

## Angola: Funds urgently needed as Congolese refugee influx overwhelms services, warns UN agency

12 June 2017 – As refugees fleeing violence and communal tensions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to arrive in neighbouring Angola, the United Nations refugee agency has appealed for more resources to cope with the influx and to provide those coming with the support they urgently need.

According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), some 30,000 people have arrived in Angola's Lunda Norte province since April and there are fears that the number could reach 50,000, with about 300-500 people arriving daily.

Angola is providing a warm welcome, but reception centres accommodating refugees, are full beyond their capacity and basic services cannot be maintained without immediate donor support, said Valentin Tapsoba, the UNHCR's Africa Bureau Director, in a news release today.

He added that the refugees are traumatized and humanitarian agencies require urgent support to ensure that life-saving assistance and protection can be provided to those in need.

The arrivals have mostly been from the Kasai provinces in the DRC, where they were at risk of serious human rights violations and abuses, including physical mutilation, killing, sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention in inhumane conditions.

The Kasais were the location of the discovery of some 42 mass graves, in April by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)). The discoveries further underscored the gravity of the situation.

About 1.3 million people remain displaced internally in the DRC.

Those reaching Angola also expressed fear returning back unless the situation allows for safe and dignified return, noted UNHCR in the release.

***Sustaining life-saving assistance not possible without more funding UNHCR***

In the news release, the UN refugee agency also said that Angola, a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, has historically hosted refugees from its neighbours including DRC.

Prior to the recent influx, the country housed some 15,600 refugees including more than 13,400 from the DRC.

However, with arrivals increasing and apprehensions that the situation could get much worse additional funding is urgently needed.

“Sustaining life-saving assistance won’t be possible without more funding,” said UNHCR, noting that together with its partners, some \$65 million are required of which the UN agency needs \$35 million (until the end of the year) to reach refugees in remote parts of Angola, who are the most vulnerable.

Current humanitarian efforts are supported with \$10 million by the UN Central Emergency Fund, a limited pool of financial resources that provides funding to critical, life-saving humanitarian rapid response and underfunded operations around the globe.