

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Operational highlights

- Late 2009 and early 2010 saw an influx of some 116,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) into the northern part of the Republic of the Congo (Congo). The newly arrived refugees were registered at more than 100 sites along the Oubangui River on the border between the two countries. UNHCR re-established a presence in the northern town of Betou to assist and protect the refugees.
- A tripartite agreement was signed in June 2010 between UNHCR, the Congo and the DRC to work out the modalities for the voluntary repatriation of refugees from the two countries.
- UNHCR continued to help its implementing and operational partners build their capacity.

Working environment

The arrival of new refugees from the DRC generated additional pressure on the Congo, where more than half of the population lives below the poverty line.

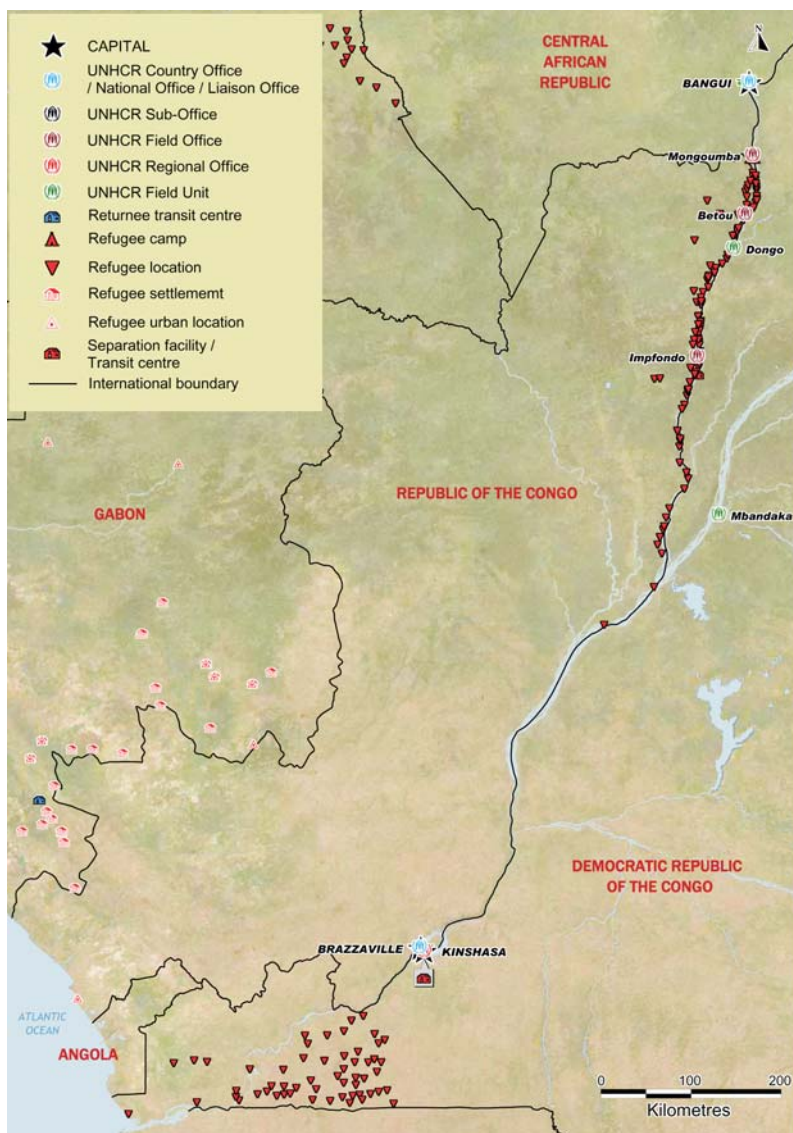
The security situation, which was compromised by the presence of rebel groups from the DRC in the north of the country, improved in the second part of the year following the surrender of some of the rebel leaders. UNHCR faced major constraints in implementing its programme in this isolated region, where road conditions are poor and there is little infrastructure.

Achievements and impact

Main objectives and targets

UNHCR's main objectives in the Congo in 2010 were aimed at reinforcing the Government's protection capacity; improving the potential of voluntary repatriation; and offering

local integration opportunities to rural and urban refugees. The Office also worked to provide protection and assistance to the 116,000 newly arrived refugees from the DRC.



Persons of concern

Type of Population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	DRC	124,200	124,200	5	58
	Rwanda	7,800	7,800	41	48
	Angola	800	800	47	42
	Various	270	270	38	31
Asylum-seekers	DRC	4,600	4,600	48	49
	Chad	250	250	24	24
	Central African Rep.	220	220	33	33
	Côte d'Ivoire	120	120	7	8
	Rwanda	110	110	52	29
	Various	180	180	28	23
Returnees (refugees)	Various	100	100	-	-
Total		138,650	138,650		

Favourable protection environment

- UNHCR worked with the national eligibility and appeals committees to reinforce their capacity for refugee status determination (RSD). This allowed the committees to hold 17 sessions in 2010 and examine some 330 first-instance asylum claims, and appeals related to 160 others.

Fair protection processes

- UNHCR registered more than 116,000 refugees at more than 100 sites along the Oubangui River. The *Comité Nationale d'Assistance aux Réfugiés* (CNAR) delivered nearly 2,700 temporary residence permits to asylum-seekers and close to 1,100 refugees received identity cards. In addition, some 100 travel documents were either extended or issued by the CNAR, which also issued some 350 birth certificates to refugee children born outside the Congo.

Security from violence and exploitation

- Some 130 incidents of sexual and gender-based violence were reported by refugees in 2010, and 90 victims needing psychosocial support, health care or, in some cases, legal aid were provided with it. UNHCR and its partners organized training sessions and sensitization meetings for a total of some 1,600 refugees and government personnel to improve their ability to prevent sexual violence.

Basic needs and services

- UNHCR helped some 24,900 of the 27,500 school-aged refugee children in the camps to enrol in 76 schools; the teaching staff included some 670 refugee teachers.

Another 270 refugee or asylum-seeker children were assisted to go to school in urban areas.

- Working through an implementing partner, UNHCR made sure that its population of concern had adequate access to health care, which was provided through health centres in Brazzaville and Betou, a hospital in Impfondo, and 24 newly created health units in the Likouala district. A total of some 56,000 medical consultations were offered in 2010. The most common ailment among refugees was malaria. Some 830 cases of malnutrition were identified, including 146 severe cases in Likouala district who received immediate treatment.
- UNHCR also worked to ensure refugees had access to potable water. Some 120 wells were built in 2010, benefiting more than 126,000 people. To improve sanitation, more than 300 community latrines were built at 11 refugee sites in Likouala.
- By distributing non-food items (NFIs), UNHCR was able to respond to the needs of some 75 per cent of the refugees in the Betou area and 22 per cent of those living in Impfondo. More than 50 per cent of refugee women of child-bearing age received sanitary materials in 2010.

Community participation and self-management

- As part of its efforts to improve livelihoods and self-reliance among people of concern, UNHCR helped some 250 refugee groups in Likouala district benefit from market-gardening and fish-farming projects. The beneficiaries were given assistance with seeds, utensils



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and nets, and training sessions were organized to teach them new agricultural techniques.

- Women’s participation in refugee committees reached 28 per cent in rural areas and 35 per cent in urban settings. UNHCR continued to advocate for an increase in the number of women on the committees.

Durable solutions

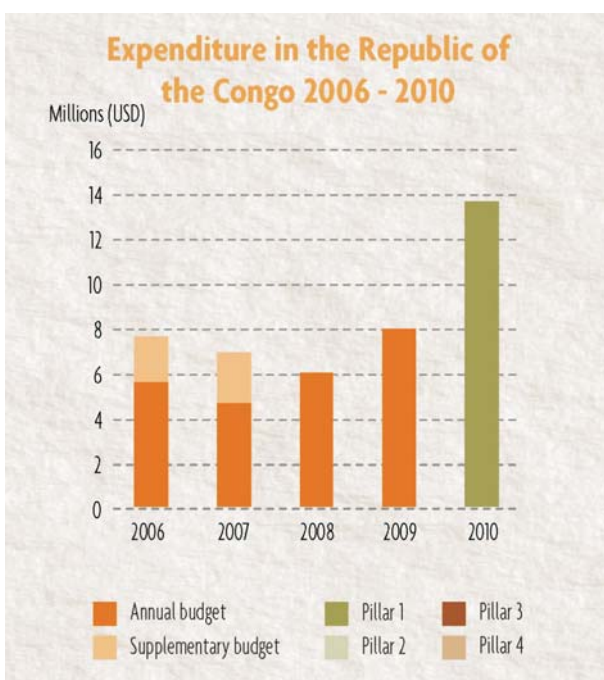
- A tripartite meeting in June 2010 led to a decision to resume the repatriation of Congolese refugees from Gabon. In total, some 20 Congolese refugees returned home in 2010 from Gabon, DRC and Côte d’Ivoire.
- Meanwhile, the search for durable solutions for refugees in the Congo continued. Tripartite meetings were held with the DRC to discuss repatriation, in aid of which UNHCR supported a “go-and-see” visit. In total, UNHCR assisted a total of 46 refugees to repatriate to Rwanda, the DRC and the Central African Republic. UNHCR also advocated for the Government to facilitate the local integration of those refugees who were not willing to return.

Logistics and operational support

- UNHCR maintained a fleet of 46 light vehicles as well as 15 speed boats and whaleboats to support programme implementation. Despite the poor roads, supplies were transported to the refugee sites.

Constraints

Logistics remained a major constraint, as transport costs were high due to the poor state of the roads. UNHCR often used aircraft or boats to reach or deliver assistance to people of concern. Although security improved during the second half of the year in the north of the country, the presence of DRC and Congolese armed forces on the Oubangui River fuelled a high level of tension.



Financial information

Between 2006 and 2009, UNHCR’s programme and budget had been reduced, with a priority given to local integration activities for refugees who opted to remain after the completion of the voluntary repatriation operations. Although UNHCR had planned to close down its operation in the Congo, the influx of refugees from the DRC in late 2009 forced it to raise its operational capacity in the country. This, in addition to the newly introduced comprehensive needs assessment, led to an increase in financial requirements, from USD 8.5 million in 2009 to USD 29.6 million in 2010.

Organization and implementation

In 2010, UNHCR’s operation in the Congo was managed by three offices and 73 staff.

UNHCR’s presence in 2010

□ Number of offices	3
□ Total staff	73
International	11
National	49
UNVs	10
Consultants	3

Working with others

UNHCR worked with five implementing partners and cooperated closely with the Government and the UN Country Team. Other operational partners included WFP, in food assistance.

Overall assessment

UNHCR strengthened its presence in order to respond to the needs of the newly arrived refugees from the DRC. However, logistical constraints did not allow it to meet its objectives in the Congo fully, as poor infrastructure and the isolation of refugee sites limited access to affected populations. There is a need to strengthen advocacy with the Government for local integration and provide training in the management of microcredit programmes.

Partners	
Implementing partners	
Government:	Comité National d’Assistance aux Réfugiés (CNAR)
NGOs:	Agence d’Assistance aux Rapatriés et Réfugiés au Congo, Commission d’Entraide pour les Migrants et les Réfugiés, Médecins d’Afrique
Others:	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Operational partners	
Government:	Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health, Humanitarian Action
NGOs:	Agence d’Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement, Médecins Sans Frontières – France
Others:	FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO

Budget, income and expenditure in Republic of the Congo | USD

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
FINAL BUDGET	29,622,036	29,622,036
Income from contributions ¹	11,686,246	11,686,246
Other funds available	1,984,528	1,984,528
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	13,670,774	13,670,774

EXPENDITURE BREAKDOWN

<i>Favourable protection environment</i>		
National legal framework	33,192	33,192
National administrative framework	220,984	220,984
Co-operation with partners	269,132	269,132
Public attitudes towards persons of concern	88,198	88,198
<i>Non-refoulement</i>	143,172	143,172

Subtotal **754,677** **754,677**

<i>Fair protection processes and documentation</i>		
Reception conditions	184,344	184,344
Registration and profiling	392,832	392,832
Access to asylum procedures	16,596	16,596
Fair and efficient status determination	185,228	185,228
Family reunification	49,910	49,910
Individual documentation	185,303	185,303
Civil status documentation	97,106	97,106

Subtotal **1,111,318** **1,111,318**

<i>Security from violence and exploitation</i>		
Impact on host communities	89,251	89,251
Gender-based violence	545,624	545,624
Protection of children	142,411	142,411
Freedom of movement	89,128	89,128
Non-arbitrary detention	125,675	125,675

Subtotal **992,090** **992,090**

<i>Basic needs and essential services</i>		
Water	297,766	297,766
Shelter and other infrastructure	158,435	158,435
Basic domestic and hygiene items	2,650,067	2,650,067
Primary health care	1,414,865	1,414,865
HIV and AIDS	80,913	80,913
Education	725,437	725,437
Sanitation services	134,107	134,107
Services for groups with specific needs	395,213	395,213

Subtotal **5,856,802** **5,856,802**

	PILLAR 1 Refugee programme	Total
<i>Community participation and self-management</i>		
Participatory assessment and community mobilisation	225,618	225,618
Community self-management and equal representation	231,283	231,283
Self-reliance and livelihoods	311,043	311,043
Subtotal	767,944	767,944
<i>Durable solutions</i>		
Voluntary return	200,894	200,894
Resettlement	122,929	122,929
Local integration support	171,238	171,238
Subtotal	495,060	495,060
<i>External relations</i>		
Public information	3,492	3,492
Subtotal	3,492	3,492
<i>Logistics and operations support</i>		
Supply chain and logistics	712,209	712,209
Programme management, coordination and support	887,434	887,434
Subtotal	1,599,643	1,599,643
Instalments to implementing partners	2,089,724	2,089,724
Other objectives	23	23
Total	13,670,774	13,670,774

¹ Income from contributions includes indirect support costs that are recovered from contributions to Pillars 3 and 4, supplementary budgets and the "New or additional activities - mandate-related" (NAM) reserve. Contributions towards all pillars are included under Pillar 1.