

Southern Africa

June 2025

11.5 million people* are covered by UNHCR's operations across 16 Southern African countries, including over **1 million refugees and asylum-seekers**, mainly from Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan.

UNHCR contributes to protection and solutions for **6.8 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)** in the region who have been forced to flee due to conflict and some **1.4 million displaced by disasters** – primarily in the DRC and Malawi.

UNHCR continues to **closely monitor the evolving situation in the DRC**, working to **advocate for rights** and **provide life-saving assistance** to families affected by the alarming rates of violence in the eastern provinces of the country.

KEY FIGURES (as of 31 May 2025)

817,427

Refugees

211,351

Asylum-seekers

6,868,324

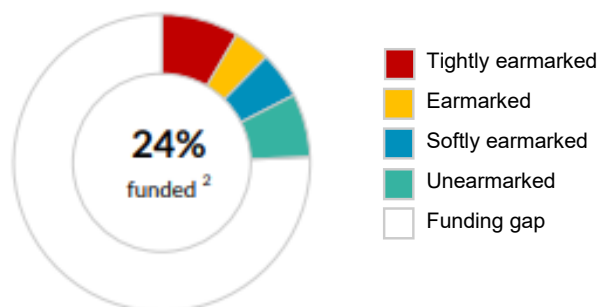
Internally displaced persons *

*This figure includes only conflict-related IDPs. In addition, as of 31 May 2025, there were 1,409,788 **people displaced internally by natural disasters and extreme weather events** in the region. The displacement occurred in the following countries: DRC (851,501), Malawi (410,683) and Mozambique (147,604).

FUNDING (as of 30 June) *

US\$ 451.3 million

UNHCR's financial requirements in Southern Africa for 2025

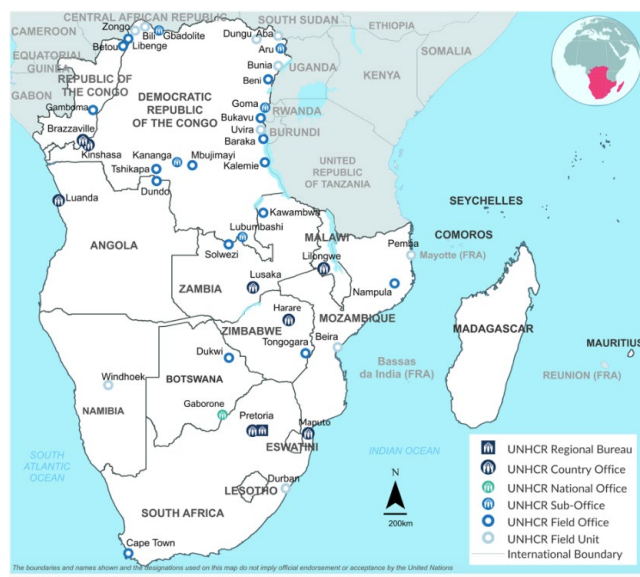


* Includes indicative allocation of softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions for the region.

PRESENCE AND STAFF (as of 30 June) *

Regional Bureau for Southern Africa	64
Angola	26
Democratic Republic of the Congo	281
Malawi	38
Mozambique	89
Republic of the Congo	44
South Africa Multi-Country Office (Botswana, Comoros, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa)	56
Zambia	48
Zimbabwe	26
TOTAL STAFF	672

*Figures reflect regular UNHCR staff and affiliate workforce.



Regional Overview

Context: As of June 2025, Southern Africa had **11.5 million forcibly displaced people and returnees**. The region comprises one of the largest IDP situations in sub-Saharan Africa, while refugee camps and settlements in multiple countries, along with some urban areas, host long-term refugee population. **Complex crises** cause millions to flee their homes and prevent their safe return every year. The situation is further complicated by the **growing impact of natural disasters such as drought, heavy rains and cyclones**, which have **displaced 1.4 million people** in Southern Africa. In addition, thousands undertake the **dangerous journey along the Southern Route** alongside migrants, often reporting harsh experiences including violence, detention and exploitation.

Emergency Situations: The **DRC** is home to one of the world's most severe and underfunded humanitarian crises. Violence in the eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu and natural disasters across the territory have internally displaced some 6.4 million people and caused some 1.2 million people to seek asylum beyond the country's borders.

Solutions: Efforts toward sustainable responses and more integration of refugees are being made. **Voluntary repatriation** is the focus of solutions efforts in the region, as opportunities for **resettlement** remain limited. Options to expand complementary pathways continue to be explored. **Steps taken towards ending statelessness** in southern Africa include working with government to advocate for reforming nationality laws, policies, and procedures and supporting access to documentation.



The Office of the Commissioner of Refugees (COR) facilitates community leadership elections in Meheba Refugee Settlement, Zambia, with the support of UNHCR. © UNHCR/Yuchen Dou

Strategic Directions

The High Commissioner's Strategic Directions, renewed for 2022-2026, continue to guide UNHCR's efforts in Southern Africa to enact sustainable achievements for forcibly displaced and stateless people and the States and communities that host them. Priorities within the scope of the Strategic Directions include:

- Protect** **Strengthen** the protection environment; **improve** the quality of registration and information management; **reinforce** asylum systems and legal protection frameworks.
- Respond** **Strengthen** emergency preparedness; **innovate** to improve operational responses.
- Include** **Enhance** partnerships; **invigorate** the humanitarian-development nexus; **encourage** sustainable responses.
- Empower** **Empower** displaced communities; **improve** communication; **support** decision-making.
- Solve** **Promote** and **facilitate** comprehensive solutions; **alleviate** poverty; **foster** self-reliance.

Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support of donors who contributed to its operations in the Southern Africa region with flexible and earmarked funds in 2025:

African Development Fund | Algeria | Armenia | Australia | Australia for UNHCR | Belgium | Bulgaria | Canada | Central Emergency Response Fund | China | Costa Rica | Denmark | España con ACNUR | Estonia | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Finland | Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Japan for UNHCR | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | New Zealand | Norway | Peru | Philippines | Qatar | Republic of Korea | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | South Africa | Sweden | Switzerland | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs | United Nations Children's Fund | United Nations Joint SDG Fund | United Kingdom of Great Britain & Northern Ireland | United States of America | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe | USA for UNHCR | Private donors in the Republic of Korea and United Arab Emirates | Other private donors

This is the final Fact Sheet issued by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Southern Africa. Effective 01 October 2025, Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, the South Africa Multi-Country Office, Zambia and Zimbabwe will be covered by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for East and the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (email: kenrbext@unhcr.org) while the DRC and Republic of the Congo will be covered by UNHCR's Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (email: senrbmedia@unhcr.org).