

# Southern Africa Operational Update

February 2022

## Highlights

**Livelihoods:** Support continued across the region, while additional resources are needed to reach a larger portion of people in need.

**Tropical Storm Ana:** UNHCR worked to deliver assistance to those impacted by the storm, notably in Mozambique and Malawi.

**COVID-19:** 5,000 more refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons (IDPs) vaccinated in the region.



*A mother and child living in Corrane site for IDPs in Nampula Province, northern Mozambique, prepare food. © UNHCR/Guilherme Chirinda*

## During the month of February:



**12,526** IDPs received core relief items (CRIs) in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**



**150** fuel-efficient cooking stoves distributed to refugees in the **Republic of the Congo**



**145** families supported in **Namibia** following rain and flood damage



**72** refugee households had their roofs repaired and replaced in **Angola**



**30** LGBTQI individuals participated in targeted protection information sessions in **Zambia**



**15** builders trained on WASH facilities construction standards in **Zimbabwe**

## People of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa

**7,777,267** people of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa, including:



**782,019** refugees and  
**296,090** asylum-seekers



**6,662,174** IDPs



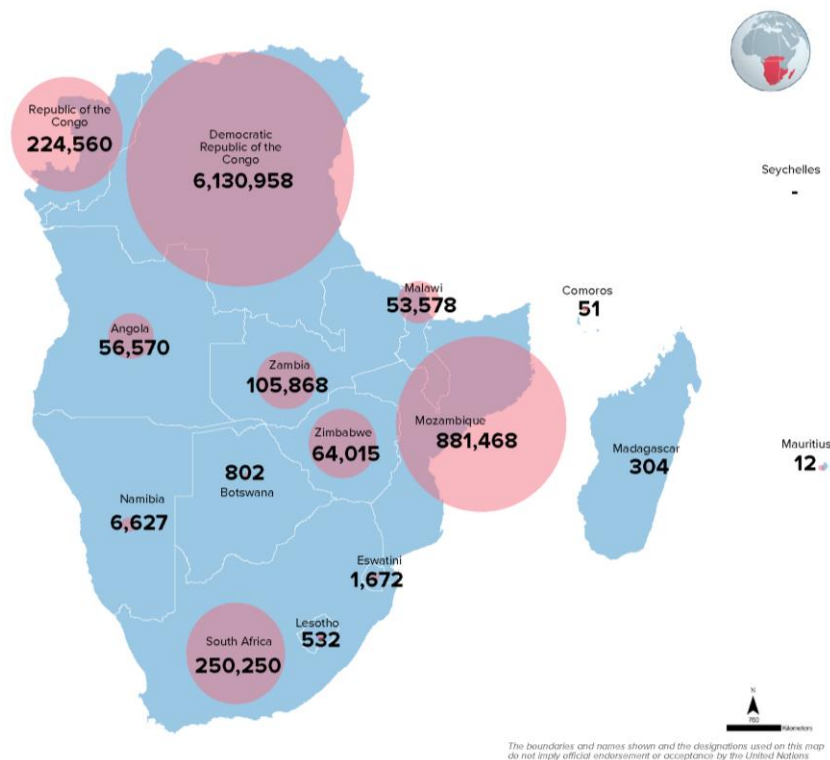
**97** returnees\*



**36,887** other people of concern

(as of 28 February 2022)

*\*Note: The reduction in overall population as compared to December 2021 is due to an adjustment of IDP and refugee returnee figures following the regional data review in January 2022. For statistical purposes, returnee figures, which stood at 1,041,729 at the end of 2021, are reported only in the calendar year in which they returned.*



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

## Regional context: Key developments

**Security situation in the DRC and Mozambique:** The upsurge in violence and ongoing volatility in eastern DRC and northern Mozambique continues to be of grave concern as armed groups cause death and displacement, while hindering humanitarian assistance.

- **DRC:** In eastern DRC, the security situation remained unstable, with targeted attacks, killings, kidnappings, and house burnings in Ituri Province causing repeated population displacement and limiting humanitarian access. In North Kivu, despite the joint military operation between the Congolese and Ugandan armies, non-state armed groups carried out several attacks against the local populations, including at the Bukombo site that hosts 4,000 IDPs. Intercommunal conflict in South Kivu also displaced at least 10,000 people in February, as ongoing clashes were characterized by increasing attacks against unarmed civilians.
- **Mozambique:** The volatile security situation persisted in northern Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province. Military operations involving Mozambican and foreign troops remained intense in several districts including Mocimboa da Praia, Mueda, Nangade, and Palma. Simultaneously, non-state armed groups continued conducting attacks in multiple areas in Cabo Delgado.

In both situations, UNHCR remains committed to continue delivering assistance where possible and has stressed the need for an improved security environment that would permit assistance to reach the most affected areas. UNHCR has also called upon all parties to abide by obligations under international law to protect and safeguard civilian lives at all times.

## Operational highlights

### Angola

- **Livelihoods and vocational training:** UNHCR collaborated with the National Employment and Training Institute to facilitate vocational training for refugees living in urban areas of Lunda Norte Province. Enrolment opened for courses on decoration, cooking, electricity, plumbing and construction. In addition, 250 spaces were made available for refugees in Lóvua settlement to study sewing, hairdressing, event planning, plumbing and electricity. The initiative prioritizes young refugees between 18 and 22 years of age. Furthermore, 30 farmers in Lóvua settlement were trained in marketing skills and value addition, while 27 refugee women in Lóvua settlement, identified to be vulnerable or at risk, received livelihood support.
- **Shelter and hygiene support:** In Lóvua refugee settlement, as part of a shelter rehabilitation programme, 65 households had the plastic sheeting roofs of their houses replaced with a new timber structures and zinc roofing sheets. Additionally, seven refugee families living in Luanda had their roofs repaired or replaced with new zinc sheets. Meanwhile, 130 hygiene kits composed of soap, brooms, sodium hydroxide and chlorine were distributed to refugees in Lóvua settlement.
- **Drought assessment and fact-finding:** From 19-28 February UNHCR conducted a fact-finding mission to areas affected by the ongoing drought in southern Angola. Signs of malnutrition were observed among individuals of all ages, backgrounds, and genders. Deaths related to hunger were reported in all locations visited, particularly among children and the elderly. While the Government has provided food and seeds in some areas, the need has outweighed the assistance being provided. UNHCR also joined a field visit conducted by OCHA, UNDP and WFP to Calueque Camp, which hosts returnees from Namibia. The visit was organized under the auspices of the UN Country Team drought response and UNHCR provided technical assistance in terms of Protection, Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), shelter and site planning.

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

- **Education:** UNHCR handed over six equipped classrooms and latrines to local authorities at Wele primary school in the Modale development hub, North Ubangi Province, which hosts approximately 1,000 Central African refugee and Congolese students. Three other classrooms and toilets were also handed over at Mboma primary school in Elaka, South Ubangi Province. Meanwhile, in Kasai Province, UNHCR celebrated the *Jeunes filles visionnaires* ("Visionary Girls") programme, which was launched in 2021. The programme offers scholarships for university-aged girls who have been exposed to gender-based violence (GBV) to continue their studies and receive mentorship. Sixty-four scholarships were awarded in 2021 and a further 70 scholarships awarded in 2022.



*Yakatoa Sango teaches primary 4 at the Wele primary school, Modale development hub, in the DRC. © UNHCR/Clariss Achu*



- **Protection response:** UNHCR and the Government's National Commission for Refugees facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 279 Rwandan refugees and 242 Burundian refugees in safety and dignity from North and South Kivu to their countries of origin. In North Ubangi, South Ubangi and Bas Uele Provinces, UNHCR's partner carried out awareness-raising sessions on preventing GBV, reaching 1,029 Central African refugees and people from the host community in Monga, Kanzawi, Wenze as well as Mole and Boyabu camps. In Ituri, UNHCR with the support of its partner conducted physical verification exercise for IDPs, in order to produce reliable statistics and facilitate planning of humanitarian interventions. The exercise recorded 6,821 households (34,305 IDPs,) in the Plaine Savo site area, 2,132 households (10,755 IDPs) in the Lala site and 2,357 households (12,076 IDPs) in the Ngupu/Tshukpa site.
- **Livelihood support:** To support Central African refugees and people in the host community to start small businesses and increase household income, UNHCR and its partner distributed market gardening kits, consisting of hoes, watering cans and wheelbarrows, to 120 households in the Sidi and Nzakara development hubs, North Ubangi Province. Fishing kits were also provided to 70 households in Nzakara, North Ubangi Province, and Wenze, South Ubangi Province, while 40 farmers received goats in Wenze.
- **CRI and hygiene kit distribution:** UNHCR and its partner distributed CRI kits consisting of tarpaulins, blankets, mats, jerry cans, soap, buckets, basins, and plates to 12,526 IDPs living in the Rhoe site in Ituri Province. An additional 223 vulnerable displaced women who recently gave birth each received bedding and hygiene items.
- *For more detailed reports on UNHCR's work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, visit [Global Focus](#).*

## Malawi

- **Tropical Storm Ana:** UNHCR participated in assessments and response planning to assist people who have been internally displaced by the impacts of Tropical Storm Ana. Humanitarian partners launched a [Flash Appeal](#) that urgently seeks US\$29.4 million to provide vital assistance to 542,000 of the hardest-hit people in support of the Government-led response. UNHCR is seeking US\$1 million to cover protection, shelter and CRI needs, including for displaced Mozambican nationals hosted in camps in Nsanje district.
- **Water and sanitation gaps:** Refugees and asylum-seekers in Dzaleka refugee camp continued to be provided with an average of 11.5 litres of potable water per person per day in February, which remained below the UNHCR standard. In terms of sanitation in the camp, there are 6,471 household latrines, 79 communal latrines and 4,769 bathing shelters. This represents about 38 per cent of families having a household latrine, which is also below the UNHCR standard of 85 per cent. Additional financial resources, as well as space to accommodate infrastructure, are necessary to increase access to water and sanitation throughout the camp.



*Edesi prepares a meal of cassava at Marka Primary School in Nsanje district on the Malawi-Mozambique border where she and her four grandchildren sought shelter after Tropical Storm Ana. © UNHCR/Rumbani Msiska*

## Mozambique

- **Mission to hard-to-reach area in Cabo Delgado:** UNHCR conducted a multisectoral mission to Mueda from 21 to 26 February to monitor partner activities, assess the security situation and road conditions, and deliver CCCM training to local authorities and partners. UNHCR also conducted a rapid assessment together with an NGO partner in Nandimbe and Lyanda IDP sites, where recently displaced families were in urgent need of multisectoral support and protection services. While at the IDP sites, UNHCR monitored the impact of the distribution of tarpaulins and CRIs that took place in December 2021, which had reached about 6,000 people prior to the rainy season.
- **Assistance to households affected by Tropical Storm Ana:** By the end of February, UNHCR had assisted 248 of the 285 families in Maratane refugee settlement whose houses had been affected by Tropical Storm Ana. The shelter assistance, including construction materials, was distributed to families whose houses were damaged or at risk of collapse. Those receiving the assistance were verified and recorded by UNHCR using registration data.
- **Vocational kits for refugees:** UNHCR together with a government partner, distributed vocational kits to 153 people in Maratane refugee settlement who had successfully completed their three-month technical and vocational training. The kits contained supplies specific to the graduate's area of specialisation, for example bakery equipment and supplies, or hairdressing scissors, combs, and brushes. Another 43 graduates will be taking up professional internships. Following the distribution of the kits, the partner, with support from UNHCR, will continue providing mentorship to graduates on business management, sustainability, and market linkages.
- **Construction work:** UNHCR conducted a monitoring visit to Corrane IDP site to oversee shelter construction activities. A total of 113 houses had been completed, with 86 still remaining to be built. Meanwhile, in Maratane refugee settlement, construction work concluded on five secondary school classrooms, with students beginning to use the classrooms by the end of February. It is estimated that about 125 students per term will benefit from the newly built classrooms.
- *For more detailed reports on UNHCR's work in Mozambique, visit [Global Focus](#).*

## Republic of the Congo

- **Fuel-efficient stoves:** To enhance climate change resilience, 150 fuel-efficient cooking stoves made by 30 asylum-seekers and Congolese nationals were distributed to local and asylum-seeker communities in Bouémbo village, Plateaux Department. This initiative seeks to mitigate firewood dependency, improve access to climate-friendly energy, improve life standards and reduce deforestation. The use of fuel-efficient stoves will also contribute social cohesion and peaceful coexistence by mitigating tensions with local communities over resources.
- **IDP enrollment:** The government-led IDP enrollment exercise in Pool Department successfully entered its final phase on 21 February. The exercise collects specific protection needs, documentation concerns, and socio-economic data. This collaboration is framed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of the Republic of the Congo and UNHCR. The MoU intends to frame protection concerns inherent to personal data protection and other areas of assistance for the targeted group.

- **Health response:** A suspected measles outbreak was detected by UNHCR's health partner among more than 40 refugee and host community children in several localities of the Likouala Department, where a majority of refugees and asylum-seekers reside. The situation is of particular concern because of low measles vaccination coverage, limited medicine stocks in remote areas, and unavailability of measles vaccines in the country. UNHCR collected samples for clinical confirmation and medical case management, and is working alongside UN partners including WHO and UNICEF to support a prompt response.
- **Lisungi Social Safety Nets Project:** From 14 to 18 February, at the request of the Government, UNHCR led a follow-up enrollment campaign in the Likouala Department on behalf of the World Bank-financed Lisungi Social Safety Nets Project. The exercise enrolled an additional 449 refugee and 557 Congolese households, who were eligible for the upcoming distribution of conditional cash transfers and support to income-generating activities. Among the new beneficiaries are households who missed the last enrolment phase, and those refugees and asylum-seekers who newly arrived to the Republic of the Congo in 2021. The inclusion of refugees into national social safety nets, within a year of their arrival, constitutes a strong example of local integration and inter-community coexistence between refugees and hosts.

## South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO)

Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa

- **Dwellings damaged by rain and floods in Namibia:** Refugees were left homeless in Namibia's Osire refugee settlement when heavy rains and flash floods destroyed their dwellings, which were mainly mud houses. Seven dwellings collapsed, 45 were partially destroyed, and 100 required urgent rehabilitation. UNHCR is working with partners to address these needs, while those impacted stay with family and friends, as well as in the transit facilities in the settlement.
- **Protection support in Botswana:** UNHCR continued weekly protection counselling sessions and resettlement interviews. UNHCR Pretoria conducted a resettlement profiling mission to the Dukwi field unit where 39 cases comprising 109 persons were profiled. This was followed by a registration support mission to provide technical assistance for a mini verification of the camp population, conduct a clean-up of registration data, and capture missing biometrics.
- **Activity monitoring in South Africa:** Cape Town field office continued monitoring businesses that benefitted from UNHCR's COVID-19 emergency funding in 2020 and 2021. Businesses visited included a day care, an auto mechanic, and a large format printer. The business owners emphasized the importance of UNHCR's support for keeping their businesses afloat during the most difficult times of the COVID-19 lockdown and various restrictions that adversely affected their businesses.
- **Durable solutions:** Eleven resettlement departures took place in February from SAMCO countries, including eight individuals travelling from South Africa to the United States, and three individuals traveling from Namibia also to the United States. Preparations are also underway to facilitate voluntary repatriation from South Africa to the DRC at the end of March.



UNHCR and partner field staff speaking with families whose dwellings were damaged in Osire refugee settlement, Namibia.  
 © UNHCR Namibia

## Zambia

- **Outreach and community engagement:** UNHCR held an information session with 30 LGBTQI individuals at Lusaka's Makeni transit centre. The purpose of the session was to update individuals on procedures in place for their case management and to hear from them about the protection concerns affecting them. The session was facilitated by both UNHCR and the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR) in the Ministry of Home Affairs. In addition, UNHCR and COR carried out community engagement and awareness-raising meetings in four outreach centres – Kanyama, George, Chipata and Chawama – and at the UNHCR Office in Lusaka with refugees and refugee leaders about cash-based interventions and about resettlement and complementary pathways.
- **Livelihood support:** UNHCR, through its livelihoods partner, began identifying and selecting beneficiaries for the 2022 livelihoods support programme. Owing to inadequate funding at this stage of the year, only a limited number of refugees and asylum-seekers could be supported – about 25% of those supported in 2021. UNHCR is also playing a facilitating role by engaging with other humanitarian and development partners to advocate for including refugees in their livelihood programming.
- **Voluntary repatriation:** Meetings were held with Congolese refugees in Lusaka and in the Mantapala refugee settlement about the voluntary repatriation process to Haut-Katanga and Tanganyika in the DRC. Following consultations with the Government and other stakeholders, UNHCR has identified 1,080 families (4,377 individuals) who have expressed their intentions to return to the DRC, with 263 families ready to return as soon as possible and 514 families ready to return in 2022.

## Zimbabwe

- **Latrine building refresher training:** UNHCR's WASH partner facilitated a refresher training for latrine builders in Tongogara refugee camp, alongside the Ministry of Health and Child Care. The refresher was attended by 15 builders who had been previously trained and sought to reinforce building standards – for example for the size of squat holes, the length of vent pipes, and the design of rooftops. The refresher also served as an opportunity to receive feedback from the builders, who indicated room for improvement in the availability and quality of building materials. All issues raised are being followed up to ensure ongoing improvement in the quality of latrines in the camp. About 150 camp residents participated in the campaign.
- **Clean-up campaign:** Refugees and asylum-seekers in Tongogara refugee camp, led by hygiene promoters and waste collectors, with support from UNHCR, NGOs and the Department of Social Development, participated in the National Clean-Up Campaign by cleaning the camp shopping area and nearby plots. The event was also an opportunity to introduce the temporary waste holding cage installation and conduct a demonstration on its use.
- **Irrigation system:** The maize crop under production for the summer season was ready for harvesting in February. The farmers, who underwent post-harvest handling refresher training, began selling the green mealies and harvesting dry ones. Rehabilitation work on the irrigation scheme was also completed, with a tail end drain successfully installed and excess water being diverted to the banana plantation.
- **Detention Monitoring:** UNHCR conducted detention monitoring on 10 February in the capital, Harare. Prison management authorities expressed willingness to collaborate with UNHCR with regards to detention of refugees and asylum-seekers, liaising with UNHCR if people of concern are received at the prison. During the visit, UNHCR conducted interviews with people of concern who were at risk of deportation. UNHCR is following up on their cases with the immigration department.



## Spotlight: Community workers brave the odds to help survivors of violence in the DRC



*Lidia walks to meet survivors of a recent attack in Kibarizo in her role as a protection monitor for one of UNHCR's NGO partners. © UNHCR/Justin Kasereka*

Lidia Ajuwa, 30, is among a group of workers who travel miles to reach survivors of sexual violence and attacks in displaced communities in eastern DRC.

She and 77 other protection monitors working across this vast region navigate tough terrain and frequent dangers to reach people in need, linking them to vital assistance provided by UNHCR and its partners including health care, legal justice, and psychosocial support.

“Our work is complex, and our response is based on what is possible,” Lidia explains. “If there is a solution on the spot, we provide help right away, but we often work in remote areas, where we have to refer the victim to a place where they can get assistance such as medical care.”

Every week, hundreds of incidents against civilians are recorded in eastern DRC by people like Lidia. During 2021, UNHCR, through its NGO partner INTERSOS, recorded more than 65,000 separate human rights abuses in the east of the country alone.

Lidia's work is never truly done. But as she moves on to the next location, she is driven by the knowledge that for every person she helps she is making a difference. “What I love about this work is that I can contribute to the struggle of my people and help make the law a reality for them.”

Watch the video and read the full story [here](#).

## COVID-19

There were more than 5.4 million reported cases of COVID-19 in the 16 countries of the Southern Africa region as of 28 February. Some 1,528 cases of COVID-19 have been reported among people of concern to UNHCR since reporting began in 2020. Lack of testing facilities and reliance on voluntary reporting in urban areas means that case numbers may be higher. Overall, a downward trend in active cases was observed in the region as compared to the previous month.

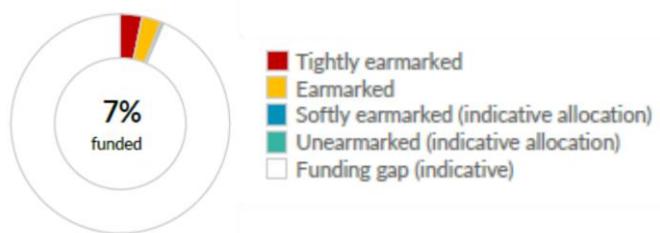
Vaccination rollout continues across the region. By the end of February, more than 32,000 people of concern to UNHCR confirmed receiving at least one dose, an increase of about 5,000 as compared to last month. More than 17,000 have reported being fully vaccinated. These numbers mainly reflect those living in camps and settlements as it is difficult to track vaccination in urban areas.

While vaccination rates are increasing, vaccine hesitancy continues to compromise uptake among refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs. UNHCR and partners are continuing efforts to address hesitancy. In February, this included community meetings in **Botswana**, mass WhatsApp messaging in **Madagascar**, and information materials translated into Swahili and French for Congolese refugees in **Zambia**.



## Financial Requirements

UNHCR's financial requirements for the Southern Africa region in 2022 total **USD 436.5 million**. As of 22 February, **7 per cent** of needs have been funded. UNHCR is grateful to donors who have supported operations in Southern Africa so far in 2022, including<sup>1</sup>:



UN Peacebuilding Fund 2.7M | Giuliana Lagetto 2M | Education Cannot Wait 1.8M | European Union 0.9M | Republic of the Congo | Qatar | Germany | Migration MPTF | UN Trust Fund for Human Security | Private donors

**Flexible financial support** greatly facilitates UNHCR being able to kick-start an emergency response, bolster forgotten or under-resourced crises, and enable the fullest possible implementation of programmes. They enable UNHCR to plan and manage its resources efficiently and effectively, contributing to the collective success in every life that is transformed and saved. UNHCR is grateful to the donors that have provided unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions in 2022, including:

**Other softly earmarked contributions (USD)<sup>2</sup>:** Norway | Education Cannot Wait | Private donors

**Unearmarked contributions (USD)<sup>3</sup>:** Sweden 77.6M | Norway 72.5M | Netherlands 37.2M | Denmark 35.6M | Germany 27.6M | Switzerland 18.4M | Belgium 11.9M | Ireland 11.8M

*Notes: 1. Where a donor has contributed USD 500,000 or more, the total amount is shown. 2. Due to their earmarking, other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used in Southern Africa. 3. Donors contributing USD 10M or more are listed.*

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