

Annual Results Report

2025

Republic of the Congo

Acknowledgements

UNHCR would like to thank all the stakeholders that contributed data and evidence to this report and reviewed their progress against the joint results of the strategy, including forcibly displaced and stateless people, host communities and host governments, United Nations agencies, and international and national non-governmental organizations, civil society and private sector. Their contributions enable us to create positive changes in the lives of the people we serve.

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Note:

The baseline values presented in this document reflect previous year's progress when available. If such data is not available, strategy baseline values are used instead.

Downloaded date: 08/05/2026

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- 4.1 - Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

Section 1: Context and Overview

1.1 Changes to the Operational Context

In 2025, the Republic of Congo maintained a generally stable political environment but continued to face structural constraints in meeting refugee needs. Socioeconomic fragility, weak public services, inequality, impending elections, and cross-border insecurity in neighbouring countries added complexity, while continued displacement from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) led to increasing numbers of people seeking international protection.

The operation's footprint remained largely concentrated in Likouala (notably Bétou, Enyellé and Mougougui), a remote fluvial area that is logistically complex and prone to flooding. Refugees and asylum-seekers are highly dispersed across riverside communities, which complicates access, increases operating costs, and heightens the importance of community-based protection and mobile outreach. The caseload is mixed, comprising long-standing Central African Republic (CAR) refugees with strong expressed intention to return, new Congolese arrivals from DRC and a residual Rwandan caseload requiring a statutory solution.

As part of UNHCR's global restructuring in response to the 2025 funding crisis, the Southern Africa Regional Bureau was closed and the ROC operation was integrated into the Cameroon Multi-Country Office (MCO). This transition was accompanied by a drastic reduction in staffing (from 48 to 8 posts) and the closure or downsizing of field locations, significantly altering UNHCR's presence and modalities in the country. The shift toward a light footprint has increased reliance on national institutions and partners for front-line service delivery, while also raising duty-of-care and coverage concerns, particularly in remote Likouala.

In February 2025, the Republic of Congo hosted the second ministerial meeting of the Solutions Platform for Crisis-Related Displacement in the Central African Republic under the Yaoundé Declaration rotation. At regional level, the Central African Republic's combined elections in December 2025 took place in a largely calm environment, contributing to improved conditions for voluntary repatriation. UNHCR also supported a regional pre-validation workshop on the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Regional Asylum Policy, in which ROC participated, helping to align national frameworks with evolving regional standards and to frame future solutions and protection efforts.

1.2. Progress Against the Desired Impact

1. Impact Area: Attaining Favorable Protection Environments

By the end of 2027, all refugees and people at risk of statelessness enjoy their fundamental rights and live above the poverty line, while benefiting from equitable access to basic social services on the same basis as nationals.

Population Type	Indicator	
	Baseline	Actual (2025)
1.1 Proportion of people seeking international protection who are able to access asylum procedures		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	94.67%	6.81%

In 2025, protection outcomes on access to territory, asylum and legal identity in the Republic of Congo reflected overstretched registration and refugee status determination (RSD) capacity, with more than 8,000 asylum-seekers remaining unregistered and seven refoulement incidents reported. Only 1,097 people were newly registered while over 15,000 refugees and asylum-seekers remained without individual documentation, underlining the need to expand registration and strengthen early-warning and State-led responses.

Monitoring and outreach remained particularly challenging due to the high dispersion of refugees in remote, flood-prone riverine communities in Likouala and the reduced field presence following staff cuts and the closure of field locations such as Gamboma, which limited regular missions and reliance on community-based protection networks.

Overall, progress towards a favorable protection environment was constrained by staffing gaps, operational access constraints, limited national ownership and persistent documentation challenges, reinforcing the need for targeted investments in CNAR's capacity, digital identity systems and community-level protection monitoring to sustain improvements.

3. Impact Area: Empowering Communities and Achieving Gender Equality

By the end of 2027, 50% of refugees, including women, young people and vulnerable groups, lead productive and decent lives and benefit from national social safety net projects on the same basis as the local population.

Population Type	Indicator	
	Baseline	Actual (2025)
3.2a Proportion of children and young people enrolled in primary education		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	93.00%	44.17%
3.2b Proportion of children and young people enrolled in secondary education		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	92.00%	19.69%

Enrolment rates in primary and secondary education remained below 45% and 20% respectively, highlighting the persistent challenges faced by refugee adolescents, particularly at the secondary level. This

gap between primary and secondary coverage is consistent with regional and global trends: worldwide, the refugees' secondary enrolment rate stands at 37%, significantly below the host-country national average of approximately 77%. Low enrolment rates (below 45% in primary and under 20% in secondary education) reflect more than limited access to schooling for refugees in the Republic of Congo. They point to systemic challenges that affect children's development, adolescents' futures, and the resilience of refugee communities. These figures illustrate a broken educational pathway, where entry into school is limited, and progression beyond primary level is even more constrained.

UNHCR partnered with Ministère des Affaires sociales, de la Solidarité et de l'Action Humanitaire (MASSAH), the National Institute of Statistics (INS), to advance the inclusion of refugees in the Unified Social Registry (RSU). As a result of UNHCR's advocacy, a list of more than 1,000 refugees living in urban areas was shared to the MASSAH via the National Committee for Refugee Assistance (CNAR) so that they could be included in surveys for certain components of projects funded by the World Bank: Support for the empowerment of women, young people, people with disabilities, and orphaned children.

UNHCR organized awareness-raising and training sessions to improve refugees' understanding of administrative procedures, strengthen self-reliance capacities, and enhance their cooperation with local authorities and MFIs. Monitoring and planning capacities were reinforced to ensure proper implementation of projects for effective economic integration.

4. Impact Area: Securing Solutions

By the end of 2027, at least 70% of refugees have access to durable solutions (repatriation, resettlement, local integration) or complementary pathways.

Population Type	Indicator	
	Baseline	Actual (2025)
4.1 Number of refugees who voluntarily return in safety and dignity to their country of origin		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	46	293
4.2a Number of people who departed on resettlement		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	20	71
4.2b Number of people who departed through complementary pathways		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	11	3
4.3b Number of refugees for whom residency status is granted or confirmed		
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	0	0

In 2025, durable solutions for refugees in the Republic of the Congo remained significantly constrained, but important foundations were laid for a more structured, nationally led solutions agenda. Only 293 Central African refugees were able to voluntarily return out of a planned 1,000, despite 5,100 individuals having formally expressed their intention to repatriate. Resettlement and complementary pathways remained limited, with 71 departures on resettlement and three through family reunification, while no refugees accessed naturalization. Overall, this translated into very low coverage of durable solutions relative to needs.

At the same time, several measures began to re-orient the operation toward a more strategic, multi-track approach, as set out in the Feuille de Route. Voluntary repatriation to the Central African Republic is being repositioned as a core solutions pillar, with plans for an 18–24 month phased scale up linked to improved conditions in areas of return. In parallel, steps toward local inclusion and eventual legal stability were initiated, including strengthened collaboration with CNAR and MASSAH, refugee inclusion in the Unified Social Registry, and the launch of a partnership with a national law firm (Ntsila) to prepare naturalization files for eligible refugees. For the residual Rwandan caseload, the roadmap envisages a dedicated statutory track, signaling intent to resolve long standing situations.

These developments take place in a context of reduced UNHCR footprint, early year funding shortages and intermittent convoy freezes by Central African Republic authorities, which together constrained the pace

and scale of voluntary repatriation and other solutions. Nonetheless, strong inter agency collaboration among UNHCR, CNAR, MASSAH, WFP, CEMIR, MDA, APPE and the authorities of the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic helped maintain voluntary returns as a protection driven, rights-based option and progressively anchor solutions within national systems. Going forward, the phased transition plan outlined in the Feuille de Route will guide efforts to expand voluntary repatriation, consolidate local inclusion, and gradually transfer solutions leadership to national institutions, in line with the High Commissioner’s ambition to reduce protracted humanitarian dependency.

Other Core Impact Indicators

Country	Population Type	Baseline	Actual(2025)
2.3 Proportion of people with access to health services			
Congo-Brazzaville	Refugees and Asylum-seekers	74.08%	53.12%

1.3 Challenges to Achieving Impacts

In 2025, chronic underfunding, critical staffing gaps and the closure or downsizing of field locations severely constrained protection delivery in the Republic of Congo. More than 8,000 asylum-seekers remained unregistered, and a further caseload awaited decisions, exposing people to prolonged uncertainty, risks of refoulement, arbitrary detention and exploitation. The near-collapse of registration capacity, combined with the absence of decentralized Refugee Status Determination (RSD) structures, delayed access to international protection and impeded progress toward a government-led system compliant with international standards.

Limited national ownership and institutional capacity within the National Committee for Refugee Assistance (CNAR) and related entities slowed the transition to State-led registration, documentation and legal protection. Without predictable funding, sufficient national staffing and structured technical support, the planned transfer of responsibilities risks generating gaps in legal identity, documentation and case management, particularly for dispersed communities in Likouala and other hard-to-reach areas. At the same time, the social protection system and the Unified Social Registry (RSU), led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Solidarity and Humanitarian Action (MASSAH), are still in early stages of including refugees, limiting access to safety-net programmes.

Durable solutions remained heavily constrained by political, operational and structural barriers. Voluntary repatriation to CAR was hampered by early funding shortages, reduced field capacity following the suspension of activities in Bétou, repeated last-minute convoy freezes linked in part to the 2026 electoral calendar, and persistent concerns related to security, documentation (especially for children) and reception/transit conditions. Resettlement prospects were extremely limited in the absence of a dedicated quota, compounded by global quota reductions and the freeze of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, while naturalization procedures for refugees did not progress.

Socioeconomic inclusion continued to face major obstacles, including high residency and naturalization fees, underfunded livelihood programmes, limited access to land, markets, credit and formal employment, and entrenched gender norms that restrict women’s economic and leadership opportunities. The concentration of activities in Bétou and logistical challenges on the river amplified access constraints.

Looking ahead, addressing these challenges will require a sequenced transition plan with predictable surge and mobile protection capacity, targeted investments in CNAR and MASSAH systems, strengthened community-based monitoring, and dedicated, multi-year financing for documentation, voluntary repatriation and inclusion initiatives.

1.4 Collaboration and Partnerships

In the Republic of Congo, collaboration with national institutions and international partners was central to maintaining a basic protection and solutions footprint in 2025. UNHCR worked closely with the National Committee for Refugee Assistance (CNAR) on registration, documentation and asylum procedures, while supporting MASSAH and its Centres d'Action Sociale (CAS) to advance the inclusion of refugees in the Unified Social Registry (RSU) and national social protection programmes. Through this collaboration, lists of urban refugees were shared to ensure their participation in World Bank-funded projects focused on women, youth, persons with disabilities and orphaned children.

For solutions, robust inter-agency cooperation among UNHCR, WFP, CEMIR, the authorities of ROC and CAR, and partners such as MDA and APPE was critical to sustaining voluntary repatriation operations for CAR refugees, including pre-departure verification, protection screening, convoy movements and reception arrangements in line with protection standards. Coordination with UNICEF and development partners, including the European Union and the World Bank, helped link refugee-hosting areas to investments in WASH, education and local infrastructure, laying the groundwork for area-based inclusion of Congolese refugees from DRC.

Monthly inter-agency refugee response meetings in Brazzaville and Bétou enabled joint analysis, information-sharing and problem-solving across sectors. At the same time, UNHCR directly implemented core protection activities where partner capacity remained limited, particularly in registration, high-risk case management and targeted assistance for the most vulnerable.

Looking forward, the operation aims to formalize and strengthen national coordination mechanisms, including through the institutionalization of a “Grand CNAR” as a regular inter-ministerial platform and the establishment of a dedicated Transition Taskforce. These structures will be key to steering the progressive transfer of responsibilities to national actors while safeguarding protection standards.

Section 2: Results

2.1. Outcomes and Achievements

1. Outcome Area: Access to Territory, Reg. and Documentation

By the end of 2026, all refugees and asylum-seekers have equal access to territory, registration and documentation in accordance with international and regional conventions.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the Republic of the Congo maintained a generally favorable protection environment, ensuring refugees' and asylum-seekers' access to territory, asylum procedures, registration and documentation, in line with international and regional standards. Despite constraints related to resources and institutional capacities, significant progress was achieved in strengthening legal protection and legal identity.

At the end of the year, the country hosted 62,515 refugees and 8,110 asylum-seekers, mainly originating from the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo, primarily settled in Likouala (Bétou), the Plateaux (Gamboma), and in urban areas in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire.

Registration activities resulted in 1,097 new individuals being registered in proGres v4, including 369 registered newborns, contributing to the legal recognition of persons of concern and to improved planning and targeting of protection interventions.

Regarding documentation, the Government, through the National Committee for Assistance to Refugees (CNAR), issued 6,051 official documents, including 5,090 refugee cards, 1,718 temporary residence permits, 30 travel documents, and 362 certificates serving as birth certificates. In addition, 13,243 refugees and asylum-seekers held valid documentation issued by UNHCR.

These achievements strengthened freedom of movement, access to essential services, and prospects for local integration, while also contributing to the prevention of statelessness, particularly through improved access to civil registration for refugee children.

2. Outcome Area: Status Determination

By the end of 2026, asylum-seekers have effective and free access to national refugee status determination procedures.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
2.1 Average processing time (in days) from registration to first instance asylum decision			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	90.00	90.00	1.32
2.2 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to legal representation			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	50.83%	97.00%	6.81%
2.3 Proportion of people undergoing asylum procedures who have access to an effective appeal mechanism after first instance rejection of their claim			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	24.54%	15.00%	100.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the Republic of Congo hosted 70,819 forcibly displaced persons, including 62,509 refugees and 8,110 asylum-seekers. Progress on Status Determination was partial and uneven, constrained by persistent structural challenges that prevented full achievement of the intended outcome.

On the positive side, 1,097 asylum-seekers were registered, 578 individuals obtained refugee status through first-instance decisions, and appeal access reached 100%, with all 501 eligible cases lodged, significantly exceeding the 40 case target and demonstrating meaningful progress on Indicator 2.3. This result reflects sustained advocacy and procedural improvements in the appeals mechanism.

However, average processing time remained at 366 days, unchanged from the baseline and well above the 270-day target (Indicator 2.1), due to critical staffing gaps and the absence of decentralized reception capacity. More critically, an estimated 15,000 persons remained unregistered and outside the asylum system, with seven refoulement incidents documented, a direct consequence of the registration backlog and limited field presence. Legal representation (Indicator 2.2) stood at 6.81% (1,097 out of 16,097), reflecting not an absence of legal counselling, as all registered asylum-seekers received procedural legal advice, but the critical registration bottleneck that left the vast majority outside the asylum system altogether.

Achieving the 2026 outcome will require predictable funding, expanded national staffing, accelerated digitalization of registration and RSD processes, and a stronger shift toward government-led asylum systems aligned with SDGs 16.3 and 16.9 and the Global Compact on Refugees commitments.

3. Outcome Area: Protection Policy and Law

The national protection framework is strengthened to allow refugees, asylum-seekers and people at risk of statelessness to access protection services.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the protection environment for refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, stateless persons and other people of concern in ROC remained generally favorable and broadly aligned with relevant Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. To reinforce national protection systems, UNHCR raised refugees' awareness of their rights and obligations, strengthened the capacities of State and non-State actors, and continued advocacy with the government to continue its work on sustainable solutions and national asylum strategies, advancing the process aimed at the effective adoption of the implementing decree referred to in the Asylum Act, which is essential for the full implementation of that Act.

In 2025, with technical support from UNHCR, the government issued 30 biometric passports to refugees and stepped up the distribution of refugee cards.

4. Outcome Area: Gender-based Violence

Survivors of sexual and gender-based violence have access to the support they need to build resilience and integrate locally.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, GBV interventions reached 2,675 beneficiaries, significantly exceeding the annual target, through an integrated multisectoral approach (medical, psychosocial, legal, material, and socio-economic support) and strengthened referral and follow-up mechanisms. A total of 97 GBV incidents were identified and managed, contributing to improved protection, recovery, and resilience of survivors. Despite these encouraging results in case management (high demand and improved access to services), community awareness remains insufficient: only 14–15 per cent of the target related to knowledge of GBV services was achieved, highlighting the need to scale up communication, information dissemination, and large-scale

prevention actions.

5. Outcome Area: Child Protection

All refugee and asylum-seeker children at risk receive the support necessary for their best interests and are referred to the appropriate services.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the interventions provided a multisectoral child protection response to 488 children in Brazzaville, Gamboma, and Bétou, with a focus on identifying and monitoring children at risk, facilitating access to legal identity, delivering psychosocial support, and placing children in foster families or specialized care structures. Key results included best interest assessments, the issuance of birth certificates, cash-based interventions, and advocacy actions for children with disabilities. Awareness-raising campaigns contributed to reducing the risks of statelessness and school dropout. Despite the overall positive impact, significant needs persist, particularly in relation to legal documentation, disability-related care, and support to care institutions, underscoring the need to strengthen resources and coordination to ensure a sustainable response.

6. Outcome Area: Safety and Access to Justice

All refugees and asylum-seekers are safe and have effective access to remedies and appeal procedures.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, no detentions were reported for illegal immigration. However, several refugees were arrested because their documents did not meet requirements for operating as motorcycle taxi drivers. Following these incidents, 38 refugees applied for work authorization; 30 obtained valid documents and resumed their activities.

The arrests occurred during a public security operation by the General Directorate of Public Security (DGSP) under the “Zero Kuluna” initiative, launched after violent incidents involving individuals posing as motorcycle taxi drivers. UNHCR and the National Refugee Commission (CNAR) engaged in advocacy with the public security services to prevent similar incidents and promote documentation and regularization instead of punitive measures.

At the same time, UNHCR, in close collaboration with the National Commission for Refugees (CNAR), carried out targeted awareness-raising activities for public security services. These exchanges aimed to strengthen understanding of the legal framework governing the protection and rights of refugees, prevent arbitrary arrests, and promote an approach prioritizing administrative regularization and the possession of valid documents, rather than the use of repressive measures.

7. Outcome Area: Community Engagement and Women's Empowerment

By the end of 2027, host communities, including women, have a greater capacity and interest in supporting the local integration of people who have been forced to flee.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, communication with communities improved markedly.

In the Republic of the Congo, feedback and complaint mechanisms were strengthened so that forcibly displaced and stateless persons could safely report misconduct, mismanagement or sexual exploitation and abuse. Channels included phone lines, suggestion boxes and direct community outreach. A total of 1,438 people used these mechanisms: 50 via phone calls, 1,188 through suggestion boxes and outreach, and 200 during reception activities. Around 30% of respondents considered the assistance received useful but highlighted the need for additional support, particularly for productive inclusion. Advocacy for the empowerment of women and youth resulted in participation in conferences, trainings, exhibitions and debates for 308 refugees, including women with disabilities and women living with HIV. However, entrenched social norms continued to limit women's engagement in leadership and entrepreneurship, underscoring the need for ongoing awareness-raising in rural areas.

These engagements facilitated complaints, information sharing and referrals to appropriate services. Strengthened collaboration with State institutions supported the progressive integration of forcibly displaced populations into national service systems, contributing to more sustainable and predictable support structures.

9. Outcome Area: Sustainable Housing and Settlements

By the end of 2026, refugees and asylum-seekers are included in the communal urban development plan to enable them to access to decent sustainable housing, energy and non-food items on the same basis as the local population.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
9.1 Proportion of people living in habitable and affordable housing			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	17.60%	100.00%	50.00%
9.2 Proportion of people that have energy to ensure lighting			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	55.00%	92.00%	30.00%

Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Indicator
	Actual (2025)
09.1.1 Number of people who received shelter and housing assistance	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	6,490

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, within the framework of the ROC operation, refugee housing conditions remained stable in urban settings, with refugees accommodated under conditions comparable to the host population. Conversely, in rural areas, numerous refugees are still residing in emergency shelters dating back to 2022 that have significantly deteriorated, highlighting the need for rehabilitation, replacement, or relocation measures. While access to energy remains generally adequate in urban areas, notwithstanding intermittent outages, the situation is critical in rural refugee hosting areas, where multiple sites are without lighting as a result of

deteriorated infrastructure. Technical assessments, coupled with rehabilitation or replacement of energy equipment, are necessary to secure reliable and safe electricity access.

10. Outcome Area: Healthy Lives

By the end of 2026, all refugees and asylum-seekers are included in the national health system and receive equitable, affordable and quality health care, both preventive and curative, on the same basis as the host population.

Core Outcome Indicators

Indicator			
Population Type	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
10.1 Proportion of children aged 9 months to five years who have received measles vaccination			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	87.60%	48.00%	71.03%
10.2. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	99.86%	100.00%	53.45%

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
10.1.1 Number of individual consultations in UNHCR supported health care services	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	5,487
10.2.1 Number of consultations in UNHCR supported mental health and psychosocial support services	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	2

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In the Republic of Congo, the health strategy focused on strengthened collaboration with the Ministry of Health and partners to improve access to primary healthcare for refugees and host communities. Through the medical partner MDA, vaccination coverage reached 71 per cent (657/925) and the assisted birth rate 53 per cent (1,069/2,000). Health centres supported the response to the cholera outbreak declared in July 2025, with no refugee cases reported during the period. By the end of 2025 in the Republic of Congo, 53% of refugees had access to healthcare services, against a target of 100%. This was primarily due to financial and geographical barriers. The drastic cut in funding has been a barrier to accessing healthcare, particularly given the limited autonomy of refugees.

11. Outcome Area: Education

By the end of 2026, all refugee children and adolescents of primary, secondary and tertiary school age are included in the national education system for quality education on the same basis as nationals

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
11.1 Proportion of young people enrolled in tertiary and higher education			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	22.67%	34.00%	0.36%
11.2 Proportion of children and young people enrolled in the national education system			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	35.02%	75.00%	24.14%

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
11.1.1 Number of people who benefitted from education programming	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	5,800

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the UNHCR operation in the Republic of the Congo maintained its gains in refugee education within a challenging operational context marked by financing constraints and persistent structural challenges. The achievement of the target of 5,800 students enrolled in the national education system is a positive indicator. This result reflects the sustained commitment of UNHCR, CNAR, and all operational partners to uphold the right to education for refugee populations.

However, enrolment rates persisting below 45% at primary level, 20% at secondary level and 0.4% at tertiary level are a reminder of the scale of challenges still to be addressed in order to achieve the goal of universal inclusion set for 2026. Sustained and coordinated efforts, increased resource mobilization, and strengthened national institutional capacity remain essential to realizing the vision of inclusive, quality education for all refugees in the Republic of Congo.

12. Outcome Area: Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

By the end of 2026, all people who have been forced to flee and the host population have access to sufficient clean water and live in good hygiene and sanitation conditions, thanks to their inclusion in national development plans and the interventions of relevant actors.

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
12.1 Proportion of people using at least basic drinking water services			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	79.00%	81.00%	79.00%
12.2 Proportion of people with access to a safe household toilet			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	34.87%	72.00%	34.00%

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

The Proportion of PoC using at least basic drinking water services results at the end of the year, is at 79 %, and the Proportion of PoC with access to a safe household toilet at 34%. These ratios are below the UNHCR standards.

However, there is an urgent need to upgrade most existing and future WASH facilities to a more sustainable infrastructure that better meets long-standing WASH needs. This upgrade is essential to ensure the health and well-being of both refugee and host populations on the one hand and to reduce the risk of the emergence of other health emergencies with an impact on ownership and sustainability.

13. Outcome Area: Self Reliance, Economic Inclusion and Livelihoods

By the end of 2026, 35% of refugee youth and adults are able to engage in an economic activity that generates sufficient income to meet basic family needs.

By the end of 2026, all vulnerable refugees have access to national social protection mechanisms.

By the end of 2026, diversified economic opportunities are strengthened to promote integration and self-sufficiency.

By the end of 2026, the refugee population has access to the public employment system and to support and placement mechanisms.

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In the Republic of the Congo, localization efforts strengthened refugee-led organizations through mapping, capacity-building and community-based projects. Initiatives included sanitation kit distribution and mushroom cultivation training in Brazzaville, as well as gardening and nutrition support projects in Impfondo and Bétou. Eight refugee entrepreneur groups received support, and 32 refugee women joined local economic networks, reinforcing social cohesion and expanding livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities alike.

14. Outcome Area: Voluntary Return and Sustainable Reintegration

By the end of 2026, refugees have the information and resources they need to return voluntarily to their country of origin.

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
14.1.1 Number of people who received counselling and/or information on voluntary repatriation	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	5,100

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, UNHCR supported refugees in the Republic of the Congo who opted for voluntary repatriation to return in conditions of safety and dignity, with a strong focus on legal identity and informed decision making. All returnees departed with legally recognized identity documents or credentials, in line with the 100 per cent target for Indicator 14.1, and all persons of concern who wished to receive information on conditions in their country of origin were reached, maintaining 100 per cent performance on Indicator 14.2. A total of 5,100 refugees received counselling and/or information on voluntary repatriation, exceeding the 5,000 operational target and underlining the high level of expressed intention to return.

Despite this strong demand and robust information provision, only 293 Central African refugees were able to return out of 1,000 planned departures. This gap reflects both the structural constraints in the context of asylum and the specific operational challenges that affected voluntary repatriation from ROC in 2025. Early year funding shortages, the suspension of activities in Bétou and repeated lastminute convoy freezes by Central African Republic authorities, including a halt linked to the 2026 electoral calendar, disrupted planning and reduced the number of movements that could be safely organized. Insecurity in certain areas of return, delays in issuing civil documentation for children and the poor condition of transit centres in ROC further limited the scale and predictability of returns. Nevertheless, strong interagency collaboration among UNHCR, WFP, CNAR, MDA, CEMIR, APPE and the authorities of ROC and CAR ensured that movements that did take place met protection standards. Joint missions, cross-border coordination platforms and regular information sharing allowed partners to organize predeparture verification, protection screening, convoy movements and reception arrangements in a coordinated manner, with particular attention to documentation, child protection and continuity of education. These efforts, combined with the solutions-focused Feuille de Route, position voluntary repatriation as one of three core solutions tracks for ROC (alongside local inclusion and statutory solutions for residual caseloads) and provide a framework for gradually increasing the scale and quality of return operations as conditions and resources allow.

15. Outcome Area: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

By the end of 2026, the resettlement process (from identification of cases to departure) is organised for the benefit of identified refugees and complementary pathways are offered

Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Indicator		
	Baseline	Target (2025)	Actual (2025)
15.1 Number of refugees submitted by UNHCR for resettlement			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	18	15	2
15.3 Number of people admitted through complementary pathways from the host country			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	11	16	3

Core Output Indicators

Indicator	
Population Type	Actual (2025)
15.1.1 Country issues machine-readable travel documents	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	No

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, progress toward expanding access to third-country solutions in the Republic of the Congo remained very limited. No dedicated resettlement quota was allocated to ROC, and processing capacity was significantly reduced following the closure of field offices and the absence of dedicated resettlement staff. As a result, operational reach and systematic case identification were severely constrained, and only two refugees were submitted for resettlement consideration during the reporting period, both to Canada. The situation was further affected by the continued suspension of the United States Refugee Admissions Program, which has historically constituted the principal resettlement destination for refugees from ROC. This freeze sharply reduced available resettlement options and narrowed the scope for advancing durable solutions through this channel, particularly for refugees with acute protection or medical needs. In parallel, the country did not yet issue machine-readable travel documents, limiting practical access to both resettlement and complementary pathways and reinforcing dependence on ad hoc arrangements. Despite these constraints, modest gains were achieved through complementary pathways. Three refugees successfully departed to Canada for family reunification, demonstrating that alternative legal pathways can remain viable even in a highly constrained environment when supported by targeted advocacy and close collaboration with receiving States. While small in scale, these departures contributed to individual protection outcomes and highlighted the potential for future expansion of complementary pathways as part of a broader solutions mix that also includes voluntary repatriation and local inclusion, as envisaged in the Feuille de Route.

16. Outcome Area: Integration and other Local Solutions

By the end of 2026, legal and socio-economic opportunities for local integration are available for refugees in the Republic of the Congo..

Progress Against the Desired Outcome

In 2025, the Republic of Congo made measurable progress in expanding local integration and socio-economic inclusion for refugees. CNAR strengthened pathways to self-reliance and durable solutions by coordinating with host communities to waive rent arrears and debts for vulnerable refugees transitioning to stable housing. A key milestone was the partnership with the Ntsila law firm to support naturalization of eligible refugees. The firm is mandated to prepare 210 naturalization cases, and to date 350 applications have been initiated, reflecting strong demand for secure legal status, mobility, and equal access to national services. The process is anchored within national institutions, with file collection ongoing and case selection underway.

Socio-economic inclusion advanced through improved access to rights and livelihoods. Five joint CNAR awareness sessions in public institutions promoted Law No. 041/2021 on refugee protection, resulting in the Ministry of Commerce authorizing CNAR to issue work permits, unlocking access to formal employment. In parallel, 500 beneficiaries (350 refugees and 150 host community members) were identified for an economic empowerment project implemented by CEMIR. The initiative includes training in agroecology and sustainable agriculture, establishment of 12 small-scale agro-processing units, access to microfinance through three partner institutions with preferential credit, and support to 50 microenterprises through business development, financial management, and marketing training. Together, these interventions aim to strengthen durable, inclusive income generation, foster social cohesion, and enhance local economic resilience.

Other Core Outcome Indicators

Population Type	Baseline	Target(2025)	Actual(2025)
8.1 Proportion of people that receive cash transfers and/or non-food items			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	85.66%	85.00%	74.60%
8.2 Proportion of people with primary reliance on clean (cooking) fuels and technology			
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	20.00%	70.00%	23.00%

Other Core Output Indicators

Population Type	Actual (2025)
08.3.1 Number of people supported with improved cooking options	
Refugees and Asylum-seekers	2,986

2.2. Age, Gender and Diversity

In 2025, the Republic of Congo operation continued to apply an Age, Gender and Diversity approach to ensure that refugees, asylum-seekers and other people supported by the operation could access protection, assistance and community-based services according to their specific needs and capacities. Particular attention was required for women, children, youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, as structural barriers continued to affect equitable participation and access to services. Entrenched social norms limited women's participation in skills development, livelihood opportunities and leadership structures, while youth required stronger pathways for participation, training and self-reliance. Child protection also remained constrained by limited public resources and weak coordination among State structures, affecting timely identification, referral and follow-up of children at risk. In rural refugee-hosting areas, deteriorated shelters and limited lighting further increased protection and safety risks, especially for groups facing heightened vulnerability. Strengthening AGD-sensitive programming therefore remained essential, including through inclusive community engagement, women- and youth-led structures, targeted outreach to persons with specific needs, stronger referral mechanisms and resilience-oriented livelihoods that promote participation, safety, dignity and self-reliance.

Section 3: Resources

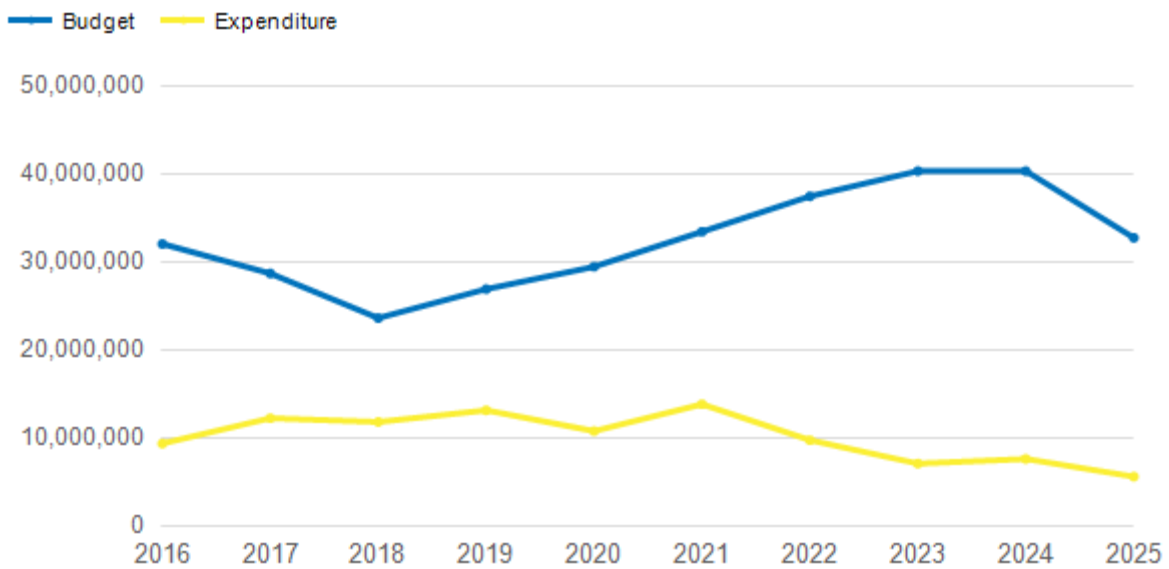
3.1 Financial Data

(Financial figures in USD)

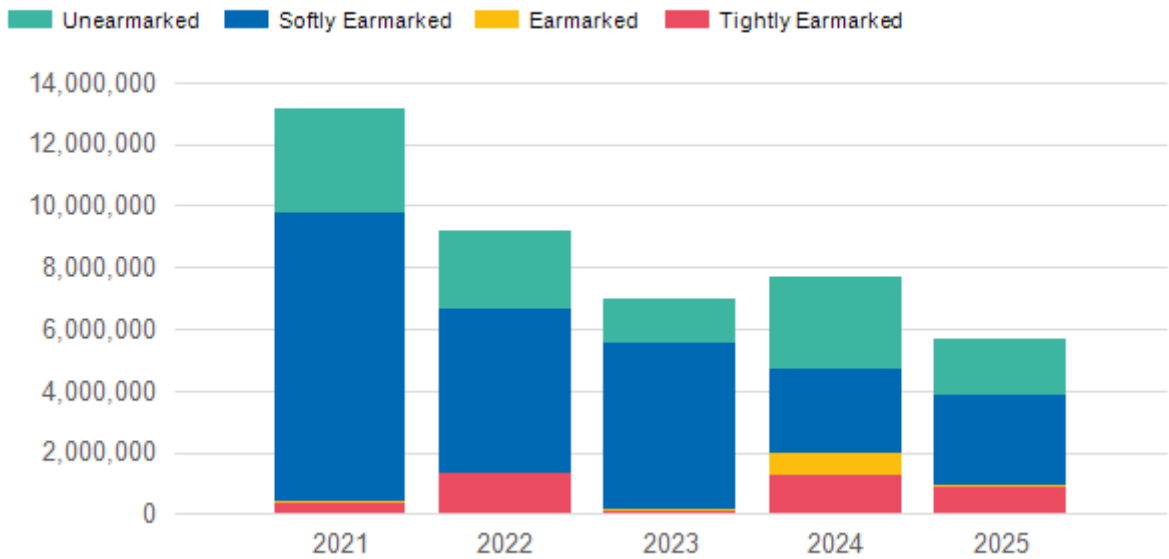
Impact Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
IA1: Protect	23,363,341	3,241,834	13.88%	3,241,834	100.00%
IA3: Empower	5,467,138	539,125	9.86%	539,124	100.00%
IA4: Solve	3,864,205	1,798,406	46.54%	1,798,406	100.00%
All Impact Areas		28,800			
Total	32,694,683	5,608,165	17.15%	5,579,365	99.49%

Outcome Area	Final Budget	Funds Available	Funds Available as % of Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure as % of Funds Available
OA1: Access/Doc	8,891,229	954,224	10.73%	954,224	100.00%
OA2: Status	2,752,158	197,414	7.17%	197,414	100.00%
OA3: Policy/Law	3,154,747	4,870	0.15%	4,870	100.00%
OA4: GBV	1,092,521	33,216	3.04%	33,216	100.00%
OA5: Children	660,672	27,723	4.20%	27,723	100.00%
OA6: Justice	597,492				
OA7: Community	1,345,771				
OA9: Housing	654,774				
OA10: Health	752,406	181,650	24.14%	181,650	100.00%
OA11: Education	466,357				
OA12: WASH	566,592	101,943	17.99%	101,943	100.00%
OA13: Livelihood	3,655,011	539,125	14.75%	539,124	100.00%
OA14: Return	1,756,936	1,049,344	59.73%	1,049,344	100.00%
OA15: Resettle	121,447	161,236	132.76%	161,236	100.00%
OA16: Integrate	1,985,822	587,826	29.60%	587,826	100.00%
EA18: Support	2,197,901	1,222,279	55.61%	1,222,279	100.00%
EA20: External	2,042,849	518,515	25.38%	518,515	100.00%
All Outcome Areas		28,800			
Total	32,694,683	5,608,165	17.15%	5,579,365	99.49%

Budget and Expenditure Trend



Contributions Trend by Type



3.2. Resources Overview

In 2025, resource allocation in the Republic of Congo was shaped by a markedly constrained funding environment and the need to sustain essential protection and solutions activities despite a steep reduction in staffing and operational footprint. Prioritization focused on life-saving and protection-critical interventions, taking into account the severity of risks, the scale and dispersion of needs in remote areas such as Likouala, operational feasibility and value for money, while seeking to embed activities within national systems and inter-agency frameworks.

By Impact Area, Solve (approximately USD 1 million, or 52 per cent of available resources) received the

largest share, reflecting the strategic choice to protect investments in voluntary repatriation and other durable solutions despite budget cuts. Protect (approximately USD 953,000, or 48 per cent) was directed primarily to access to territory and documentation, legal assistance, RSD support to CNAR, health and WASH services, GBV and child protection. Assist and Empower were deprioritized due to budget constraints and the restructuring that accompanied integration into the MCO, resulting in reduced coverage of livelihoods, community-based activities and non-food item support.

Persistent funding shortfalls necessitated a major scale-down of UNHCR's operational presence, including the closure of warehouses in Bétou, Brazzaville and Gamboma and the contraction of staff from 48 to 8 positions within the new MCO structure. This rationalization, while improving cost-efficiency, increased dependence on national systems and partners for front-line delivery and heightened risks in remote, flood-prone areas. To mitigate these effects, the Feuille de Route for ROC proposes ring-fenced financing for documentation and CAR voluntary repatriation, targeted support for CNAR and MASSAH, and a potential secondary operational anchorage in Ouessou to improve access, supervision and duty of care.

Section 4: Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

4.1 Lessons Learned and Future Outlook

In 2025, the transition of UNHCR's operation in the Republic of Congo from a stand-alone country office to a light footprint within the Cameroon Multi-Country Office highlighted the need to balance financial consolidation with the preservation of a minimum protection presence. The drastic reduction in staffing and the closure of field locations demonstrated that drawdown without carefully sequenced contingency and surge capacity can aggravate registration backlogs, heighten risks of refoulement and delay durable solutions for refugees living in remote, hard-to-access areas.

A central lesson is that national ownership must be planned, resourced and phased, not assumed. The gradual transfer of registration, documentation and RSD functions to CNAR and other national institutions is feasible, but only if accompanied by sustained technical support, clear division of roles and predictable funding. Without this, institutional capacity constraints risk reversing gains in access to territory, legal identity and fair asylum procedures, particularly for highly dispersed communities in Likouala and other border areas.

The transition process also underlined the importance of structured solutions planning. Limited voluntary repatriation, the absence of naturalization opportunities and very low resettlement and complementary pathway departures confirmed that "business-as-usual" approaches are insufficient. A multi-track, time-bound roadmap is required, combining: the relaunch of CAR voluntary repatriation where conditions allow; strengthened local inclusion for Congolese refugees from DRC through access to land, services and livelihoods; and a statutory approach for the residual Rwandan caseload.

Finally, the experience in 2025 showed that preparedness, mobility and partnerships are critical enablers of a successful transition. The need for a secondary operational anchorage (e.g. Ouessou), reinforced community-based protection monitoring, and formal platforms such as the "Grand CNAR" all emerged as key lessons for maintaining proximity to populations and sustaining nationally led systems in a context of shrinking budgets. Going forward, the operation will use these lessons to guide an 18–24-month phased roadmap that stabilizes protection delivery, consolidates national leadership and progressively re-orient assistance toward area-based resilience and development programming.



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