations, and civil society.

The Regional RRP is also a call to the international community, from governments to humanitarian and development actors, to demonstrate stronger commitment to addressing the situation facing DRC today. The situation requires support, adequate resources and collaboration so that protection and assistance can be delivered efficiently to Congolese refugees. The importance of our joint efforts and the responsibility to address continuous emergency needs through providing the necessary funding and ensuring coordination, is increasingly demanded by the gravity of the crisis.

Now, more than ever, we need to renew our solidarity with Congolese refugees.

Thank you for your support.

Ann Encontre

UNHCR Regional Refugee Coordinator for the DRC Situation

2018 PLANNED RESPONSE

941,000

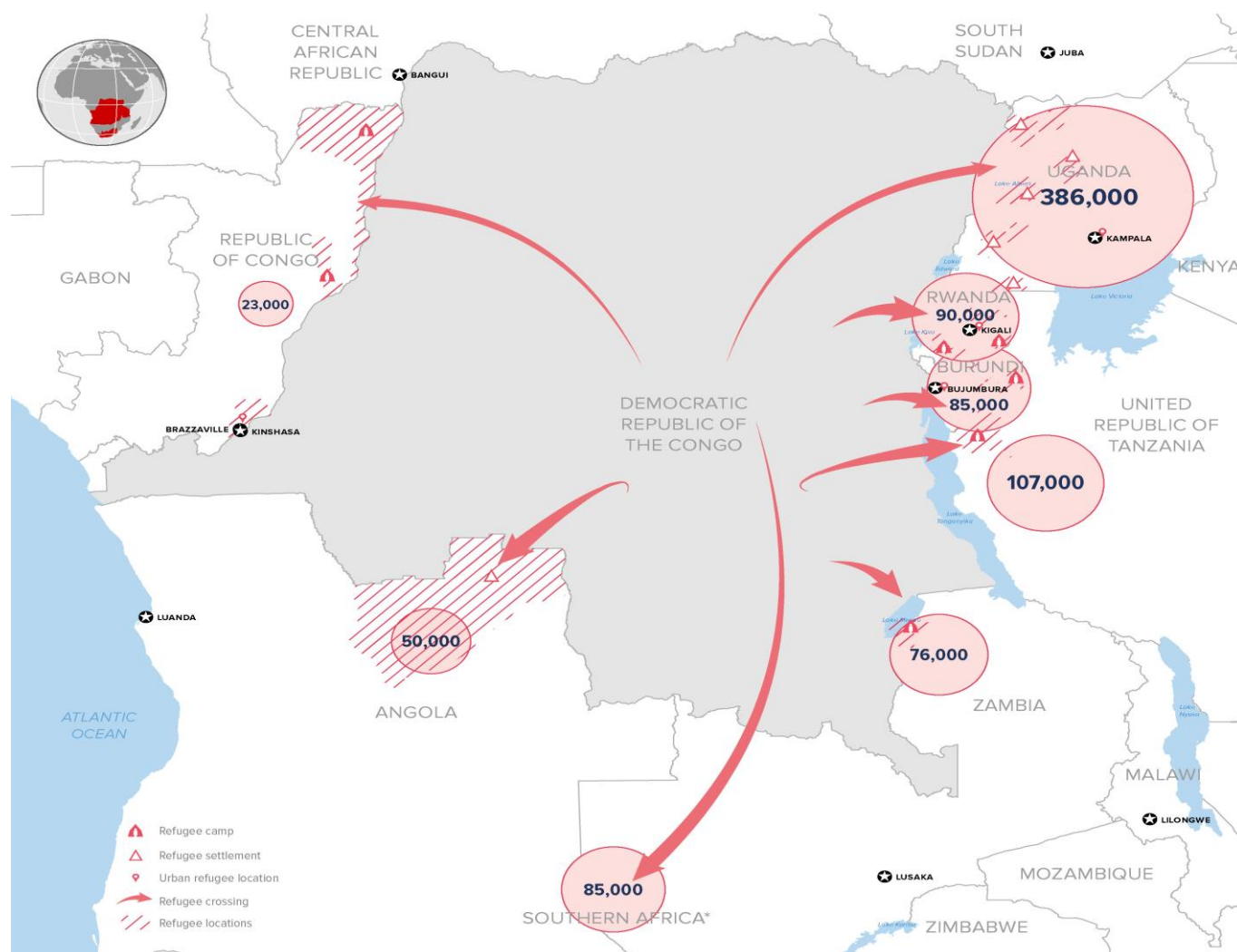
PROJECTED REFUGEE
POPULATION

US\$ 547M

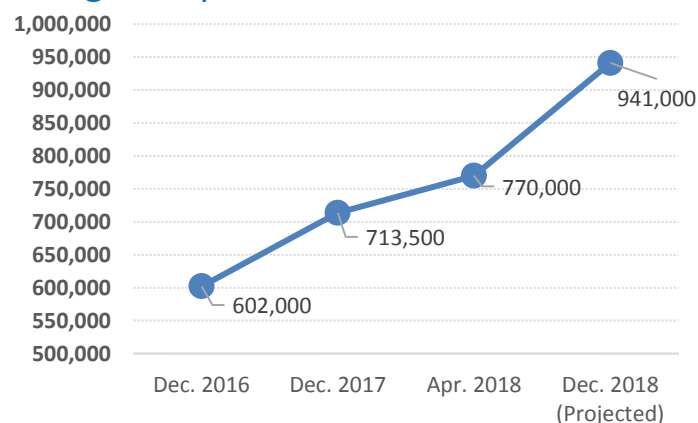
REQUIREMENTS

44

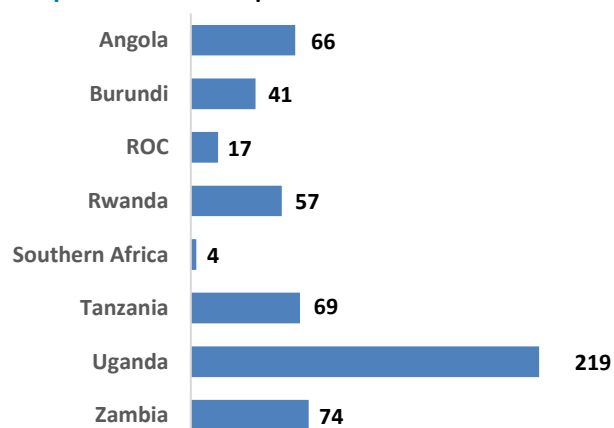
PARTNERS INVOLVED



Refugee Population Trends



Requirements | In millions US\$



Regional Overview

Introduction

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the world's most complex, challenging and forgotten crises. With 4.5 million internally displaced people (IDPs), according to OCHA, and some 770,000 Congolese refugees across Africa, the humanitarian situation deteriorated sharply in 2017. Refugees have been fleeing to neighbouring Angola, Burundi, the Republic of the Congo (RoC), Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia in large numbers. Several thousands have also fled further South towards the Southern Africa Region, mainly to Malawi and South Africa, but also to Kenya and several other countries in Africa and beyond. Since 2015, the number of IDPs has more than doubled and in 2017 alone, there were more than 2 million newly displaced in the DRC. In 2017, more than 100,000 Congolese fled to neighbouring countries as refugees joining the 600,000 already in exile. In the first months of 2018, tens of thousands of Congolese refugees fled the DRC. The majority of Congolese refugees are women and children. Nearly 57 per cent of Congolese refugees are under 18, many crossing borders unaccompanied or separated.

With widespread militia activities, and unrest and violence fuelled by ethnic and political conflict affecting many areas within the DRC, the risk of further displacement both inside and beyond borders is high. The situation has worsened since April 2017 with intense intercommunal conflict in the Kasai region causing large-scale internal displacement. Tens of thousands of Congolese fled to Angola and Zambia. In the Kasai region, clashes between militia groups resumed towards the end of 2017, starting to reach the larger population centres. The security situation has continued to deteriorate in eastern DRC, in particular in the provinces of Haut-Katanga, North and South Kivu, and Tanganyika, due to the activities of armed groups in the east and north of the country and the resurgence of inter-communal conflicts. The Province of Ituri has also been affected by clashes between armed groups and the Congolese army (FARDC). These on-going conflicts continue to cause internal and external displacement of populations, loss of human life and property.

As a result, on 20 October 2017, the Emergency Relief Coordinator declared an IASC System-Wide L3 Emergency Response for the DRC, focusing on the

Kasai region, Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces. After a six-month period, the L3 was deactivated on 20 April 2018. UNHCR activated several internal emergency declarations to respond to refugee flows to neighbouring countries. In Zambia and the Congo, UNHCR activated a Level 1 emergency requiring enhanced preparedness, while Angola was already a Level 2 emergency. On 16 February 2018, UNHCR declared the refugee influx from DRC into Uganda a Level 2 emergency following the sharp increase of new arrivals since 18 December 2017. On 14 June 2018, UNHCR deactivated all emergency declarations for the DRC situation except for Uganda and Zambia, which remain active.

New refugees have joined existing refugee populations for whom resources have been decreasing in recent years and are largely insufficient to cover food security, nutrition, health and other basic needs, or meet minimum standards. In Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and other 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, protection and assistance to thousands of new refugees seeking safety has been a challenge for host governments and Regional RRP partners.

This Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP) presents the inter-agency response to the renewed and heightened humanitarian challenge posed by the mounting number of Congolese refugees in the countries neighbouring the DRC, including both existing refugee populations and new arrivals. The planning figures are based on a scenario anticipating a slight deterioration of the situation within the DRC. The three countries receiving the largest flow of new refugees in 2017, Angola, Uganda and Zambia, have detailed response plans featured as separate chapters within this Regional RRP.

This revision was mainly prompted by larger than anticipated refugee movements in the region, particularly to Uganda. The revised Regional RRP contains updated plans, with new population planning figures and financial requirements for Uganda, as well as for Burundi, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania to address the needs of increasing numbers of Congolese refugees and asylum seekers.

Beneficiary Population*

	Pre-existing caseload (At 31 December 2016)	Population (At 31 December 2017)	Planning Population (31 December 2018)
Angola	13,500	39,000	50,000
Burundi	57,500	63,000	85,000
Republic of Congo	15,000	15,500	23,000
Rwanda	83,000	84,000	90,000
Tanzania	67,000	82,000	107,000
Uganda	222,000	236,500	386,000
Zambia	23,000	38,000	76,000
Southern Africa**	66,000	100,500	124,000
Other Countries***	55,000	55,000	0
Total Population	602,000	713,500	941,000

* These rounded figures have been updated to reflect the results of a continuous biometric registration and verification exercise in countries of asylum.

** Southern Africa includes Botswana, Indian Ocean islands, the Kingdom of eSwatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

*** Other countries include Central African Republic, Chad, Kenya and South Sudan. Refugee populations in these countries are not included in the planning scenario for this Regional RRP.



UNHCR/Georgina Goodwin

Regional Protection and Humanitarian Needs

Most of the countries of asylum of Congolese refugees are maintaining open borders but existing camps and sites are saturated and available basic services stretched to the limit. In many situations, refugees need to be relocated to safe places away from border areas. New settlements have been established in Angola and Zambia. The same will be the case if the inflow of refugees into Burundi and Tanzania continues. In Uganda, the increased number of new arrivals is putting pressure on areas that have already welcomed large refugee populations.

In Angola, the new settlement created in the second half of 2017 to host newly arrived Congolese refugees, needs considerable investment to ensure that refugees moved to this location can access quality education, medical care and an effective water system and that they can become food secure within two planting seasons. At present, water supply is very problematic and water trucking is ongoing. Refugee women and girls have been victim of many forms of violence including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), before and during flight as well as within camp settings.

Uganda hosts the largest number of Congolese refugees, currently over 280,000 people. The emergency response is focused on the rural settlement areas, where the most vulnerable refugees are living, while refugees in urban areas can access Government services and targeted support for persons with specific needs. In general, there are large numbers of women, children and persons with specific needs, many of whom have been subject to conflict-related violence, including SGBV. Fifty per cent of the refugee population are children, of which only 46 per cent have access to education. Limited secondary education, vocational skill

business support services for non-agricultural livelihoods and information on markets. The increasing number of refugees in Uganda, particularly the population in the settlements and surrounding areas makes environmental degradation a great concern, including due to cutting trees for firewood. New arrivals need to be accommodated in existing and new settlement areas and provided with shelter and household kits. The establishment of new settlements will require extensive site preparation, technical assessment, site planning, repair and maintenance of access and minor roads within the settlements and construction of culverts and bridges. The continuous influx of refugees has created reliance on water trucking to address the supply gap. Lack of funding is hindering investment in sustainable water supply systems, including drilling of wells, to eventually phase out water trucking.

The Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) provides the over-arching policy and coordination framework, guiding all aspects of the refugee response in Uganda. The Government-led CRRF Steering Group, with the support of the CRRF Secretariat, provides guidance to the five pillars of the refugee response: 1) Admission and rights; 2) Emergency response and ongoing needs; 3) Resilience and self-reliance; 4) Expanded solutions; and 5) Voluntary repatriation. The current humanitarian refugee response, and related coordination structures, mainly falls under Pillars 1 and 2 of the CRRF. Despite the difficulties and the unprecedented number of refugees Uganda is currently hosting, the country still applies an open door policy and implements one of the most progressive refugee policies by recognizing refugees' right to work and freedom of movement.

The conflict in Haut Katanga and Tanganyika provinces

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