Democratic Republic of the Congo

1 – 30 September 2019

UNHCR will launch the voluntary repatriation of Central African refugees in mid-November. An estimated 4,000 refugees will be repatriated. Three return zones were identified as safe for voluntary repatriations to CAR: Bangui, Ombella M’Poko and Lobaye.

As displacements continued, the Site Management and Coordination Working Group (CCCM) now estimates that 227,000 people are staying in 87 IDP sites in Ituri. At the onset of the crisis in June, there were 145,000 as estimated by OCHA.

Insecurity in the Fizi Highlands and Itombwe sector of South Kivu Province led to 35,000 people becoming internally displaced within two weeks, according to OCHA. In the Minembwe area, intercommunity tensions resulted in additional population movements.

### Burundian refugees

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Total in DRC</th>
<th>45,441</th>
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- **UNHCR and partners (CNR, AIDES, ADES, War Child) biometrically registered 1,199 Burundian asylum-seekers** at Kavimvira and Sange Transit Centres (TC). Among them, 1,170 arrived in 2019. The asylum-seekers are hosted at the TCs until they are granted refugee status by authorities. The TCs are overwhelmed following new arrivals in 2019, therefore UNHCR began rehabilitating five dormitories at Kamvivira TC, expanding its capacity to an additional 160 persons. Some asylum-seekers hosted at Sange TC will be transferred to Kamvimvira TC to decongest the former.

- As malaria remains the main cause of mortality amongst the host and refugee population, UNHCR’s partner the Danish Refugee Council, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, **distributed 16,563 long-lasting treated mosquito nets** (LLINs) - 12,763 in Lusenda camp and 3,800 in Mulongwe settlement.

- **Five separated refugee children underwent Best Interest Determination (BID) assessments** in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement, aiming to reunify them with their families. Another 13 children at risk were identified and will receive additional assistance related to parental care, schooling and nutrition.

- As access to clean clothing remains a major challenge for Burundian refugees and the host population, **UNHCR’s partner AIDES distributed second-hand clothes** to 659 children and 1,007 people with special needs in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement.

- Some **7,601 refugee children were enrolled in primary school** for 2019-2020 in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement, while **1,754 refugee pupils were enrolled in secondary school**. However, overcrowded classrooms, a lack of teachers, and the urgent need to rehabilitate schools are major challenge for refugees’ education.

- UNHCR and partner ADES continued to **strengthen efforts against cholera, measles and Ebola** with routine vaccination, monitoring and increased numbers of handwashing devices in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe.
settlement. Preliminary results show a positive effect, with only one case of cholera reported in September, against 12 in August. In addition, to support the Government in managing the cholera outbreak in parts of DRC, and to reduce mortality rates amongst refugees and locals, UNHCR donated 30 litres of intravenous (IV) rehydration solution to the Lusenda Health Center, to treat dehydration.

- Over 20,000 kgs of soap were distributed to 28,033 Burundian refugees and asylum-seekers in Lusenda camp and in transit centers. Access to soap and clean water reduces risks of water borne diseases.

- Following an assessment aiming to upgrade water infrastructures in Lusenda camp, an additional 2,600 household latrines will be constructed. There are currently only 1,900 latrines for 7,175 households.

- To prevent Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) amongst refugees, UNHCR-supported SGBV subcommittees organized awareness-raising sessions for 2,332 participants in Lusenda camp and Mulongwe settlement, on the prevention of rape, early marriage, denial of resources and physical violence.

- To promote refugees’ and locals’ self-reliance, UNHCR’s partner ADRA facilitated the sale of farmers associations’ harvest in Mulongwe settlement. Some 2,000kg of cabbage, 4,000kg of tomatoes, 1,000kg of onions, and 3,000kg of eggplant were sold at the local market.

### Central African refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total in DRC</th>
<th>173,141</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As of 30 September 2019</td>
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</table>

- UNHCR will launch the voluntary repatriation of Central African refugees from DRC in mid-November. An estimated 4,000 refugees will be repatriated from Mole and Boyabu camps. Three return zones were identified as safe for voluntary repatriations to CAR: Bangui, Ombella M’Poko and Lobaye.

- UNHCR and its partner CNR launched the distribution of individual biometric ID cards to an estimated 966 Central African refugees in Inke camp, Nord Ubangi Province. Beneficiaries are youths who turned 12 by June, and refugees who did not receive IDs during the last distribution. In August 2018, a first distribution took place, but was interrupted by technical difficulties. This second phase will ensure that refugees who did not receive ID cards in 2018 are able to receive them.

On 30 September, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) ended its support to seven health centers around the refugee-hosting locations of Bili and Pandu, Nord Ubangi Province. Some 8,000 out-of-camp refugees were using the health centers, in addition to the host population. With MSF’s support, healthcare was free for children under 5, and adults paid reduced fees. MSF was also providing medicines and payment for health staff. Remaining stocks are expected to last three months, but refugees’ access to healthcare will be hampered as they now need to pay full fees.

- UNHCR and partners AIDES and CNR provided cash assistance to 18 families in Gbadolite and Inke camp, Nord Ubangi Province, who are hosting unaccompanied and separated refugee children (UASC). School fees were also paid for 10 children. Another 16 families hosting 19 UASC in Kanzawi, Bas-Uele Province, received non-food items (clothes, bedsheets, blankets, shoes, jerry cans, buckets, etc.) distributed by UNHCR’s partner Terre Sans Frontières (TSF).
UNHCR’s partner ADSSE distributed **380 benches to primary schools** in Inke camp and in the refugee-hosting locality of Nzakara, Nord Ubangi Province. The benches will improve learning conditions for both Central African refugees and Congolese pupils, who used to sit on rocks or tree branches to follow lessons.

UNHCR’s partner ADSSE distributed **clothes**, donated by Japanese brand UNIQLO, to 945 Central African refugees in Mole camp, as well as in out-of-camp locations in Sud Ubangi Province. Beneficiaries included 649 persons with specific needs. Clothes were also donated to host community members in the refugee-hosting locality of Monzo.

In Inke refugee camp, Nord Ubangi Province, UNHCR’s partner AIDES distributed seeds to 31 households out of 90 targeted, to use in their **self-reliance agricultural activities**. The distribution is ongoing in Inke. Another 82 kgs of seeds were distributed to four groups of farmers in the refugee-hosting locality of Elaka, Sud Ubangi Province. The groups are composed of a mix of refugees and locals. Seed distributions will also take place in Bili, Mole and Boyabu camps, and in host communities.

UNHCR’s partner TSF is covering the 2019-2020 school fees of 290 secondary school refugee pupils in different out-of-camp localities between Kanzawi and Ndu, Bas Uele Province. In addition, TSF provided school materials to 1,600 primary school refugee pupils in the same locations.

### Rwandan refugees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total in DRC (figure based on a pre-registration done by the DRC Government)</th>
<th>Repatriated this month (figure pending verification)</th>
<th>Repatriated in 2019 (figure pending verification)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>215,907</td>
<td>unavailable</td>
<td>1,199</td>
</tr>
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</table>

As of 30 September 2019

UNHCR and its Government partner, the National Commission for Refugees (CNR), renewed the refugee certificates of 2,002 Rwandan refugees who reside in the highlands of Kalehe Territory, South Kivu Province. Documentation facilitates refugees’ freedom of movement and allows their identification with authorities.

In an ongoing effort to **facilitate voluntary repatriations to Rwanda**, UNHCR and CNR conducted an awareness-raising mission from 10 to 15 September in Kabalo Territory, Tanganyika Province, to inform refugees and local authorities about the biometric verification starting in October to facilitate voluntary repatriations to Rwanda.

Medical screening of a Rwandan refugee in South Kivu Province, before voluntary repatriation. © UNHCR/Sanne Biesmans

Refugee and Congolese children enjoy better learning conditions after UNHCR’s distribution of benches at the primary school of Nzakara, Nord Ubangi Province. © UNHCR/Ghislaine Nentobo
South Sudanese refugees

Total in the DRC

102,826

As of 30 September 2019

- Since 4 September, UNHCR started relocating refugees from Meri settlement to the newly-constructed settlement of Bele (both in Faradje Territory, Haut Uele Province). A total of 411 refugees (157 households) have been relocated so far, including asylum-seekers from a village 25km from Aba, Haut Uele Province.

- Upon arrival in Bele, refugees received food and basic household items. They were allocated land for shelter construction and agriculture, made available by authorities. Lastly, UNHCR ensured that for 89 primary-school-age children, who were relocated from Meri to Bele, could attend primary school for free.

- On 27 September, 167 South Sudanese refugees were transferred from the Ingbokolo border area to Biringi settlement, due to reports of rising insecurity in South Sudan’s Equatoria region, as reported by partner Terre Sans Frontieres. Upon transit at the Aru Transit Center, refugees were registered and provided assistance, including non-food items, medical care and emergency food assistance. Their subsequent transportation to Biringi was affected by austere road conditions.

- In Meri, Biringi and Kaka settlements, 32 cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) were recorded, a vast majority of whom received medical and psychosocial care. There were emerging reports of the use of survival sex in Biringi settlement. In Kaka settlement, UNCHR’s partners carried out awareness-raising on SGBV by transmitting two radio shows, organising seven sensitization sessions for 1,927 people, projecting educative films in two primary schools, and holding therapy sessions with 23 girls.

- UNHCR’s partner ADSSE provided food assistance to 1,251 vulnerable refugees in Meri settlement, which included 13 persons with specific needs, 14 new arrivals, 19 detained individuals and 1,094 individuals with various medical needs.

- In Meri and Kaka settlements, UNHCR’s partner ADES conducted awareness-raising on HIV/AIDS for some 7,029 individuals. Free and voluntary testing was performed for 395 individuals in Meri, of which 20 tested positive for HIV. They were referred to the Kurukwata Health Centre for follow up. Male and female condoms were widely distributed in both settlements.

- In Biringi settlement, 14 new children at risk were identified, for which one Best Interest Assessment is ongoing. There are a total of 120 children at risk in the settlement. Among them, 118 were provided WASH assistance consisting of bath and laundry soap.

- In Biringi settlement, a recent verification exercise identified 216 Children with Specific Needs, including 67 separated children and 13 unaccompanied children. Theirs needs have yet to be assessed.
Urban refugees

- UNHCR’s partner AIDES facilitated access to medical care for 137 urban refugees in Goma, mostly Burundian and Rwandan, through the "Kingo la Afya" health insurance.

- In Bukavu, 148 urban refugee children received school supplies and cash support for school fees, allowing them to enrol for the 2019-2020 school year at the local school.

Congolese returnees

- UNHCR and its partner CNR verified a total of 14,615 Congolese refugees who spontaneously returned from Angola to Kasai and Kasai Central Provinces.

- In Kasai Central Province, at the request of authorities, UNHCR started transporting Congolese refugees who spontaneously returned from Angola, from the border crossing point of Kalamba Mbuji to the temporary site of Nkandji, near Kananga (capital of the Province). On 26 September, the first convoy transported 964 persons.

- The Provincial Government set up the Nkandji site in mid-September, to relocate the thousands of spontaneous returnees who were staying in a makeshift site in Kananga city. Authorities then started transporting returnees directly from Kalamba Mbuji to Nkandji site (instead of Kananga). UNHCR provided 1,000 tarpaulins to improve living conditions in Nkandji site.

- In Haut-Katanga Province, UNHCR distributed 383 school kits to students in Mwashi and Kapampa, which have seen the return of thousands of Congolese refugees from Zambia. In addition, both schools received supplies such as notebooks and pens.

- In early September, the first stone was laid for a new school, financed by UNHCR and built by AIRD, in the village of Kapampa, Haut-Katanga Province. Construction is ongoing for the school to be able to host the thousands of Congolese refugee children who have returned from Zambia since September 2018.

Statelessness

- UNHCR organized focus groups with displaced women, men, boys and girls, including persons with specific needs, in the Tchomia and Kasenyi IDP sites (Ituri Province) to assess challenges in registering children’s births. The discussions revealed that most IDPs lost their documentation while fleeing attacks, while the legal procedure to obtain new documents is lengthy or non-existent. General unawareness of the 90-day deadline for registering births exposes children to statelessness. UNHCR conducted awareness-raising in schools in Tchomia, about the importance of birth certificates to prevent statelessness.

- Following a training conducted by UNHCR, the Civil Protection of Ituri Province also began raising awareness of the importance of birth registration in Kasenyi site. Thanks to its advocacy efforts, the Civil Registry officer started registering displaced newborns during the 90-day legal period at the site.

- In North Kivu Province, following advocacy from child protection actors including UNHCR, 54 refugee children received birth certificates through supplementary judgments at the Peace Court in Goma, despite their births having been registered after the legal 90-day deadline.
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

**Ituri Province**

- As displacements continued in Ituri Province, Ituri’s Site Management and Coordination Working Group (CCCM) now estimates that almost **227,000 people are staying in 87 IDP sites**. At the onset of the crisis in June, there were 145,000 according to OCHA. Meanwhile, many more are still staying with host communities, the biggest concentrations being in Drôdro, Kasenyi, Fataki, Rho and Tchomia.

- Armed clashes between the DRC’s army and armed groups continued in Ituri Province’s Mambasa, Djugu and Irumu territories. In Djugu Territory, the CCCM Working Group recorded the **arrival of 675 households** (2,874 individuals) in two sites in Bunia and neighboring Iga Barrière.

- A total of **706 human rights violations** were recorded by UNHCR’s partner INTERSOS in September, a 32% decrease compared to August. This could be due to the multiplication of army patrols, and to sensitizations on peaceful coexistence. UNHCR and partners **responded to 188 violations**, mainly to cases of rape, attempt to physical integrity, and arbitrary detention.1

- Since June, in response to massive displacement, UNHCR and partners Caritas and the Danish Refugee Council constructed **79 collective hangars for 498 households** (4,740 persons), as well as **897 family emergency shelters for 897 vulnerable households** (4,485 persons) in several IDP-hosting locations. Schools and churches in Kasenyi, Drôdro and Bule could be decongested thanks to this assistance.

- UNHCR and partners Caritas and AVSI **built the capacity of IDPs and host communities** to directly address challenges related to displacement, and ensure their own participation in decision-making. In September, 40 local leaders and members of authorities (including 11 women), 14 IDP committees and 15 community-based protection structures received **community-based protection training** in IDP-hosting areas. Five community-based protection structures also elaborated protection plans in Komanda and Mandima.

- In September, UNHCR and partners **distributed non-food items** (NFIs) to 3,238 households (12,952 persons) at the Bembei Telega and Kasenyi IDP sites, including blankets, plastic sheeting, sleeping mats, jerry cans, soap and sanitary pads.

- UNHCR and INTERSOS interviewed 426 IDP households living in host families in Bunia and neighboring Iga Barrière, as well as 18 key informants, about their needs. **Sexual and gender-based violence** (SGBV) was reported as the main protection risk, namely survival sex, sexual assault, and early and forced marriage. IDPs also denounced **stigmatization** by host communities. Their reported immediate needs were food (47% of households survive on one meal per day), shelter, education, and clothing. 32% of households were displaced for the second time.

**North Kivu Province**

- The situation in Lubero, Masisi and Rutshuru territories remained of extreme concern, as a result of the DRC’s army and armed groups clashing. Displacements continued in Lubero Territory, the majority being women and children staying in host families, with staggering protection needs. Meanwhile, **timid returns of IDPs** to their areas of origin were observed around Nobili, even though these movements may be cyclical.

- UNHCR’s Protection Monitoring system documented **7,813 protection incidents** between January and September 2019 throughout North Kivu Province, including 1,256 in September alone. UNHCR and partners

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responded with **advocacy and referrals**, which enabled nine rape victims to receive psychosocial care, 16 to receive PEP kits, 12 to receive medical care, and two rape perpetrators to be arrested. In addition, three victims of kidnapping and six victims of arbitrary arrest were freed².

- In Beni territory, UNHCR and partner Caritas trained six IDP committees on **IDP protection** and their roles and responsibilities. Three community-based protection structures received capacity-building in Nobili, so that they could start creating community-based protection plans for their areas, to identify the protection risks faced by communities and propose solutions to them.

- UNHCR’s local partners, ANT-PP and SOCOAC, launched **peaceful coexistence projects** in Masisi, Rutshuru and Beni territories. The project involves IDPs, returned IDPs and host community members working together in community fields, learning improved farming techniques and planting as a group, which contributes to their livelihood and helps solve peaceful coexistence issues. The two NGOs supported **2,000 beneficiary households** with farming tools, training, and continuous supervision.

- In Masisi, Rutshuru and Lubero territories, UNHCR and partner AIDES are implementing a **shelter project** for returned and recent IDPs. A total of 1,355 shelters have so far been completed, while emergency shelters are under construction in IDP sites in Masisi and Rutshuru, to meet the needs or recent arrivals. The project involves a **cash-for shelter approach** via mobile money, as well as the distribution of locally-unavailable materials. The project targets 1,700 returned IDPs and 1,000 newly-displaced households.

- In the Nobili area, UNHCR **distributed tarpaulins** to 202 recently-displaced households who were occupying schools, so that they could build emergency shelters and vacate the school to allow teaching to resume.

**South Kivu Province**

- Insecurity in the Fizi Highlands and Itombwe sector led to **35,000 people becoming internally displaced** within two weeks, according to OCHA. In the Minembwe area, **intercommunity tensions** resulted in additional population movements. Humanitarian access is restricted due to road inaccessibility, aggravated by the rainy season.

- Following the new wave of displacement from the Minembwe Highlands (Fizi Territory) and Itombwe area (Mwenga Territory), UNHCR and AIDES conducted a mission to Fizi to assess the population’s shelter and non-food item needs.

- An attack in Abembwe was heard from Lusenda refugee camp and led to **panic within the host and Burundian refugee populations**, triggering displacements towards Mboko.

- UNHCR’s partner INTERSOS put in place **ten community structures** in Walungu, Mwegna, Shabunda and Kalehe territories, in areas with high protection needs that are difficult to access and are not covered by Protection Monitoring. The structures were trained collect and document protection incidents.

**Kasai region**

- UNHCR’s protection monitoring system recorded **1,099 human rights violations** in the Kasai region in September. UNHCR and partners responded with referrals to medical, psychosocial and judicial services, the provision of PEP kits to rape survivors, cash assistance, and mediation in cases of conflict. UNHCR and partners also conducted sensitization for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

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² For a full protection analysis, cf. UNHCR’s monthly protection monitoring report on North Kivu (in French):
In Kasai Province, UNHCR began an **HIV/AIDS project** aiming to increase the provision of HIV services in the Province, and to contribute to targeted populations’ access to these services.

In Kananga, Kasai Central Province, **200 beneficiaries were selected** for a socio-economic reintegration project targeting survivors of, and people exposed to, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). Socio-economic reintegration activities will include tailoring, baking, soap-making, and literacy classes.

**Tanganyika / Haut-Katanga Provinces**

From 5 to 6 September, UNHCR, partners and IDPs conducted a joint “Go and See” mission to verify the conditions of return in Mpiana and Panda (Manono Territory, Tanganyika Province), following return movements from Shamwana, also in Manono Territory. In Mpiana Mwanga Health Zone, there were **5,726 returnees** who came back from various villages in Haut Katanga Province between April and July 2018, according authorities. They were living in dire conditions. The mission highlighted needs in protection, food security, nutrition, essential household items, education, health, hygiene and sanitation.

In response to recurrent population movements of both returnees and IDPs in Kabalo and Nyunzu territories, Tanganyika Province, UNHCR and partners carried out a mission to update population movement figures. Some 14,270 IDPs and 60,931 returnees were recorded in Nyunzu Territory, while 6,477 IDPs and 65,125 returnees were recorded in Kabalo Territory. The mission also highlighted needs in protection, food security, nutrition, essential household items, education, health, hygiene and sanitation in both territories.

UNHCR and partners visited the IDPs sites of Kakomba TZF, Kankomba Office and Kaseke, in and around Kalemie town, which are under closure by Tanganyika provincial authorities. The aim was to gather IDPs’ intentions of return, as well as potential protection risks to ensure that returns are voluntary, safe and dignified. Returning IDPs in Moba Territory, Tanganyika Province, expressed a general satisfaction with the return process according to focus groups held on 26 September.

**Clusters and Working Groups**

**Protection Cluster**

Between 4 and 6 September, the Ituri Protection Cluster and other actors\(^3\) conducted a **joint humanitarian mission in conflict-affected areas of Djugu Territory**, Ituri Province. The mission noted that IDP sites had been spontaneously created next to MONUSCO military bases, and that IDPs limited their own movements for fear of violence. Humanitarian needs were overwhelming: overcrowded sites, lack of latrines, and limited access to food and water. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) was a serious concern, with women and girls openly declaring their use of survival sex as a last resort. Host communities were generally welcoming, despite limited resources to share. Following the joint mission, humanitarian actors recommended that local committees establish registration procedures, and that humanitarian actors strengthen capacity-building of IDP committees, reinforce community-based protection mechanisms, conduct an in-depth evaluation of SGBV and child protection risks, and reinforce protection monitoring systems and security in sites.

The North Kivu Protection Cluster organized a joint mission to Kitshanga, Masisi Territory, from 23 to 28 September. The **civilian character of displacement sites** was found to be compromised, and serious **tensions existed with host communities**. During the night of 21 to 22 September, armed men made an incursion into

\(^3\) UNHCR, WFP, OCHA, UNICEF, INTERSOS, local NGOs, and MONUSCO’s Civil Affairs section.
the Mungote IDP site, killing two and injuring four IDPs. The Protection Cluster is assessing the security situation in IDP sites to propose solutions.

- From 14 to 16 September, UNHCR, OCHA and WFP participated in a Joint Protection Team mission organized by MONUSCO in Minembwe, South Kivu Province. The mission evaluated security and protection needs in the Minembwe Highlands and Itombwe Mountains following the resurgence of intercommunal clashes in September, and to coordinate the humanitarian response. Local authorities and community leaders were consulted, and advised on how to reactivate inter-community consultations. The team found the lack of access to affected areas to be a major obstacle for a response.

- In Tanganyika Province, the Protection Cluster, led by UNHCR, prepared a note for the Humanitarian Coordinator to advocate to national authorities for the involvement of humanitarian actors in the process of closing IDPs sites in Kalemie Territory. This is to ensure that returns are voluntary, safe and dignified.

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**As of 24 September 2019**

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