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EASTERN DRC SITUATION

13 June 2025



The Musenyi refugee site in the south of Burundi, where refugees fleeing violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are being relocated, for their safety, away from the border areas. ©UNHCR/Charity Nzomo

HIGHLIGHTS

- While peace proposals have been tabled through ongoing mediation efforts, **clashes between state and non-state armed groups persist across several territories in North and South Kivu, continuing to drive displacement and cause loss of life.**
- [Human Rights Watch](#) released a report documenting the **alleged summary execution of civilians in the Kasika neighborhood of Goma between 22 and 23 February 2025.**
- UNHCR and partners continue to provide protection services across North and South Kivu, including case management and referrals for vulnerable individuals. Survivors of sexual violence are also receiving psychosocial support and timely access to medical care.
- **A total of 146 refugees were repatriated from the DRC to Rwanda.** UNHCR remains committed to safeguarding the rights of refugees and displaced persons and will continue to advocate for solutions that respect their dignity, safety, and informed choices.
- UNHCR and partners continue to support returnee households with core relief items and dignity kits for women and girls. Cash assistance is also being provided to displaced families to help cover essential needs and specific protection concerns.
- **Over 114,000 people have fled violence in eastern DRC to neighboring countries since the start of the year.** UNHCR and partners are supporting not just emergency assistance, but also access to services, self-reliance, and inclusion from the outset—laying the groundwork for more sustainable solutions for both refugees and host communities.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

- **Clashes between state and non-state armed groups continue to be reported across several territories in North and South Kivu Provinces.** In North Kivu, increased attacks in Beni and renewed fighting over control of areas near the Masisi–Walikale border have caused multiple civilian casualties and displacement. In South Kivu, recent clashes in Kalehe Territory, including in Katana town near Bukavu, reportedly left over a dozen people dead. Negotiations under the **dual peace processes led by [Washington](#) and [Doha](#), respectively, have continued**, with draft peace proposals presented to the negotiating parties.
- **UNHCR, in collaboration with partners, continues to deliver protection services across North and South Kivu.** These include case management and referrals for 241 vulnerable individuals identified through protection monitoring as of 31 May (115 in North Kivu and 126 in South Kivu), who were subsequently referred to relevant humanitarian and protection services for follow-up support. In addition, between March and early June, 68 rape survivors and 54 survivors of other forms of sexual violence received psychosocial support and were referred to health facilities for medical care within 72 hours in Nyiragongo, Masisi, and Rutshuru territories.
- **With support from the United Kingdom’s Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the North Kivu Protection Cluster is preparing to roll out Rapid Protection Assessments in areas of return.** In the lead-up, UNHCR has been building the capacity of local partners since late May, including conflict sensitivity training for staff from 29 partner organizations. Earlier, at the end of April, NRC carried out an initial assessment of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) issues in return areas across Nyiragongo, Masisi, and Rutshuru territories, focusing on land access for returnees and the presence of conflict resolution mechanisms.
- **UNHCR and partners continue to provide humanitarian assistance to returnee households upon return to their villages of origin.** This includes the distribution of 292 Core Relief Item Kits for 1,887 returns and a further 516 dignity kits for women and girls of childbearing age in Kalengaera in Rutshuru Territory.
- **UNHCR continues to support cash distributions for displaced populations in collective centres in North Kivu.** Over the course of May, 3,252 households in Lubero and Beni territories (including in Butembo) were provided with cash for essential items, with 200 of these households also receiving additional cash to help them cover their specific protection needs.
- On 11 June, **the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC) began the second phase of its planned withdrawal from Goma and Sake in North Kivu.** This phase involves the repatriation of personnel and equipment. According to the [official statement](#), Tanzanian troops will be transported overland before flying to Dar es Salaam, while South African and Malawian contingents will be airlifted directly to their home countries.
- On 10 June, **146 Rwandan refugees were voluntarily repatriated from Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo.** This brings to 3,680 the total number of refugees assisted by UNHCR and partners to return from eastern DRC to Rwanda in safety and dignity since the beginning of the year.
- On 3 June, **[Human Rights Watch \(HRW\)](#) released a report documenting the alleged summary execution of at least 21 civilians in the Kasika neighborhood of Goma between 22 and 23 February 2025.** The report states that, following reports of activity by national armed forces and allied groups, non-state armed groups conducted house-to-house searches targeting young men. Many were reportedly abducted, and their bodies were later found in surrounding areas, including at a nearby construction site.

REGIONAL UPDATES

- **As of 11 June, over 116,500 people have fled DRC to neighboring countries since the beginning of the year**, the majority of whom have arrived in Burundi and Uganda. Over the past two weeks, an average of 68 daily arrivals have been received in Burundi and 66 daily arrivals in Uganda.
- The latest figures on new arrivals to neighboring countries are reflected in the Eastern DRC Displacement Dashboard, Burundi CORE and Uganda CORE, which are updated regularly and available on the [Operational Data Portal](#).

Country	Total New Arrivals* since 1 Jan (as of 11 June unless specified)
Burundi	41,403**
Uganda	66,521 (as of 8 June)
Zambia	1,578
Rwanda	3,954*** (as of 8 June)
Tanzania	3,066 (as of 8 June)
TOTAL	116,522

*For countries where data is available, the new arrivals figure includes returnees as well as refugees from third countries, alongside the Congolese new arrivals. The inclusion of these group reflects that returnee populations and third country nationals may also have specific international protection and humanitarian needs.

**Of the 70,400 people who have arrived in Burundi since January 2025, 41,403 are estimated to remain in Burundi. This includes over 5,000 Burundian refugees who have returned from the DRC.

***This figure comprises 2,748 Rwandan refugee returnees who have been supported to return from DRC to Rwanda. Of these, 1,792 have been recorded since 17 May.

Burundi

- **Of the 70,400 individuals estimated to have arrived from DRC to Burundi since 1 January, at least 41,403 are estimated to remain in Burundi, including 36,057 DRC refugees.** Between 27 May and 11 June, there have reportedly been a further 1,016 new arrivals, averaging approximately 68 new arrivals each day.
- **Individual biometric registration of new arrivals is ongoing at the Musenyi site in Rutana Province, where 16,526 refugees have been registered.** This initial phase is expected to conclude by the end of next week. Registration will then extend to the 3,624 individuals currently in transit centres, followed by the 15,809 refugees identified within host communities in Cibitoke Province.
- **UNHCR continues to pursue a “solutions from the start” approach in its response to new arrivals, including by adopting alternatives** to camps wherever possible. In this context, UNHCR continues to liaise with the Government of Burundi and other key partners, including the World Bank, to design and implement more sustainable responses, particularly for the almost 16,000 refugees living amongst the host community in Cibitoke Province.
- **At the Musenyi site, an integrated settlement where refugees live alongside host communities, over 16,500 individuals who arrived from eastern DRC have been relocated.** As of 28 May, 11,795 people (3,075 households) had completed biometric registration. Between 21 and 27 May, a further 286 individuals (133 households) were relocated from the Cishemere transit centre to Musenyi and other sites. With increasing arrivals placing pressure on services, UNHCR and partners are prioritizing the scale-up of the response to cover the immediate needs of new arrivals, efforts to design sustainable responses that promote refugee inclusion and integration continue. Key responses in Musenyi include the following:
 - **CCCM and Shelter:** To ease congestion at Musenyi and ensure more dignified living conditions, UNHCR and partners are expanding the site and preparing individual plots

for families. Site demarcation and access road rehabilitation are underway, with newly arrived families, many still living in large communal tents, set to receive 100m² plots and family tents, over 4,000 of which are en-route from global stockpiles. Distribution of transitional shelter kits continues for those already settled at the site.

- **Protection:** The protection help desk continues to facilitate referrals for refugees with specific needs. Between 28 May and 6 June, 140 individuals were identified for follow-up support, including women at risk and people with chronic illnesses. Some 60 cases were referred by the help desk, nearly half related to family reunification or tracing. The registration process also identified 80 at-risk refugee children, including unaccompanied or separated minors and child-headed households, 60 of whom have been referred for tailored support. In parallel, over 40 refugees are receiving legal assistance from the Bujumbura Bar Association, and CARE International delivered training on sexual and reproductive health as part of ongoing community sensitization and outreach.
- **Education:** To strengthen early childhood education in Musenyi, five classroom tents were installed at the on-site nursery school, doubling the number of classes from three to six, allowing each teacher to oversee their own class. Additionally, UNHCR, the African Initiative for Relief and Development (AIRD), and the National Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (ONPRA) facilitated the transfer of 298 secondary school students to Bujumbura to sit their final year exams between 2 and 8 June.
- **WASH.** To improve sanitation in Musenyi, partners installed additional temporary latrines and showers. Efforts are also underway to restore the water supply from the Rubonga hillside source, including chlorination to ensure water is safe for use.

Uganda

- Since January 2025, Uganda has received over 66,500 new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with 59,570 registered to date. Between 26 May and 8 June, 926 arrivals were recorded, well below the weekly average of 2,926, due to seasonal factors and tighter border controls by non-state armed groups. Children under 12 make up one-third of the new arrivals, with the majority (64%) entering through Kisoro District crossing points in southwestern Uganda.
- As of 8 June, 3,382 asylum seekers remained at transit and reception centres in Uganda, awaiting relocation to longer-term settlements, a decrease from 4,167 on 25 May. Current occupancy stands at 46% of designated capacity. However, concerns persist about limited space, especially with the potential for new influxes in the second half of the year due to instability in Ituri and North Kivu provinces. Nyakabande Transit Centre in Kisoro remains particularly overstretched, having frequently hosted up to five or six times its 1,500-person capacity. UNHCR is engaging with national and local authorities to expand transit facilities, streamline referral systems, and accelerate processing, particularly at Matanda Transit Centre, where delays linked to additional refugee status screening have led to prolonged stays.
- **The funding shortfall continues to impact both the emergency response for new arrivals and ongoing support to long-term refugees in Uganda.** Under the protection sector, UNHCR and partners are developing guidance to help prioritize assistance for the most vulnerable. However, given the scale of needs among new arrivals, significant funding is still urgently needed to deliver essential life-saving support.
 - Approximately 70 per cent of all new arrivals from the DRC to Uganda continue to be women and children, with some 40 per cent of total arrivals under the age of 18. Given the high number of new arrivals with specific needs combined with high incidence of family separation and, increasingly, abandonment of children in settlements, there is a growing demand for costly case management services.

- Up to 40–50 per cent of new arrivals in Uganda have tested positive for malaria at entry. In response, UNHCR and partners have implemented a ‘test and treat’ approach to ensure timely care and reduce mortality. However, the high cost of sustaining this intervention has placed pressure on available resources, at times affecting the continuity of other important activities such as community outreach and malnutrition prevention programmes.
- Malnutrition among newly arrived children remains a serious concern, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates in transit and reception centres consistently above the 15 per cent emergency threshold during the first five months of the year. While WFP is currently providing blanket supplementary feeding for children at these sites, available funding may not support the continuation of this assistance beyond June. UNHCR is working closely with WFP and UNICEF to explore options for sustaining the programme.
- In response to the high number of arrivals over the past five months and limited capacity at transit and reception centres, UNHCR and partners have prioritized faster screening and relocation efforts to ease congestion and mitigate health risks. These efforts have included supporting the government in deploying additional registration staff and facilitating transport to longer-term settlements—measures that have come at a significant operational cost amidst ongoing funding constraints.
- The [Inter-Agency Emergency Appeal](#) to respond to new arrivals, which was launched at the end of April, is approximately 15 per cent funded, with US\$6.5 million so far allocated, including a recent allocation of US\$2.5 million from the OCHA-managed Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) to UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP. The appeal, which is a subset of the overall financial requirements of the [Regional Refugee Response Plan \(R-RRP\)](#) for the DRC situation, requested US\$44 million to respond to up to 80,000 new arrivals from the DRC between April and September 2025.

Tanzania

- **Since the beginning of 2025, a total of 3,066 Congolese asylum seekers have arrived in Tanzania.** While this is fewer than in neighboring countries, there continues to be a steady number of new arrivals. Most arrive via land routes along the Burundi-Tanzania border, with a smaller number arriving by crossing Lake Tanganyika. Asylum seekers report significant challenges reaching Tanzanian territory by lake, accounts that protection monitoring in the DRC side have corroborated.

Zambia

- UNHCR continues to assist new arrivals from the Democratic Republic of the Congo at four main border transit centres in Zambia—Kaputa, Chiengi, Nsumbu, and Mpulungu. Most are relocated to Mantapala settlement, although some proceed directly to Meheba, Mayukwayukwa, or Lusaka. **As of 11 June, Zambia had registered 1,578 new arrivals since the start of 2025,** through various entry points such as Mpulungu, Chinonde, Lupiya, and Kashiba.

Rwanda

- Since January, **3,680 Rwandans have been facilitated to return from eastern DRC with the support of UNHCR.** Given the increased pace of returns, UNHCR has revised its planning figures to up to 10,000 returnees, four times the initial projection.
- Returnees are received at the border by Rwandan authorities, who carry out identity verification and health screenings. UNHCR and partners provide food, temporary shelter, core relief items,

medical care, and protection services at transit centres, with additional support for transportation to areas of origin and cash assistance to aid reintegration.

Malawi

- Over the first five months of 2025, **Malawi recorded 2,037 new arrivals from the DRC, already over 60 per cent of the total 3,206 registered throughout 2024.** April saw the highest monthly arrivals at 452, followed by 322 in May, resulting in a 2025 monthly average of 407, compared to 267 in the same period last year. All new arrivals are relocated to Dzaleka Refugee Camp. Due to overcrowding at the site, the Government of Malawi has temporarily paused the registration of new arrivals. Without registration, any new arrivals will have challenges to access essential services, further compounding their vulnerability.

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