

# Southern Africa Operational Update

April 2022

## Highlights

### Voluntary repatriation

progressed with 1,400 individuals returning to their country of origin by end of April

### Refugee inclusion

continued to be pursued in national development plans and financial systems

### Preventing statelessness

through birth certificates and official documentation remained a priority



*Displaced families building shelters in Mueda District, Cabo Delgado, Northern Mozambique*  
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## During the month of April:



**13,064** women and girls received sanitary materials in **Malawi**



**3,356** people registered and documented to prevent statelessness in **Eswatini**



**2,650** people benefitted from a new health post in the **Republic of the Congo**



**784** people provided with legal assistance to obtain official documentation in **Mozambique**



**180** teachers provided with training in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**



**142** refugee leaders, parents and students received protection training in **Angola**

## People of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa

**7,835,145** people of concern to UNHCR in Southern Africa, including:



**801,098** refugees and  
**285,322** asylum-seekers



**6,711,404** IDPs



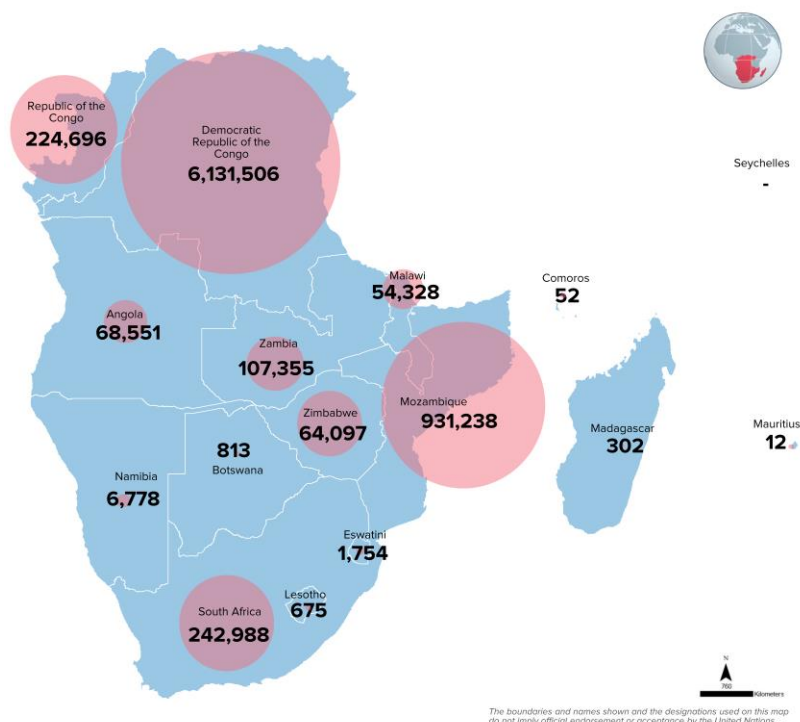
**145** returnees\*



**37,175** other people of concern

(as of 30 April 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.*



## Regional context: Key developments

**Voluntary repatriation:** UNHCR operations in the region are facilitating the voluntary repatriation of refugees and asylum-seekers who wish to return to their home countries. This process is conducted in close coordination with government and partners. From January 2022 to the end of April, approximately 1,400 individuals were recorded as having voluntarily repatriated back to their country of origin.

- **Angola:** UNHCR developed a multisectoral road map to repatriate Congolese refugees who fled DRC in the aftermath of the 2017 crisis in Greater Kasai region. Cross-border returns of about 1,000 individuals are set to resume in June. UNHCR and government will begin implementing activities to prepare for repatriation, such as vaccination, birth registration and issuance of certificates, and other logistical matters.
- **DRC:** So far in 2022, 724 Rwandan and 512 Burundian refugees have voluntarily repatriated from the DRC. Planning for voluntary repatriation of refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) are still underway for later in the year.
- **South Africa:** UNHCR facilitated the voluntary repatriation of 49 individuals from South Africa to the DRC, with a second group of 64 individuals expected to depart in late May to Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. In the coming months, further departures from Johannesburg and Cape Town are planned to Burundi and the DRC respectively.
- **Zambia:** Voluntary repatriation began at the end of December 2021 following the results of an Intentions Survey conducted in Mantapala refugee settlement. Three convoys of 298 individuals travelled from Mantapala to Pweto reception centre in the DRC. With indications of continued interest from refugees, it is expected that many more will repatriate in 2022.

## Operational highlights

### Angola

- **Protection training:** On 21 April, 80 refugees, including parents and student representatives from the school in Lóvua refugee settlement were trained on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response as part of an initiative to promote a safe teaching environment in schools. Furthermore, on 27 April, UNHCR held a capacity building session on protection mainstreaming and age, gender and diversity (AGD) approaches with 62 participants from 19 community management structures in Lóvua refugee settlement. The relevance of these concepts in humanitarian action and the role of the community were the main themes discussed.
- **Statelessness field assessments:** From 7 to 13 April, UNHCR conducted field assessments in communities of Lunda Norte where residents had been identified to be at risk of statelessness. The purpose of the assessments was to identify causes and consequences of the risk of statelessness. As an outcome of this exercise, UNHCR identified three locations where an indigenous tribe faces difficulties in accessing nationality documentation. These outcomes will inform future advocacy and promotion of solutions with local and national authorities.

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

- **Teacher training:** UNHCR's partner facilitated pedagogical training on the principles and skills of teaching and learning for 159 teachers from primary and secondary schools supported by Education Cannot Wait in Mobayi Mbongo and Yakoma territories. Twenty-one other teachers and education specialists received similar pedagogic training to run remedial classes for out-of-school children, with 664 pupils identified to benefit from remedial and non-formal education in the targeted localities.
- **Livelihood support:** UNHCR's partner distributed maize and groundnuts seeds to 109 refugee and host community households in the Modale development hub, North Ubangi Province, to cultivate 60 hectares of land granted to the community by local authorities. UNHCR also provided soap-making kits and training for 30 women from IDP and host communities in Kigonze and other IDP sites in Bunia, Ituri Province. Through its livelihoods programming, UNHCR aims to contribute to self-reliance and resilience by providing income streams for households.
- **GBV training:** From 29 to 30 April, UNHCR together with its partners organized training sessions with traditional leaders and customary authorities in Kasai Central Province on GBV prevention and response, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The aim of the training was to reinforce leaders' and authorities' role in the prevention of GBV and in the promotion of women's rights.

### Malawi

- **Insects for food pilot project:** A pilot project will be implemented in Dzaleka refugee camp promoting insects for food and feed. Consultations on the potential for insect farming in refugee and host communities were facilitated by the World Bank. The project will seek to build up a value chain for human consumption, animal feed and organic fertilizer.
- **Sanitary materials:** A distribution of sanitary material and soap began on 27 April reaching 13,064 women and girls. The distribution covered needs for four months and was aimed at improving hygiene and health for women of reproductive age. Access to sanitary materials is also critical for reducing the likelihood that girls of reproductive age will be absent from or drop out of school.

## Mozambique

- **Access to documentation:** UNHCR in partnership with the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM) provided legal assistance to 784 people in April to access official documentation. This included people who had lost their documents when forced to flee their homes, and those who previously never had documentation. Documentation is important for accessing public and social services such as education and healthcare, and for preventing statelessness. Since December 2020, UNHCR and UCM provided legal assistance to 22,308 people in Cabo Delgado, including 14,607 people assisted to access documentation.
- **Livelihood support:** UNHCR enrolled 100 people from displaced and host communities in technical and vocational education and training, launched a pilot initiative to engage 50 IDPs in recycling-related livelihoods initiatives, and facilitated the inclusion of 80 artisans in the MAKE initiative led by UNESCO that promotes access to markets and opportunities within the creative industry in Mozambique. Since October 2021, UNHCR has established partnerships with the government, NGOs and the private sector that has provided more than 500 people from displaced and host communities with livelihoods opportunities.
- **GBV prevention and response:** UNHCR and its partner organized mental health and psychosocial support activities with 107 adolescent girls at six “multipurpose hubs” run by UNHCR in Cabo Delgado. UNHCR also conducted awareness-raising and community engagement sessions on GBV and on sexual exploitation and abuse prevention and response reaching 647 people from displaced and host communities.

### In his own words: Supporting a displaced family through farming in Cabo Delgado



Tomás, 35, and his son, Salvador, 6, in Mueda District, Mozambique © UNHCR/Martim Gray Pereira

In 2021, Tomás, 35, was forced to flee with his family from Muindumbe, Cabo Delgado, northern Mozambique. “I want the war to end and live in peace”, he says. “Here in Mueda, I found safety and peace. I am farming beans, maize, green beans, tomatoes and other vegetables on two hectares of land. I go to the farm every day, and my youngest son, Salvador, comes with me sometimes. He doesn’t like it that much, though, as he is looking forward to joining his siblings in school later this year,” says Tomás smiling. “I want my children to go to school and have a good job one day,” he adds. “This year I am planning to stay in Mueda, but as soon as it is possible and peace is back, I want to go back to my village in Muindumbe. It’s home, and home is home.”

## Republic of the Congo

- **Improved water supply:** On 21 April, UNHCR launched drilling for two boreholes equipped with hand pumps in Bouanga locality site in Plateaux, where recurring quality water shortages had become an increasingly pressing issue. Prior to the installation of the boreholes, locals and refugees had access to less than 12 litres of water per person per day. The project will improve access to drinking water and meet the standard of 20 litres per person per day benefitting 1,800 people, including 600 refugees.
- **New health post:** The new health post built with support from UNHCR in 2021 in Moungoungui, Likouala department, began operating in April. It is providing much-needed healthcare for 2,650 individuals, including 1,800 refugees who arrived from the CAR in 2021, who previously had to travel long distances to seek healthcare.



## South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO)

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

- **Handover of medical equipment and supplies in Namibia:** On 29 April, UNHCR, alongside UNICEF and WHO, donated an ambulance, medical equipment, medicine and personal protective equipment to the Government of Namibia at the Osire refugee settlement. The contributions were received by the Minister of Health, the Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and Security, as well as representatives of the Regional Governor. As part of the handover ceremony, refugees participated in various activities including traditional dances.
- **Preventing statelessness through civil registration in Eswatini:** In April, the Kingdom of Eswatini launched a nationwide civil registration and documentation exercise. By the end of the month, the exercise was ongoing in the two regions of Shiselweni and Lumbobo, with the registration and documentation of 3,356 individuals. Some 30 stateless individuals were identified and registered. UNHCR will work alongside the government to support solutions for the identified stateless persons.

### Profile: Rugby-playing refugee returns home from South Africa to the DRC



*Yanis Tshibangu attends the refugee reception office in Pretoria to receive papers to return home to the DRC. © UNHCR/Laura Padoan*

The last time Yanis Tshibangu was in Salongo village, in the DRC, he thought he would never see his home again. His mother had received threats to her life and fled to South Africa with her children.

After leaving Kinshasa, Yanis was determined that the label of refugee would not limit his ambitions. His talent for sport was nurtured by his school rugby coach, and he went on to play rugby for the University of the Witwatersrand, in Johannesburg. “Sport has the capacity to make you feel at home,” he explains. “You are part of a team where you are all sharing the same goal and the same objectives. Sport made it easy for me to integrate and to adjust.”

Now aged 27, Yanis has returned to Salongo with his family under happier circumstances – he has been selected to play for DRC’s national rugby team. The Tshibangu family was part of the first group of around 600 Congolese refugees living in South Africa who have opted to take up voluntary repatriation this year. [Read the full story here.](#)

## Zambia

- **Access to financial services:** UNHCR, in partnership with the Bank of Zambia, held a multi-stakeholder virtual forum to review and validate a proposed financial inclusion roadmap of steps toward improving access to financial services for refugees in Zambia. The virtual event was attended by more than 30 government and private sector stakeholders involved in financial service provision, with appearances by the UNHCR Representative, the Commissioner of Refugees, and the Director of Payment Services at Bank of Zambia.
- **Refugee inclusion in national development plan:** During the first week of April, the Cabinet of the Republic of Zambia approved the Eighth National Development Plan, which will be put forward for endorsement by parliament and ascension by the President. UNHCR, through engagement with government and UN agencies, ensured that the plan includes refugees and other people of concern to UNHCR. As the Plan moves toward implementation, UNHCR will continue to engage and advocate to ensure that refugees, who are part of the plan, are also prioritized for access to services and programming.

## Zimbabwe

- **Child protection:** UNHCR's education partner facilitated a child protection awareness campaign at the cash distribution point. The topic was "Condemning all forms of Child Abuse". Refugees and asylum-seekers learned about forms of child abuse ranging from sexual, physical, emotional and general neglect, and were provided with information about the appropriate referral pathways.
- **Clowns Without Borders:** UNHCR partnered with Clowns Without Borders to bring laughter and happiness to refugee children at Tongogara Refugee Camp. The clowns performed several shows in the camp and in primary schools at surrounding villages reaching more than 4,000 children. The shows aimed at improving the psychosocial condition of children and communities. "The importance of bringing happiness amongst children and forgetting the tensions in their lives for even a short time is crucial for building their resilience. Bringing a smile to a kid is a wonderful contribution to their wellbeing," said the UNHCR Representative.

### Spotlight: Youth taking action for World Earth Day in Tongogara refugee camp



© UNHCR/Gwaar Nger

To mark World Earth Day in Tongogara refugee camp, Zimbabwe, the Refugee Child's Coalition for Climate Action spearheaded clean-up campaigns, documentary screening, tree planting and focus group discussions with children and young people. The Nyaradzo Group donated 200 trees that were planted in the camp.

The Refugee Child's Coalition for Climate Action is a project run by young refugees to raise awareness on climate change and environmental conservation. The initiative received funds from the Global Refugee Youth Network in March 2022. It aims to empower young refugees to become climate change advocates. UNHCR is supporting their activities with technical assistance as well as equipment and supplies for clean-up campaigns.

## COVID-19

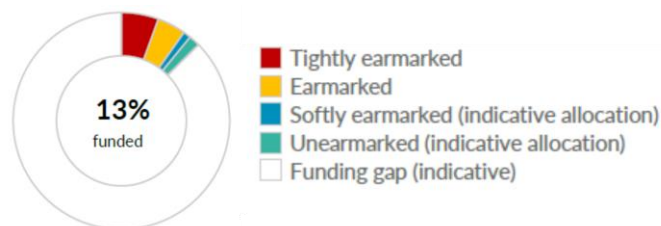
There were more than 5.5 million reported cases of COVID-19 in the 16 countries of the Southern Africa region as of 26 April. Some 1,544 cases of COVID-19 have been reported among people of concern to UNHCR since reporting began in 2020. Overall, a downward trend in active cases was observed as compared to the previous month, however a lack of testing facilities and reliance on voluntary reporting in urban areas means that case numbers may be higher. There have been indications in countries such as **South Africa** of a growing upward trend that may trigger a new wave of cases going into the winter season.

UNHCR continues to work with governments, UN and NGO partners to strengthen COVID-19 prevention and response capacity and to promote vaccine uptake in refugee and IDP-hosting communities. Vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge and UNHCR is engaging with communities to dispel myths and build confidence. In **Angola**, 4,707 refugees had been vaccinated against COVID-19 at Lóvua settlement by 29 April, out of which 3,264 were fully immunized with two doses, and 26 people had received a third dose. In addition, 2,650 disposable face masks were delivered for use in common areas of Lóvua settlement to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19. In **Zimbabwe**, all refugees and asylum-seekers in Tongogara refugee camp and the Waterfalls transit centre in Harare have access to the national vaccination programme. As of 27 April, 2,365 persons at these locations, including people from the host community, had received a first dose, 1,489 had received a second dose, and 75 people received a third dose.

Meanwhile, in North Ubangi, **DRC**, UNHCR completed construction of two isolation and two quarantine centres in durable material, replacing emergency structures at Bili and Inke refugee camps. To support provincial authorities and strengthen prevention and response, UNHCR carried out a technical assessment of a COVID-19 centre at Gbadolite general hospital and a surveillance kiosk at Gbadolite airport.

## Financial Requirements

UNHCR's financial requirements for the Southern Africa region in 2022 total **USD 436.5 million**. By the end of April, **13 per cent** of needs have been funded. UNHCR is grateful to donors who have supported operations in Southern Africa in 2022, including<sup>1</sup>:



United States of America 15.1M | Japan 6.4M | Sweden 3.7M | UN Peacebuilding Fund 2.7M | CERF 2.7M | European Union 2.3M | Giuliana Lagetto 2M | Education Cannot Wait 1.8M | France 1M | Country-Based Pooled Funds | UNO-Fluechtlingshilfe | UN Programme On HIV/AIDS | Republic of the Congo | Qatar | Profuturo | 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>:** United States of America 14.5M | Norway | Private donors

**Unearmarked contributions (USD)<sup>3</sup>:** Sweden 95.2M | Norway 72.5M | Netherlands 37.2M | Denmark 35.6M | Germany 27.6M | Private donors Spain 19.9M | France 18.5 | Switzerland 18.4M | Private donor Japan 14.9M | Belgium 11.9M | Ireland 11.9M | Italy 10M

*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. Where a donor has contributed USD 2M or more, the total amount is shown 3. Donors contributing USD 10M or more are listed.*

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