

# Democratic Republic of the Congo

February- March 2022

## Highlights

- In February, UNHCR and partners facilitated the **voluntary repatriation of 521 Burundian and Rwandan refugees** to their country of origin.
- During the month of March, **over 3,600 birth certificates were delivered by UNHCR and its partners** in Kasai and Haut Uele Provinces.
- In February, **475 internally displaced people (IDPs) received cash for protection assistance** in Shabunda and Walungu, South Kivu Province.
- In the period under review, UNHCR's protection monitoring partner INTERSOS recorded **over 6,600 protection incidents in Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces**.



UNHCR distributes cash for protection to displaced women at risk to face their most urgent needs in the territory of Walungu, South Kivu Province. © UNHCR/ Antonia Vadala

## KEY FIGURES<sup>1</sup>

**521**

Burundian and  
Rwandan refugees  
repatriated

**5,502**

Families assisted  
with core relief items

**2,563**

Refugees  
vaccinated against  
Covid-19

**6,600**

Protection incidents  
recorded by UNHCR  
protection monitoring

## Context & Security

During the months of February and March, **the security situation in several parts of the country remained volatile**, with the eastern Provinces of the DRC continuing to face **intercommunal conflicts and armed group confrontations**. The security situation in Ituri province continued to face targeted attacks, killings, kidnappings and house burnings committed in the territories of Irumu, Djugu, and Mambasa (Ituri province) by armed groups, despite ongoing military operations. This situation caused **repeated population displacement and limited access to humanitarian aid**. In North Kivu Province, the activities of an armed group claiming to be M-23 have caused the **displacement of an estimated 46,000 people with over 10,000 who have crossed into Uganda**. Despite the joint military operation between the Congolese Army (FARDC) and Ugandan Army (UPDF) in Beni territory (North Kivu), armed groups continued to commit violent attacks against the local populations, including sites hosting IDPs. At the same time, **intercommunal conflicts in South Kivu displaced at least 10,000 people**

<sup>1</sup>Figures for the reporting period December 2021 – January 2022

during February. Ongoing clashes continued in the Itombwe sector of Mwenga territory and Bibokoboko, where alliances between local and foreign armed groups are growing, resulting in **increasing attacks against unarmed civilians**.

## Refugees

### PROTECTION

- In February, UNHCR and its partner the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) facilitated the durable solution of voluntary repatriation of **279 Rwandan refugees and 242 Burundian refugees** in safety and dignity from North and South Kivu to their countries of origin.
- **During the period under report**, UNHCR continued to renew refugee cards for urban refugees and Burundian refugees based in South Kivu. In February, **2,362 Burundian refugees received new identity cards thanks to UNHCR with the support of the CNR**, whilst in March, **573 refugees and asylum seekers in Goma received identity documents, including refugee cards and certificates**. These documents allow them to enjoy their free movement right and access basic social services.
- During February, **UNHCR partner AIDES carried out awareness raising sessions on preventing gender-based violence (GBV)** across the three Provinces of North Ubangi, South Ubangi and Bas Uele, **reaching a total of 1,029 CAR refugees and host community members** in the refugee hosting locations of Monga, Kanzawi, Wenze as well as Mole and Boyabu camps.
- During the period under report, **UNHCR and partners relocated other 30 South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers from insecure border areas to the safer Bele site in Haut-Uélé province**, where they are receiving multi-sectoral assistance. As of end of February, 3,274 South Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers have been relocated to the Bele site.

### EDUCATION

- During the month of February, **UNHCR handed over to local authorities six equipped classrooms and latrines to the Wele primary school which hosts approximately 1,000 CAR refugee and Congolese students in Modale development hub, North Ubangi Province**. Three other classrooms and three toilets were also handed over to the Mboma primary school in Elaka, South Ubangi Province.
- **In February, UNHCR partner ADSSE completed the renovation, construction and equipment of 12 classrooms to serve as Instant Network Schools (INS)**, funded by the Vodafone foundation in North and South Ubangi Provinces. Already functional at Inke, Bili, Mole and Boyabu camps, Vodafone is extending the INS project to out of camp refugee hosting locations in



*A CAR refugee and a Congolese student attend a class using the tablets provided by Vodafone Foundation at the secondary school of Libenge Kete, South Ubangi Province © UNHCR/ Vittoria Moretti*

Zongo, Bili, Gbadolite and Libenge, to ensure that both CAR refugee and Congolese children have unfettered access to online lessons allowing them to access diversified and high-quality education in remote areas.



### **WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)**

- In order to improve overall access to hygiene and sanitation, **UNHCR and its partners distributed soap to 8,510 Burundian refugees in transit facilities and in the Mulongwe settlement (South Kivu Province)** while **364 women received dignity kits** in the same localities. Other **3,515 Central African refugees received soap** as part of a similar distribution in Boyabu camp, South Ubangi Province.
- **UNHCR through its partner ADES, reinforced the access to water for the Burundian refugee community residing in Lusenda camp, South Kivu Province**, through the connection to the water distribution network of the local community, and worked on the maintenance of 3 human-powered pumps in Mulongwe settlement.



### **HEALTH**

- During February and March, **a total of 2,563 refugees were vaccinated against Covid-19 in the DRC. This includes 1,117 South Sudanese** (750 living at the Meri site, 242 at Bele site and 125 at the Biringi site) vaccinated in the Ituri and Haut-Uele provinces, **1,362 Central African Refugees living in Inke Camp** (North Ubangi Province) and **84 Burundian refugees** vaccinated at the Lusenda and Mulongwe settlements in South Kivu Province.
- In February **UNHCR and partner AIDES distributed essential drugs and nutrition supplies to health centres in the Inke, Bili, Mole and Boyabu camps in North and South Ubangi Provinces**. The distributions are continuing in 12 other health centres in the development hubs and other out-of-camp refugee hosting locations across the three provinces.
- UNHCR, in collaboration with the Provincial Health Division of South Kivu, WHO, UNICEF and ADES, launched a **joint vaccination campaign against measles in Lusenda camp and surrounding areas** after 9 cases of measles were detected in February in Lusenda camp. By 31 March, **4,083 children from 6 to 59 months were vaccinated**.



### **SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)**

- In February, **UNHCR and ADSSE distributed solar lamps, soap and buckets to 815 refugees relocated from Gombe to Modale to facilitate their settlement**, while **170 refugees** self-relocated to Wenze, South Ubangi, **received tarpaulins** to build shelters.
- **In February, UNHCR in collaboration with its partners officially handed over working tools to the shelter sectoral committee of South Sudanese refugees Biringi site, (Ituri Province)** with the view to support the ownership of shelter activities by the refugees and the accompaniment of people with special needs. The kits distributed were composed of boots, notebooks, plastic helmets, pens, wheelbarrows, carpentry hammers, hoes, raincoats, shovels, machetes, bicycles, rolls of string, decametres, umbrellas and cutters.



### **CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)**

- During the month of February, **UNHCR assisted 44 persons with special needs and most vulnerable South Sudanese refugee households living in the three sites of Meri, Bele and Biringi in Ituri and**

**Haut Uele Provinces** with cash for food assistance. In addition, 25 South Sudanese refugees with special needs living in Bele site were assisted with cash for the construction of latrines.

- In South Ubangi province, UNHCR partner **ADSSE distributed cash assistance to 700 individuals with special needs from both the refugees and host community**, including 11 unaccompanied children in Wenze development hub.



### **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND SELF RELIANCE**

- To support CAR refugees and host community members to start small businesses and increase their household income, **UNHCR and partner AIDES distributed market gardening kits (hoes, watering cans and wheelbarrows) to 120 households in the Sidi and Nzakara development hubs, (North Ubangi Province)**. Fishing kits were also given to households in Nzakara (North Ubangi) and Wenze (South Ubangi) whilst another 40 animal farmers received goats in Wenze.
- In February, UNHCR continued its efforts to empower **South Sudanese refugees in Ituri and Haut-Uélé provinces by organizing working sessions on the sharing of good practices** in the sectors of livelihoods and economic inclusion with refugees in the Biringi and Bele sites.

## Statelessness

- UNHCR, through its government partner CNR, continued its efforts to prevent statelessness among refugee children. In March 2022, **178 birth certificates including 107 for girls and 71 for boys, were issued by the National Civil Status Service in the Meri site**, Province of Haut Uélé. In addition other **3,500 birth certificates were distributed in the village of Shamusanda, Kasai Province**, were internally displaced and returnee people have been relocated since 2021.

## Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)



### **PROTECTION**

- In February and March, **UNHCR's protection monitoring partner INTERSOS recorded over 6,600 protection incidents in the three eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu**, due to the active presence of armed groups, increased attacks from a group claiming to be M-23 in North Kivu and the intensification of intercommunal clashes especially in the territories of Fizi, Uvira and Mwuenga, in South Kivu province. The majority of the incidents consisted in physical assaults, looting of properties, arbitrary arrests and detention. Among these protection incidents, over 300 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) were recorded in North and South Kivu provinces.
- During the month of February, **the biometric enrollment operation for IDPs in the great Kasai was extended to the territory of Luebo, where 2,215 (11,488 individuals) were registered by UNHCR** in collaboration with the provincial authorities.
- In February, **UNHCR with the support of CARITAS conducted a number of physical verification operations for IDPs in order to produce reliable statistics and to facilitate the planning of humanitarian interventions** in Ituri Province. As a result of this activity, **6,821 households** for a total of 34,305 IDPs, were

registered in the Plaine Savo site area, **2,132 households** of 10,755 IDPs in the Lala site and **2,357 households** of 12,076 IDPs in the Ngupu/Tshukpa site.

- Between 1-3 February, **UNHCR together with UNFPA and with its partner FMMDI (*Femme Main dans la Main pour le Développement Intégral*) organized a high-level workshop in Kananga (Kasai Central Province) focusing on the implementation of a roadmap to combat gender-based violence (GBV) in the province and to officially launched the adoption of three provincial edicts to eradicate degrading practices against women in the Kasai provinces. This workshop was chaired by the national minister of women, representatives of United Nations agencies and about 300 participants.**

## EDUCATION

- On 17 March, UNHCR proceeded to the official handing over of **Mulongoy Primary school rehabilitated in Miketo, Kalemie territory, Tanganyika Province**. The school, which was in ruins, will host more than 500 children from Twa and Bantu communities, as well as children from the host community, displaced and returnees providing better conditions to facilitate their learning

## SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRIs)

- In February, UNHCR and partner CARITAS distributed NFI kits consisting of tarpaulins, blankets, mats, jerry cans, soap, buckets, basins and plates to **12,526 internally displaced people (1,750 households) living in the Rho site in Ituri province**. In addition, 223 vulnerable displaced women who recently gave birth each received bedding and hygiene items.
- In March, UNHCR with different partners (Gender and Family Provincial Division, AVSI, SAFDF, the University of Semliki, AIDES, AIRD and INTERSOS) provided Core Relief Items (CRIs) to **1,752 households composed of blankets, mats, jerrycans, soap and 2,682 dignity kits to women and girls in Beni and Oicha, Beni territory, North Kivu Province**.
- In North Kivu Province, 400 displaced families in Mangina, Beni Territory, received construction materials** in order to build their own transitional shelter latrines, thanks to UNHCR and its partner AIDES.



*Core relief items kits offer essential support to displaced people in Rho site in Ituri Province. UNHCR/Pascal MASIRIKA*

## WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

- In February, **UNHCR and its partner AIDES, completed a water borehole in Beni territory (North Kivu Province) which will provide drinking water to 139 IDPs and host community households** and will help to alleviate community tensions linked to water access.

## CASH-BASED INTERVENTIONS (CBI)

- In February, UNHCR and its partner *Solidarité des associations féminines pour la défense des droits de la femme (SAFDF)* provided cash assistance to 221 IDP girls at risk of gender-based violence (GBV) in Beni and Lubero territories, North Kivu Province, with the aim to prevent them from resorting to survival sex and other negative coping mechanisms.
- In South Kivu Province, UNHCR distributed multi-purpose cash grants to 475 internally displaced people in the localities of Shabunda and Walungu. This cash distribution targeted predominantly women at risk in order to provide them with an assistance to meet their most pressing needs.



*A displaced woman in Shabunda territory who lost her husband during an armed group attack receive cash to rebuild a dignified life for herself and her child. © UNHCR/ Antonia Vadala*

## Clusters and Working Groups

- Over the month of February, the Protection Cluster and the CCCM Working Group (of which UNHCR is the lead agency) published an [advocacy note on the attacks against IDPs sites \(link here\)](#) and the inobservance of the civil and the humanitarian character of the IDPs sites. This followed the violent attacks of the Bule IDPs site in Plaine Savo which caused death of at least 61 persons.
- In February, the Protection Cluster conducted a [protection analysis update focusing on the protection situation in the territories of Djugu, Mahagi and Irumu \(link here\)](#) particularly affected by the current crisis. The report outlines prevalent protection risks and provides a set of recommendations for immediate action.

## External / Donor Relations

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is grateful for the support of<sup>2</sup>:

### **Donors for all UNHCR operations in DRC in 2022**

Education Cannot Wait (1,7M) | UN Peacebuilding Fund (1,7M) | Japan (1,1M) | UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (0,1M) |

### **Donors of regional or sub-regional funds in 2022**

Norway | Private Donors

### **Major donors of unearmarked funds for the DRC in 2022**

Sweden (95.2M) | Norway (72.5M) | Netherlands (37.2M) | Denmark (35.6M) | Germany (27.6M) | Switzerland (18.4 M) | Belgium (11.9 million) | Ireland (11.8 million)

## Contacts

<sup>2</sup> Funding update as of 29 March 2022

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