

Southern Africa Operational Update

April-June 2025

Highlights

Capacity building initiatives to strengthen government refugee status determination procedures were implemented in **Angola** and **South Africa**.

Agricultural support and vocational training to improve the self-reliance of displaced people were provided in **Angola**, the **DRC** and **Eswatini**.

UNHCR continued to respond to recent displacement in the **DRC** and **Mozambique**, including by distributing essential items and providing cash assistance.



*Essential core relief items are distributed to families displaced by attacks in Ancyabe, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique.
©UNHCR/Isadora Zoni*

During April-June, across Southern Africa:



6,724 people were registered and **36,412** people received documentation.



54 people were supported to voluntarily return to their home countries.



3,766 people received livelihoods training and support.



274 refugees were submitted for resettlement and **373** people departed on resettlement and complementary pathways.



7,010 people received cash assistance to support their basic needs.



48,096 people benefited from trainings on prevention of and response to sexual violence and child protection.



73,062 people were reached with core relief items (CRIs) and shelter initiatives.



192,800 people benefitted from health and WASH initiatives.

Population Figures in Southern Africa



817,427 refugees



211,351 asylum-seekers



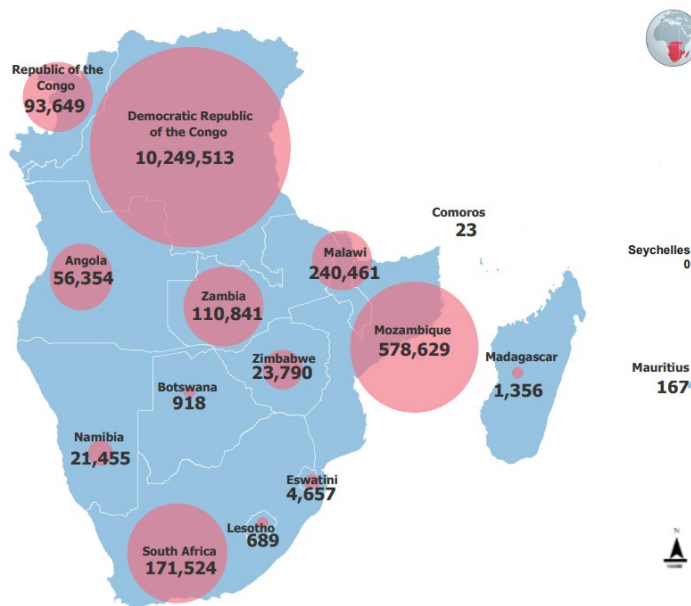
6,868,234 IDPs



3,597,307 IDP returnees



49,617 from other groups



(as of 31 May 2025)

*The figures and the map only include conflict-related IDPs and IDP returnees. In addition to this number, as

of 31 May 2025, there were some **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).

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

- DRC-Rwanda peace agreement:** On 27 June Congolese and Rwandan officials signed a peace agreement in Washington D.C. which offers an opportunity to stop the cycle of violence and displacement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Since the beginning of the year, more than 118,500 people have fled the DRC to neighbouring countries, primarily Burundi and Uganda. The agreement was [welcomed by UNHCR](#), in particular the parties' commitment to support the return of refugees and those internally displaced by the conflict to their places of origin, and to guarantee safe, unimpeded humanitarian access.
- Insecurity in northern Mozambique:** The situation in northern Mozambique remained highly volatile and unpredictable, with a sharp rise in attacks by non-state armed groups. In April alone, attacks and fear amongst communities triggered the displacement of some 26,000 people, including over 2,000 in Niassa Province – a region where displacement had previously been limited. May marked the most violent month in nearly three years and saw the sharpest rise in violence in Cabo Delgado Province since June 2022, with 61 security incidents affecting over 134,000 people. [UNHCR's ability to respond is severely constrained by a critical lack of funding](#). Protection needs, including support for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), mental health services, and access to civil documentation, far exceed available resources.
- Cholera outbreaks:** Angola continues to face a severe cholera outbreak, with more than 25,000 cases reported and 760 deaths nationwide. UNHCR is actively coordinating with WHO and UNICEF on prevention and response efforts, particularly for refugees in affected areas such as Lóvuá settlement in Lunda Norte Province.

Operational Highlights

Angola

- **Refugee status determination workshop:** UNHCR conducted a training workshop for 50 officials from Angola's Ministry of Interior, focusing on refugee status determination, refugee law, cessation, protection principles, interviewing techniques, detention guidelines and asylum procedures. This marks the second phase of a three-part training series which is aligned with Angola's pledge made at the Global Refugee Forum to resume and strengthen refugee status determination and reinforces Angola's commitment to upholding international protection standards.
- **Vocational training:** Vocational training programmes in tailoring, carpentry, and plumbing were concluded in Lovua settlement, resulting in 54 refugees graduating and representing a major step towards economic self-reliance. Graduates received start-up kits to help them launch small businesses and put their new skills into practice. The training is part of a broader livelihoods strategy which aims to reduce aid dependency and foster sustainable income-generating activities.



*Ministry of Interior officials attend a refugee status determination workshop in Luanda, Angola.
© UNHCR/Wine Camilo*

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

- **Response in eastern DRC:** UNHCR and partners continued to provide protection and assistance across North and South Kivu provinces. On 23 June UNHCR began the enrolment of 1,000 IDP households, including many living in collective centres in Beni Territory, North Kivu Province, in cash assistance programmes. The voluntary repatriation of Burundian refugees in South Kivu has resumed in coordination with the National Commission for Refugees. On 26 June, the first convoy of 44 Burundian refugees departed the Kavimvira transit centre for Bujumbura.
- **Agricultural support:** The allocation of agricultural land in Mole, South Ubangi, provided 150 people with a 50 x 100m plot while in Limasa, North Ubangi, 35 farmers received seeds to boost food production. In addition, training in self-management and income generation reached 126 people, promoting autonomy and food security.
- **Prevention of GBV:** More than 2,300 people—including 1,000 refugees—participated in 28 awareness sessions across several locations, focusing on GBV prevention and consequences, as well as the importance of reporting sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) in schools. Additionally, dignity kits were distributed to 1,090 women and girls in Libenge in South Ubangi Province, as well as in Gomba and Modale in North Ubangi Province.

Malawi

- **Access to safe water and sanitation services enhanced:**

In Dzaleka Camp the solarization of one borehole was completed, boosting water production capacity to approximately 50,000 litres per day—sufficient to meet the daily needs of around 2,500 individuals at a rate of 20 litres per person. In addition, 30 household water, sanitation and hygiene units were constructed and one handpump was upgraded to a motorized water system. Five new water kiosks were established to pilot the Water



Refugee women in Dzaleka Camp benefit from initiatives to improve access to safe water. © UNHCR/Miriam Kadamba

Users Association (WUA) model, promoting community-led and sustainable water management. To support sanitation for new arrivals and those constructing new shelters, 400 dome toilet slabs were molded, contributing to improved hygiene infrastructure across the settlement.

- **Support for refugee-led organizations:** As part of continuous efforts to empower refugee communities and enhance protection responses, four refugee-led organizations (RLOs) were selected to receive targeted financial support to implement GBV prevention and response activities in Dzaleka Camp. This initiative is designed to reinforce community-driven mechanisms and promote sustainable, localized protection solutions.

Mozambique

- **Response to new displacement:** UNHCR deployed teams to carry out rapid protection assessments and provide urgent protection support, including gender-based violence case management services, to communities newly displaced in Ancuabe, Cabo Delgado Province and Mucula, Niassa Province by escalating attacks by non-state armed groups. In addition, a total of 550 core relief item kits, including essential items such as blankets, mats, cooking utensils, hygiene kits and mosquito nets were distributed.

- **Supporting access to civil documentation:** A new birth registration booth at Maratane Health Centre in Nampula Province was launched on World Refugee Day. Established in collaboration with UNICEF and government partners, the booth brings civil registration services closer to the community in Maratane, where approximately 30 per cent of Mozambique's refugees and asylum-seekers reside. During 2025, a more than 9,000 individuals have received support to access civil documentation in Cabo Delgado Province, while over 800 ID cards were distributed to refugees and asylum-seekers in Nampula Province.



Refugees, internally displaced people and host community members play football during World Refugee Day commemorations in Pemba, Nampula Province, Mozambique. © UNHCR/Isadora Zoni

- **Refugee inclusion and self-reliance highlighted during World Refugee Day commemorations:**

World Refugee Day was commemorated with events held in Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces, as well as the capital city of Maputo. In Pemba, Cabo Delgado Province, refugees and IDPs participated in a football match and market fair, while in Nampula Province activities included a tree-planting ceremony, solidarity march, cultural performances and inauguration of the rehabilitated Maratane dam to enhance water access and improve livelihoods. In Maputo, a joint visit by UNHCR and Government representatives to the local Bobole market highlighted refugee-managed businesses and the value of inclusion and self-reliance.

Republic of the Congo

- **Response for new arrivals from the DRC:** UNHCR, in partnership with Comité national d'assistance aux réfugiés (CNAR) and local authorities in Makotimpoko, provided a speed boat to enable access to remote fishing camps along the Congo River and the pre-registration of 407 new refugees—bringing the total number of new arrivals to more than 8,400—many of whom had fled community violence in Bolobo in neighbouring DRC. Joint protection and medical screenings identified 50 individuals with specific vulnerabilities, including severely malnourished children and unaccompanied minors living in precarious conditions.
- **Support for health facilities:** To strengthen the response capacity of health facilities and improve the quality of care for over 30,000 refugees and host community members, UNHCR, in partnership with Médecin d'Afrique (MDA), provided essential medical equipment to health centres in Makotimpoko and Kounzoulou (Ngabé), as well as the referral hospital of Gamboma and the district hospital of Ngabé. This included surgical supplies, hygiene equipment, medical trolleys and disinfectants.

South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO)

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



Refugees collect food during their transfer from the Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants to Dukwi Refugee Settlement in Botswana.
 © UNHCR/Staff

- **Asylum-seekers and refugees released from years-long detention in Botswana:** Following advocacy by UNHCR, along with support from other UN agencies, the Government of Botswana transferred a group of more than 370 asylum-seekers and refugees, primarily from the DRC, from the Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants to Dukwi Refugee Settlement. UNHCR was able to assist the new arrivals by providing tents and kitchen sets, however, given that the population of Dukwi Refugee Settlement has now increased by more than 50 per cent following the arrival of this group, additional funding is urgently required to meet the needs in the settlement.
- **Economic empowerment in Eswatini:** The first group of eight people transferred to Ndzevane, a site in Eswatini which is designed to support agricultural livelihoods and promote self-reliance among both refugees and host communities, while reducing pressure on the Malindza Refugee Reception Centre (MRRC)

and improving overall living conditions. The Ndzevane initiative aligns with Eswatini's Global Refugee Forum commitments to allocate arable land to refugees and host communities, and aims to improve food security, promote self-reliance and increase market participation.

- **Enhancement of asylum procedures in South Africa:** UNHCR, in partnership with IOM, UNICEF, and the Government of South Africa, conducted a four-day capacity-building workshop for 150 officials from government and border agencies, aimed at promoting a protection-sensitive entry system for refugees and asylum-seekers. In addition, UNHCR hosted a three-day virtual training for Refugee Status Determination Officers to enhance national asylum procedures, with a joint handbook currently under development.

Zambia

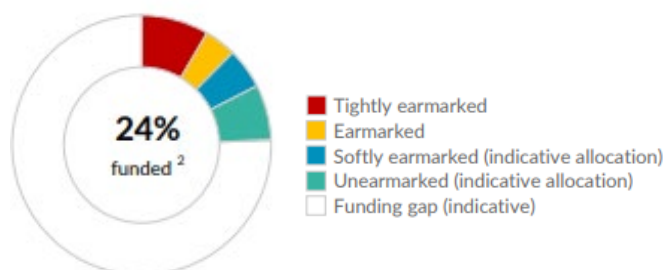
- **Inclusion in national systems:** ZamStats, the Office of the Commissioner for Refugees (COR), and UNHCR signed a tripartite memorandum of understanding to integrate refugees into national statistical systems, supporting Zambia's Global Refugee Forum commitments. Data collection for the Forced Displacement Survey of 4,000 households, conducted in cooperation with communities and government actors across all three settlements and Lusaka, is 82 per cent complete
- **Community engagement and family reconnection:** In partnership with the Zambia Red Cross Society, UNHCR supported the delivery of Red Cross messages for more than 1,400 refugees and asylum-seekers, facilitating family tracing and reconnection through digital platforms. These efforts restored family links and provided critical updates on rising insecurity in the DRC's Haut Katanga, Tanganyika and Lualaba provinces, underscoring the importance of two-way communication in monitoring protection risks and informing the humanitarian response.

Zimbabwe

- **Access to education:** Support with payment of school fees enabled more than 600 early childhood development (ECD) learners, 2,220 primary and 600 secondary students to access education through the national education system. In addition, two digital coaches conducted weekly visits to provide technical support to more than 100 teachers in the four schools covered under UNHCR's partnership with the ProFuturo Foundation to help improve the quality of education for refugee and host community students.
- **Accountability to affected populations:** A training was provided for 30 community volunteers, including 16 female volunteers, focusing on the establishment and importance of community-based community feedback and reporting mechanisms.

Financial Information

UNHCR's financial requirements for the Southern Africa region in 2025 total **US\$ 451.3 million**. As of the end of June, **24 per cent** of needs had been funded. UNHCR is grateful to donors who have supported operations in Southern Africa in 2025, including¹:



United States of America 10.9M | Germany 10.8M | European Union 3.8M | Japan 2.3M | Canada 2.2M | | Central Emergency Response Fund 2M | Sweden 1.8M | Private donors in the United Arab Emirates 1.7M | Italy 1.1M | Switzerland | España con ACNUR | African Development Fund | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | Japan for UNHCR | South Africa | USA for UNHCR | Belgium | China | UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs | United Nations Joint SDG Fund | United Nations Children's Fund | Other private donors

Flexible financial support greatly facilitates UNHCR's ability 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 2025, including:

Other softly earmarked contributions (US\$)²: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 6.9 million | Denmark 4.5 million | Australia for UNHCR 4.1 million | Norway 2.8 million | UNO-Flüchtlingshilfe 2.1 million

Unearmarked contributions (US\$)³: Sweden 74.1M | Norway 56.9M | Denmark 37.8M | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) 36.3M | España con ACNUR 31.3M | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 28.5M | Switzerland 20.4M | Japan for UNHCR 19.3M | Republic of Korea 16.8M | Australia 14.3M | France 14.9M | Ireland 13.6M | Private donors in the Republic of Korea 13.4M | Germany 10.8M | Belgium 10.7M | Algeria | Armenia | Bulgaria | Canada | Costa Rica | Estonia | Finland | Iceland | Kuwait | Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Monaco | Montenegro | New Zealand | Peru | Philippines | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | Serbia | Singapore | Thailand | United Arab Emirates | Private donors

Notes: 1. Where a donor has contributed US\$ 1 million 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 US\$ 2 million or more, the total amount is shown. 3. Where a donor has contributed US\$ 10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

This is the final Operational Update 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 the 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).