

## Democratic Republic of the Congo

### Operational Context

### Issues and Challenges

### Operations Plan Document

The political and security situation within the DRC remained volatile during 2014. Despite the positive step marked by the signature of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PSCF), and defeat of the armed group M23 in November 2013, conflict has continued in the eastern provinces and there has also been some civil unrest related to discussions on the Constitution and the Electoral calendar. Security is an operating constraint to UNHCR's ability to access and protect persons of concern. The offensive role ascribed to MONSUCO through UNSCR 2098 and subsequent resolutions has led to public misperceptions concerning humanitarians' neutrality, since MONUSCO is perceived as a party to the conflict. This misperception has the potential to affect public perceptions of UN Agencies including UNHCR and to put staff members at risk, and it cannot be ruled out that UNHCR and its staff could be targeted in case of political deterioration of the situation. Renewed conflict and violence have been occurred in North and South Kivu, Oriental Province and Katanga, leading to continued population displacement. A total of 2, 7 million people were internally displaced at the end of 2014 while more than 400,000 Congolese citizens were still refugees in neighboring countries. Each area of UNHCR operations had its own security challenges: North Kivu, South Kivu, and Province Orientale: Joint FARDC/MONUSCO military operations were conducted against armed groups and this contributed to insecurity and internal displacement. Military operations were successfully conducted against FRPI in Province Orientale with the arrest of its leader Cobra Matata. In North and South Kivu, operations code-named Sokula 1 and 2 were conducted against ADF and FDLR. As a result of the operations against ADF, 250 men, women and children lost their lives in attacks in Beni territory by ADF-NALU. In North and South Kivu, military operations resulted in mass displacement and insecurity which resulted in loss of humanitarian lives. The abrupt closure of IDP camp Kiwanja, in December 2014, added to the numerous challenges faced by displaced persons: A bloody conflict pitted ethnic Bantu against indigenous Pygmies in Katanga, while Kata-Katanga militias have staged attacks purportedly in support of an independent Katanga. Entire villages were reportedly burned, sending thousands into the forest and internal displacement. In Equateur Province, the influx of Central African refugees into the DRC has increased: In 2014 there were 68,165 refugees from CAR. UNHCR and partners assist CAR refugees in five camps (Mole, Boyabu, Zongo, Billi and Mboti), taking into consideration the needs of the surrounding host communities. UNHCR supports community based protection in refugee hosting communities, with partners, principally by addressing infrastructure gaps in ways that benefit host communities and refugees. A Memorandum of Understanding for the protection of refugee camps by the national police was extended. An Ebola outbreak was reported in the middle of the year and the Central government imposed travel restrictions within the province, impacting UNHCR operations. Kinshasa: the Congolese government crackdown on street gangs, as reported by the MONUSCO Joint Human Rights Office resulted in reported loss of life through extrajudicial executions. The UN Country team requested and obtained the reclassification of Kinshasa to a family duty station.. UNHCR/DRC continued to rely heavily on air transportation to conduct its operations in the country, but has been spared air accidents and remained safe thanks to strict observation of security related advisories and decisions, and compliance to MOSS.

### Achievements to date

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RR Kinshasa's Regional Representative was appointed Regional Refugee Coordinator for the Great Lakes situation and coordinated regional preparedness planning; the Operation has rolled out the Refugee Coordination Model and the High Commissioners' Structured Dialogue with NGOS: Some 5,000 Rwandan refugees and 1000 Burundian refugees were voluntarily repatriated; Provision of technical and financial support to the National Commission for Refugees for the pre-registration of over 240,000 Rwandan refugees in application of a relevant recommendation made at the last Tripartite meeting held in Kigali; Conduct of regular protection monitoring in locations with a high concentration of IDP and returnees, which has allowed for the identification of a significant number of cases involving serious human rights violations and urgent humanitarian needs. Information gathered through protection monitoring allowed the humanitarian community to provide the emergency response required in a comprehensive and coordinated manner and the presence of protection monitors on a daily basis in the IDP-hosting areas helped reduce their exposure to human rights violations and abuses. Profiling of IDPs staying in spontaneous settlements around Goma resulting in the collection of the required set of data needed by humanitarian actors for planning purposes; Implementation of activities related to the prevention and protection against SGBV as a component of the DRC national strategy for combatting SGBV which is led by UNHCR; SGBV trainings were provided on a regular basis to further build the capacity of the relevant UNHCR and IP staff. Such trainings targeted a large audience including, but not limited to, law-enforcement authorities, members of the DRC armed forces (FARDC), local administration, religious and traditional community leaders, etc. Furthermore, access to medical services was made available to the extent possible for SGBV survivors living in host villages outside camps. - Mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as protection, SGBV, SAFE, gender into activities undertaken by the humanitarian community on behalf of persons of concern including through the delivery of specific training in all the provinces; - Distribution of NFIs, hygiene kits and shelter assistance for a large number of persons of concern including refugees and IDPs; Emergency response to successive waves of new refugees who were forced to flee the on-going violence in the Central African Republic and cross into DRC in the quest of asylum and whose number had reached nearly 90,000 by the end of 2014. Appropriate mechanisms based on the Refugee Coordination Model were set up for effective and efficient coordination of the emergency response including specific activities relating to the prevention and protection against sexual and gender-based violence both inside and outside of the refugee camps - Resettlement of a few dozens of cases from various nationalities mainly to the US for reasons linked to serious protection concerns coupled with the lack of any prospects for local integration or voluntary repatriation; - Provision of support for the reintegration of a significant number of Congolese refugees returning home from the Republic of Congo in the context of a voluntary repatriation programme which was concluded in June 2014; - Facilitation of voluntary repatriation for a large number of former Angolan refugees and local integration for over 12,000 of them, who were unwilling or unable to return, in close collaboration with the competent authorities both in DRC as their country of asylum and Angola as their country of origin.

## **Population trends**

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The numbers of Refugees and asylum-seekers from the is expected to increase from nearly 90,000 in 2015 to 110,000 in 2016 and 2017. Other refugee populations are unlikely to change significantly. in the next two years. The voluntary return of Rwandan refugees will maintain the same level (5,000 – 10,000 annually) or potentially increase significantly with intensified awareness raising and completion of biometric registration. . IDPs While in 2014, 2,730,000 persons were displaced in eastern DRC, in 2015, the overall number of IDPs is expected to go down in eastern provinces (North Kivu, South Kivu, Province Orientale and Katanga) by more or less 300,000 persons some of whom will be assisted by UNHCR. Returnees and returned IDPs The relative stability in certain zones draws some populations, including IDPs and Congolese refugees coming from neighbouring countries (Uganda, South Sudan and Central Africa Republic), to return to their places of origin. The number of refugee returnees as well as IDP returnees is expected to increase, in 2016, by 2,000 and 100,000 persons respectively in the Province Orientale, of whom 70,000 will be assisted by UNHCR. Some 200,000 IDPs are expected to return to their places of origin in North Kivu, South Kivu and Katanga. Finally, an estimated number of 2800 Congolese refugees are expected to return to their places of origin within the South Kivu Province from the neighboring countries including Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Tanzania and Burundi. Refugees and Asylum-seekers in Gabon: At the end of 2014, there were 2,903

persons of concern to UNHCR in Gabon including 1,013 refugees and 1,890 asylum-seekers, all of whom were registered in the ProGres database. The planning figure for 2016 estimated at 2,225 persons including 1,000 refugees 1,255 asylum-seekers

## **Regional Context**

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The political and security situation within the borders of the DRC remained volatile during 2014 and the beginning of 2015. Even though a Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework (PCFR) was signed and the armed group M23 was defeated in November 2013, only limited returns of internally displaced people and DRC refugees from Uganda were registered and conflict and internal displacement continued in the East of the country. Reportedly, over 250 men, women and children were killed in attacks that took place starting in October, 2014 in Beni territory. The attacks, attributed to the Ugandan Alliance of Democratic Forces-NALU (ADF-NALU) led to new population displacement within DRC and into neighboring Uganda. Other armed groups including the FDLR were requested to disarm before 15 January 2015, but little progress has been made and low level conflict is expected to continue in 2016. The abrupt closure of an IDP camp in Kiwanja, a town in Rutshuru Territory, in December 2014, and announcement of the closure of more camps in the region, added to the insecurity facing displaced persons in the DRC. Continued attacks by the LRA contributed to further insecurity. UNHCR's protection monitoring teams reported an increase in LRA attacks in both the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2014, with the number of reported abductions increasing from 346 cases in 2013 to 566 cases in 2014. Since the arrest in the Central African Republic of Dominic Ongwen, an LRA top commander accused of crimes against humanity in the beginning of 2015, LRA rebels have intensified their attacks on villages at the CAR/DRC border. Continuing instability in DRC's Katanga Province related to longstanding conflicts between the Congolese army and the armed group Mai Mai Bataga Katanga, as well as clashes between the Twa (Pigmies) and the Luba (Bantu), further destabilized the region and contributed to further displacement. Twa are finding it more difficult to continue their traditional means of existence as forest resources diminish. There are currently 90,851 refugees from CAR in the DRC, with numbers steadily increasing. They are predominantly in Equateur Province, but also in Province Orientale. Assistance is provided both in camps settings in five refugee camps (Mole, Boyabu, Zongo, Bili and Mboti). UNHCR works with partners to support community that has received refugees from the CAR. Community based assistance includes construction of schools and support to primary health care facilities. Such investment in the host community strengthens community based protection, contributing as it does to the acceptance of refugees more readily by the host community and contributing to peaceful coexistence and community resilience. As the crisis in the Central African Republic is still unresolved with ongoing fighting between ex-Seleka and Anti-Balaka forces, it is expected that this crisis will contribute to instability and displacement in 2016. In August 2014, a voluntary repatriation operation started for Angolans who still seeking to return home.. Out of some 37,625 former Angolan refugees who have opted for voluntary return, 13,814 were able to return. UNHCR has funded temporary residence permits for 18,638 Angolan former refugees who registered for local integration in the DRC. On the political level in Kinshasa, 2014 was marked by the formation of a new unity government in December, which also includes members from the opposition. This announcement came amid speculations that President Kabila, in power since 2001, may try and change the constitution to run for a third term.

## **Protection and Solutions Strategy**

### **Protection and Solutions Strategy**

#### **Operations Plan Document**

UNHCR's Protection and Solutions Operations Strategy and Plan is based on an evaluation of the Protection Environment, taking into consideration data collected through AGDM, Protection Monitoring and a range of reports including the MRM and MARA, as well as the GBVIMS (Gender Based Violence Information

Management System) to which UNHCR contributes, as well as OHCHR and other reports by the United Nations and Group of Experts. The Strategy draws, further, on policies and guidelines including UNHCR's "Alternatives to Camps." The objective of the strategy is to strengthen respect for fundamental rights, build resilience and develop community-based protection, building on synergies between populations. Operational strategies include strengthened partnership with the whole range of relevant stakeholders including government authorities, UN Sister Agencies, local and international NGOs, civil society associations and quite obviously the persons of concern themselves. These are accompanied by capacity building and advocacy for the further development of a fair and efficient national asylum system, of national IDP legislation pursuant to the Kampala Convention and continued advocacy for the DRC's accession to the two Statelessness conventions. UNHCR will strive to further mainstream protection and ensure its activities appear as requisite in UNDAF. UNHCR will seek to ensure that protection and populations of concern to the Organization are taken due account of in the HAP and Humanitarian Emergency responses, ensuring enhanced synergies with OCHA and partners in multiyear planning and prioritization. The operation has developed national and regional contingency plans with associated budgets in order to be prepared for emergencies at the national and regional levels. The overarching goal of the protection strategy is based on the effective implementation of UNHCR's policy on the search for Alternatives to Camps as well as relevant thematic strategies (Livelihoods, education, SGBV, Child Protection, etc.), and is designed to achieve long-term sustainable solutions across all PPGs, making strategic use of community based protection and synergies between different population groups; strengthening community-based protection, monitoring, outreach and case management, including increased direct engagement with refugee and host communities, through mobile monitoring teams, community centers, the co-location of government, UNHCR and partner services ("one-stop shops") and the use of virtual platforms to facilitate information sharing and two-way communication in order to overcome the challenges that arise when refugees are not consolidated in camps and to ensure that refugees with specific needs and vulnerabilities, child protection risks and SGBV issues do not remain hidden. Finally, efforts will be made for the introductions of Biometric (BIMS) level three registration which help further strengthen protection and facilitate the search for durable solutions both in the DRC and at the regional level. In IDP protection UNHCR will respect the principle "Do No Harm" and seek to mainstream protection across clusters through training and awareness raising activities, fully assuming its role advisory role to the Humanitarian Country Team and the Humanitarian Coordinator. UNHCR will seeks to ensure that protection drives the analysis of and strategies to address situations of displacement assuring links between. humanitarian assistance ,delivery of health services, creation of shelter options and protection outcomes.

## **Prioritized Operations Results**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The prioritized Operations results can be summarized as follows: • Emergency response to 40,000 new CAR refugees (25,000 in 2016 and 15,000 in 2017) who are expected to be forced to flee violence and cross into DRC. • Delivery of protection and provision of assistance for CAR refugees in the Province of Equateur and the Oriental Province as well as urban refugees and asylum-seekers from other nationalities; • Ensuring access to essential basic services for refugees (WASH, education, shelter, health care, food and non-food items, etc.) • Preserve civilian and humanitarian character of asylum and ensure respect for the principle of non-refoulement. • Ensuring camp security and protection of refugees from crime and violence; • Promotion of refugees self-reliance and their subsequent socio-economic integration including through the implementation of UNHCR's policy on the search for alternatives to camps; • Prevention and response to SGBV including through the implementation of the SAFE strategy; • Facilitation of voluntary repatriation for Rwandan and Burundian refugees; • Protection monitoring in conflict affected locations in eastern DRC • IDP profiling and registration for a targeted assistance as well as for durable solutions purposes;

### **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The impact on persons of concern, which is expected to result from UNHCR's inability to implement the full plan, will include:

- Resettlement as a protection tool and the only viable durable solution for hundreds of cases may not be available;
- Legal assistance and judicial support for SGBV survivors;
- Timely processing by the National Commission for Refugees of asylum claims;
- Access to livelihood opportunities for the promotion of refugees' self-reliance;
- Facilitation of voluntary and sustainable return for IDPs willing to go back to their places of origin;
- Empowerment of IDPs and promotion of their self-reliance especially the most vulnerable of them;
- -Further aggravation of the protection situation for persons found to be in need of resettlement as the only viable solution;
- -Unduly protracted displacement for IDPs who should normally be able to return to their areas of origin or find alternative sustainable solutions if they were given the support needed to restart their lives;
- -Higher exposure of persons of concern to protection risks including gender-based violence in a climate of impunity;
- -Exacerbation of vulnerability for persons with specific needs as a result of inadequate support;
- -Heightened exposure to police harassment, violence and exploitation as well as an increased dependence on UNHCR's assistance for asylum-seekers whose refugee claims have been pending for an extended period of time before the National Commission for Refugees;
- -Persons of concern are likely to become fully dependent on UNHCR's assistance if they are not provided with livelihood opportunities which should allow them make a living and sustain themselves;

The UNHCR Policy on Alternatives to Camps is taken into consideration but further work needed to assure broad awareness and subsequent full range of community based protection, community resilience, enjoyment of rights and access to services as envisioned in the Policy

## **Management Plan**

### **Operations Plan Document**

In 2016 through to 2017, the Regional Representation will continue to demonstrate its creativity, in an ever fluid and rapidly changing operational environment, coupled with the reality of a dwindling global financial environment, in ensuring the appropriate management and administrative structures to ensure maximum delivery of assistance to Refugees. To this end, the Regional Representation in Kinshasa will continue to provide leadership to the Operations in the DRC and the other offices under its purview, namely Gabon and ROC, coupled with its new Coordination role for the Great Lakes. In the Equateur, given the trend of the influx of CAR refugees to Gbadolite and its environs, the Sub-Office will be moved from Mbandaka to Gbadolite, as a P.5 Sub-Office. Mbandaka will be closed. Gbadolite will be appropriately strengthened to assume the new role of Sub-Office. With the recent opening of an Office in Bili, the new sub office in Gbadolite (P5) will supervise: Zongo (P2), Libenge (P3) and Bili (P3). In the East, the Sub-Office in Goma will be reinforced and strengthened to enhance its coordination role of offices in the Kivus (Bukavu) and in the Province Oriental (Bunia). With scaling down of the repatriation of DRC refugees from neighboring countries and the end of the Rwandese Refugee operations, the Field Units in Uvira and Ango will be closed by the end of 2015 and the Field Office structures in Bukavu and Bunia to be strengthened to ensure continued protection monitoring and later on repatriation activities in their respective regions. In the Katanga region also, with the end of the Repatriation of Angolan and Rwandese Refugees at the end of 2015, the Field Unit in Lubumbashi will be closed at the end of 2015 and activities in the Katanga concentrated and overseen by the Field Office in Kalemie. The Regional Representation will therefore be operating with 11 Offices in the DRC - the Regional Representation in Kinshasa, 2 Sub-offices – Goma and Gbadolite, 6 Field Offices, Bukavu, Libenge, Zongo, Bili, Kalemie and Bunia plus 2 Field Units in Rutshuru and Kindu. The total number of positions proposed in the plan narrative is 289 positions, while 287 is included in the staffing OL budget. Bureau/field has to review and ensure that number of approved positions for 2016 is aligned with the submission. The total number of positions proposed for 2016 therefore is 289 positions. This includes, 212 national positions, 17 National Professional Officer Positions and 58 international positions (including 1 FS)-totaling 287. There is a Regional Cash-Based Intervention position at P3 level currently occupied as TA. This position is expected to be Fixed Term from January 2016. The proposed number of affiliate workforce is 42 including 38 IUNVs, 2 JPOs and 2 Consultants. The Liaison Office in Gabon will have 3 positions in 2016. The Regional Representation will continue to contribute towards the inter-agency and integrated initiatives within the UN country team. The Representation will capitalize on the cost-share budgets and the consolidation of resources within the country team, especially in the areas of Security and Telecommunications in order to streamline its own structures in these two areas. In

2016 the Coordination of the Protection Cluster will continue to need the presence of a full time coordinator in Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema and Katanga provinces. The Kinshasa-based National Coordinator and Goma Coordinator (the latter supervising Oriental and South Kivu provinces) will continue to need an Associate Coordinator. As well, the activities of the Protection Cluster will not be visible without the support of an Information Manager Officer (IMO) based in Kinshasa; this post has been created for 2016.

## **Partnership Strategy and Partner Contributions**

### **Operations Plan Document**

UNHCR will participate in the UN coordination mechanism and the Humanitarian response to crises in the country and collaborate with implementing and operational partners as envisioned in the High Commissioners Dialogue with NGOs and related s ICVA initiatives. In order to strengthen community resilience and pursuant to IASC guidelines UNHCR will work with development partners so that elements of early recovery can be part of emergency response. UNHCR is a member of the UNCT and will participate in all UNCT activities during 2016 in the DRC, RoC and Gabon. UNHCR will participate in thematic working groups. UNHCR will lead interventions and coordinate partners in the full range of refugee response as outlined in the Refugee Coordination Model and guidance on refugee coordination in mixed situations, assuring partner involvement in contingency and Programme planning.. Active participation and intervention from UN agencies (UNICEF, WHO, WFP, UNFPA) and other Operational and implementing partners (World vision, MSF Belgique) will be pursued to strengthen response to humanitarian needs for refugees and others of concern. UNHCR in the DRC will regularly attend the inter UN agency coordination meetings in the HCT (Humanitarian Country Team), the HAG (Humanitarian Advisory Group), the INTERCLUSTER and the PMT (Program Monitoring Group). In Kinshasa, Katanga, North and South Kivu, Province Orientale and Equateur, UNHCR is part of the cluster and intercluster coordination mechanism to address IDP issues across provinces and leads the Protection and the shelter/NFI clusters. UNHCR will continue to have access to the humanitarian common funds, especially the Pooled Funds and the CERF for the protection and monitoring of IDPs based on strategic priorities and needs. UNHCR will advocate for the activation of the CCCM Cluster. With regards to core protection and the delivering of basic needs and essential services to the refugees and asylum seekers, UNHCR will still cooperate with National and International NGOs through the PPA to implement deliver protection and assistance to the PoCs. The retention system and the desk reviews will be conducted. In Gabon, UNHCR will participate regularly to the UN inter agency coordination meetings with UNCT, DSS, GTO, UNCARES, UN communication group , EC HIV/AIDS... The Government in DRC granted 4 sites to host the refugees in Equateur and Province Orientale. Recently, Bili a site of 160 Ha was allocated for the relocation of 15,000 CAR refugees from the border. The Government also provided arable lands for farming and livestock to 4,286 refugees during 2014 in Equateur UNHCR will continue working with its governmental partner: CNR, which plays a key role in assisting UNHCR and its implementing partners in dealing with governmental authorities, as well as representing the office in judicial matters. Police ensure security in Lead of the Protection Cluster in DRC, UNHCR will continue to coordinate activities regarding the protection of internally displaced persons and/or with very special needs in conflict-affected areas and/or return areas within the Inter-Agency humanitarian system. Meetings will be organized in a regular manner on the basis of equal partnership with members of the Cluster at national, provincial and local levels. The Coordination of the Protection Cluster suffers from the absence of co-facilitators (except in North Kivu). Moreover, lacking technical support staff, Protection Cluster Coordinators (all the more those who are protection generalists) are over taken by the humanitarian inter-agency work pressure demanding rapid and coordinated responses to emergencies, as well as by the heavy and tedious humanitarian planning and financing procedures. In particular, the absence of an Information Manager Officer dedicated to the Protection Cluster is felt, as it does not enable the improved visibility of activities of the Protection Cluster both in DRC and at global level.

### **Security Management**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The humanitarian space is limited because of the affected areas under control of armed groups. Confrontations between the FARDC and AGs on one hand and among AGs on the other, impact negatively on UNHCR's operation as access to persons of concern is limited. The threat from armed conflicts aside, criminality both in urban and rural area is on the rise, facilitated by the proliferation of light arms, high unemployment, poverty and impunity. In the midst of the above threats and consequent risks, UNHCR cannot shy away from its responsibility on ensuring the security of the staff, partners and assets on his area of operation. The strategy adopted by UNHCR in order to enable the continuity of operation is to ensure mitigating and preventive measures are in place to reduce the level of risk, or to avoid risk when it is not acceptable. UNHCR acknowledges acceptable risks for which mitigating measures must be put in place for 2016/2017 to the extent possible. Despite all these security measures, UN staff remain at risk due to rampant and persistent criminality fuelled by economic hardship, ill-paid police and military personnel and presence of armed groups. Staff members are exposed to house break-ins, ambushed, car-jacking, and violent criminals. Strict adherence to security measures will be advised to all staffs in order to preserve them from being victims of serious security incident and to allow a smooth and secure conduct of UN operations. Additional funds will be needed to upgrade the MOSS and conduct security trainings for UN staff including SAFE, ETB and security awareness.

## **Population Group: Persons at risk of statelessness**

### **Assessment for each PPG**

#### **Current Situation and Achievements to date**

##### **Operations Plan Document**

Rwandan refugees are at risk of being affected by the cessation clause the implementation of which was called for by their country of origin in 2013. All countries in the region that are hosting Rwandan refugees, including DRC, are opposed to their local integration including for political reasons considering that voluntary repatriation is actually the only viable solution that is available to them. Consequently, they will be wandering in the forest to try to revitalize their forces or to get associated with Congolese armed groups. Women and children could be then taken hostages and used as human shields. Several cases might run the risk of statelessness, especially children who do not have a chance to be recorded into the birth registration books. Although to a lesser extent compared to the Rwandan, some Burundian refugees in South Kivu may as well be at risk of statelessness for the same reasons. In addition to the Rwandan refugees as a specific group at risk of statelessness, there are some other groups of Congolese citizens who are labelled as foreign nationals due to their ethnic background as Rwandophones. The difficulties in accessing civil status registry offices for the registration of their children's births is a major factor that contributes to the latter's exposure to the risk of being denied to right to a nationality.

### **Strategy for each PPG**

#### **Protection and Solutions Strategy (comprehensive)**

##### **Operations Plan Document**

UNHCR's strategy for the prevention and reduction of the risk of statelessness consists in the registration of the whole group of the Rwandan refugees (nearly 250,000 persons according to DRC government provisional statistics) still living in DRC and the verification of the Burundian refugees who might have been previously registered but who are reportedly living in remote rural areas in South Kivu and whose number is estimated to be turning around more or less 3000 persons. Furthermore, UNHCR intends to further develop the capacity of the National Commission for Refugees on issues related to the refugee status determination procedure as well as the Civil Registry Offices on matters pertaining to birth registration as a widespread systemic problem in rural areas in the DRC. Last but not least, in line with the Organization's Global Plan of Action to end Statelessness by 2024, UNHCR will facilitate a round table with key players

from government institutions, UN agencies, NGO community and civil society organisations to discuss issues related to the risks of statelessness in DRC and support the DRC government in developing a national plan of action for the prevention of statelessness. Assumptions and constraints While sustained advocacy efforts to prevent/reduce risks of statelessness may lead to the government's greater engagement for the facilitation of access to civil status documentation for the persons concerned in urban centres, it is unlikely that this is not going to make a big difference for the greatest majority of persons-at-risk of statelessness living in remote and hardly accessible locations.

## **Prioritized Results**

### **Operations Plan Document**

Reduction of the risk of statelessness through prevention activities with regards to displaced Congolese children, Rwandan and Burundian refugees, mixed families, returned Congolese children. Population will be informed about the risks associated with statelessness, as well as about prevention and protection against serious human rights violation.

## **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The lack of adequate will be a major obstacle to the effective implementation of specific actions relevant to the DRC context from the UNHCR's Global Action Plan to end statelessness within the next ten years. Additional resources are required for UNHCR to launch a masse information and awareness-raising campaign about issues related to the causes and consequences of the risks of statelessness in DRC.

## **Population Group: Refugees Asylum Seekers**

### **Assessment for each PPG**

#### **Current Situation and Achievements to date**

### **Operations Plan Document**

Urban refugees and asylum-seekers are mainly originating from neighboring countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Republic of Congo, in addition to various smaller groups of other refugees from other nationalities. They are to be found in large urban centers in the eastern Provinces as well as Katanga and Equateur with the highest concentration being in Kinshasa and Bas Congo. In 2016, it is expected that that there will be 4,000 urban refugees and 1,184 asylum-seekers in 2016, which figures will go up to 6,000 and 3,552 respectively in 2017. While the number of urban refugees and asylum-seekers is obviously insignificant compared to that of those staying in refugee camps, addressing their protection concerns and humanitarian needs has proven to be far more challenging for both UNHCR and its implementing partners. Indeed, the potential for their self-reliance is rather limited due to higher cost of living and greater difficulties in securing gainful jobs in urban centers where they are consequently forced to rely heavily on UNHCR's assistance for their survival. Their basic needs in terms of access to health care, education, food and accommodation are far from being fully covered and as a consequence, they have no other choice than turning to UNHCR and civil society organizations looking for assistance. Some of the urban refugees have been staying in the DRC for an extended period of time with no opportunities for any durable solutions including voluntary repatriation which is not deemed feasible as yet because of the prevailing conditions in their countries of origin. Moreover, it must be highlighted that due to their stigmatization coupled with the xenophobic attitudes of the general public towards them for reasons linked to their nationality, urban refugees have actually no prospects for local integration either. This is particularly the case for refugees coming from the Republic of Congo and Rwanda, and whose protection environment may further deteriorate with the upcoming elections in DRC. The voluntary repatriation of the former Angolan refugees is expected

to be concluded sometime towards the end of June 2015. Nevertheless, there will still be a residual group which is made up of those who are still waiting for the examination of their requested they had submitted before the National Commission for Refugees (CNR) for their exemption from the application the cessation clause claiming to be in a continued need of international protection, as well as those who have opted for local integration as ordinary migrants. As far access to the status determination procedure, it must be stated that asylum-seekers living elsewhere away from the capital city of Kinshasa are bound to wait for unduly extended period of time before getting a chance to have their asylum applications or appeals against first-instance negative decisions reach respectively the Eligibility Commission and the Appeals Board, which entities are both based in Kinshasa. It is expected that the training provided in 2014 on RSD-related topics to CNR's technical staff as well as to the members of the Eligibility Commission and the Appeals Board will continue in 2015 and that this will contribute to the improvement of the RSD process as a whole. However, in view of the rather high turnover of CNR's staff as well as members of the eligibility commission and the appeals board, such training events should be repeated and reinforced in 2016. In conclusion, it must be stated that urban refugees and asylum seekers are confronted with serious difficulties in accessing basic social services including, but not limited to, education, health, HIV services and livelihoods. Added to this is difficulty in having timely access to the documentation required, which, in turn, results in their exposure to all sorts of harassment such as arbitrary arrest, illegal detention, extortion, eviction and so on

## **Strategy for each PPG**

### **Protection and Solutions Strategy (comprehensive)**

#### **Operations Plan Document**

In light of the above-mentioned challenges, UNHCR's strategy for the protection of urban refugees and asylum-seekers in 2016 will be focused on improving access to the status determination procedure, documentation, the promotion of self-reliance through income-generating activities, access to basic services such as education for refugee children (primary and secondary level), health care, prevention and response to SGBV, accommodation for protection purposes, as well as proactive search for durable solutions including resettlement for cases with specific needs facing serious protection concerns which cannot be effectively addressed locally. Moreover, all refugees and asylum seekers will be registered on an individual base and issued with the proper documentation for their protection. General elections in the DRC are scheduled to start on 25 October 2015 and be concluded on 27 November 2016 with the presidential election. Given the political climate surrounding the upcoming elections and the recent massive demonstrations against the revision of the constitution ahead of the elections, it is feared that urban refugees and asylum-seekers will be exposed in 2015 and 2016 to additional protection risks and challenges.

### **Prioritized Results**

#### **Operations Plan Document**

Refugees and asylum seekers in DRC are mainly concentrated in rural and urban areas whereas security remains desirable. Favorable protection environment, Security from Violence and Exploitation, Basic Needs and Essential Services and durable solutions will be the main focus for the bureau. Priority will be given to continue to strengthen the government capacity (Protection training and capacity building for CNR) in order to reinforce their competencies on civil status and documentation, on gender relations and abuses of power while health status, education, integration, resettlement and voluntary returns will remain the principal concern. Special attention will be given to person with specific needs mainly children and women and prevention of and response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) reinforced. Since the Refugee Status Determination (RSD) is one of the Government primary responsibilities and although UNHCR has been provided technical support to enhance the procedures, in DRC, Status Determination remains a challenge for UNHCR's protection and assistance activities. The Refugee Status Determination procedures take to longue, as of today, hundreds of asylum-seekers applications are pending for Government decision. Furthermore, the present of local as well as foreign armed groups in the areas of interventions expose women and Children to various forms of gender-related persecution.

## **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

With an increase number of refugees and asylum seeker in the country and with each year depreciation of resources, the office will partially achieve the Global Strategic Priority 1, 3, 7 and 8. Asylum procedures, protection risks faced by people of concern, opportunities for quality education, livelihoods and durable solution will be partially covered. During 2015, an agreement with BIT have been negotiated in order support income generating activities to sustain self-sufficient of refugees and asylum seekers however with in the operating level the funds will not be available to implement any projects. Even though refugee's children have free access to education, they are often exposed to discrimination due to their ethnic/linguistic origin. Within the operating level, extra- School fees for reinforcement charge as complement to teachers' salaries and school materials will not be sufficient. Also the bio-metric registration of refugees have not been will not been taking into account

### **Population Group: Rwandan Refugees**

#### **Assessment for each PPG**

#### **Current Situation and Achievements to date**

#### **Operations Plan Document**

At a regional Ministerial meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa on 18 April 2013, facilitated by UNHCR to review the Comprehensive Durable Solutions Strategy for the Rwandan Refugee Situation, the Government of the DRC (GoDRC) reiterated its stance that it was not in a position to apply the "ceased circumstances" Cessation Clauses by the proposed June 30th deadline and it was agreed that a registration exercise would be conducted and voluntary repatriation be implemented before invocation of the Cessation Clauses. During the Tripartite Commission meeting in Kigali in June 2013 it was agreed that the DRC Government, with support from UNHCR, would conduct identification and registration of Rwandan refugees as well as a survey of return intentions. In this context the DRC Government, through the Commission nationale pour les réfugiés (CNR) identified 241,626 individuals, some 30% indicating interest in voluntary repatriation. Between 2001 and 2015, 138,259 Rwandan refugees have voluntarily returned to Rwanda. UNHCR and the authorities intend to complete the ongoing biometric registration of Rwandan refugees remaining in the DRC in the "ProGres" data base in 2015 and will seek solutions for those identified. Article 5, paragraph 2 of the Tripartite Agreement of 17 February 2010 signed between the Government of the DRC, the Government of Rwanda and UNHCR, provides for local integration, as follows: "refugees who decide not to benefit from voluntary return may continue to reside in the Democratic Republic of Congo and strengthen their integration in Congolese society in accordance with provisions of the Geneva Convention, the OAU Convention as well as applicable legislation in the Democratic Republic of Congo." Article 2 provides that Rwandan refugees will not be forced to return to their country of origin. To date, however, the GoDRC has not made a proposal regarding a legal basis or procedures for local integration for former Rwandan refugees. National law offers some potential for sustainable local integration through long term residence and naturalization, while some (former) refugees may become eligible for nationality through marriage or by birth, with choice and renunciation of other nationalities at 18 and provided in all instances that the individual is in good legal standing. Particular attention is required to identify sustainable solutions for Rwandans with special needs. These may include former UASCs as well as the elderly, chronically ill or those socially ostracised/stigmatized or at risk of SGBV. Support would be in securing long term access to medical treatment, care and or income generating activities, whether in the country of asylum or the country of origin. UNHCR would also continue providing technical assistance to the CNR in identifying and prioritizing persons with specific needs, as well as facilitating tracing of family members, and BID for unaccompanied and or separated children (UASCs). A particular challenge in 2015 is FARDC campaigns against the FDLR, because areas where registration was foreseen may no longer be safe or accessible due to ongoing military activity and tis may impact the registration operation.

## **Strategy for each PPG**

### **Protection and Solutions Strategy (comprehensive)**

#### **Operations Plan Document**

Even though the DRC is a State Party to numerous international and regional legal instruments including, but not limited to, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Additional Protocol, the AU Convention Governing Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Statute of the International Criminal Court, the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the African Charter on Human Rights and the Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and adopted a relevant national legal and administrative legal framework, it has not yet acceded to the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons. UNHCR's protection and durable solutions strategy for Rwandan Refugees includes individual biometric registration, protection monitoring and promotion of voluntary repatriation as well as access to durable solutions including local integration and resettlement in exceptional and compelling cases. Should the DRC invoke cessation an alternative legal status will be required and provision made for Exemptions. Individual registration and documentation, as well as community based protection in line with UNHCR's policy on Alternatives to Camps and voluntary repatriation will be prioritized. Protection monitoring and SGBV prevention and response will be strengthened and UNHCR will continue efforts in 2016 to advocate for DRC's accession to the Statelessness Conventions, keeping in mind that Rwandan refugees and certain Congolese citizens may be at risk of Statelessness by the operation of the law. UNHCR will support the CNR in 2015 in conducting biometric registration to establish a reliable database that will be in place in 2016. This database will assist in better managing the repatriation of refugees, identifying those in need of other durable solutions and supporting requests for exemption should the cessation clause be invoked by the DRC government. Major challenges in eastern DRC include the weakness or absence of rule of law, the need to strengthen security services in most areas hosting Rwandan refugees, many of whom to live in precarious conditions in remote and inaccessible areas, subject to forcible displacement, or who move with the FDLR. Many have family members in the ranks of the FDLR and therefore may be at risk despite their civilian status should they be present in areas where military campaigns are ongoing. Some populations associate Rwandan refugees with the human rights violations perpetrated by armed groups (including the FDLR) and may view them with hostility. The risk of SGBV for Rwandan refugees is high. UNHCR will strive to ensure that they are protected from violence and the effects of the armed conflicts taking place in eastern DRC, including sexual and gender-based violence. Rwandan refugees may reside in remote areas, relatively far from the local civilian population and in proximity to FDLR combatants, which makes coexistence with other Congolese communities difficult, although both groups regularly mingle. Some schools in areas that are more densely populated by Rwandan refugees grant Rwandan students access to schooling. The same applies to health centers in terms of access to medical care. With this in mind, UNHCR will conduct awareness-raising campaigns targeting both relevant government officials and the general public with a view changing negative attitudes towards Rwandan Refugees.

#### **Prioritized Results**

##### **Operations Plan Document**

UNHCR has prioritized the following results within the limits of the available resources: (1) Improving or maintaining the quality of registration and documentation of Rwandan refugees in the DRC. (2) Increase in voluntary repatriation (3) Strengthen resilience and peaceful coexistence for Rwandan refugees and host communities through strengthened community based protection in accordance with UNHCR's Alternatives to Camps policy (3) Strengthening protection against the consequences of the armed conflict including Child Protection and improved SGBV prevention and response. (4) Strengthened strategy for global solutions including local integration and targeted protection of persons with special needs, including resettlement in exceptional cases.

## **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The main needs which will remain unmet due to UNHCR's inability to implement the full plan for lack of adequate resources may be summarized as follows: (1) lack of quality support for biometric ProGres registration will negatively impact protection for all Rwanda refugees (2) inadequate Community based protection will lower overall quality of protection and ability to access services (schools, medical centers) or enjoy rights (3) lack of funding for SGBV prevention and response will negatively impact protection (4) Shortage of essential drugs in local health facilities, and hygiene kit, PEP kits will mean limited access to adequate primary health care • (5) Limited access to education due to the parents' inability to afford the related costs

## **Population Group: C. African Refugees in DRC**

### **Assessment for each PPG**

#### **Current Situation and Achievements to date**

### **Operations Plan Document**

As of December 31, 2014, Central African refugees in Equateur are over 60,000 (camps and outside camps); All those living in the camps are beneficiaries of the multi-sectorial assistance provided by UNHCR and implemented by its various operational partners (AIRD, ADES, ADSSE, IEDA, CNR, SFCG). The most significant achievements include the construction of three durable (3) health centers, four (4) primary schools in Equateur and 490 semi-durable shelters especially for PBS, including 40 shelters in the Eastern Province. But also, it can be noted the establishment of an operational reproductive health service, an effective nutritionally supplementation program, an improvement in delivery of documentation and achievement of 11 productive wells to further facilitate the access to water in the camps, allowing refugees to have an average daily per capita consumption of 15 liters. Since July 2014, in the camps of Mole and Zongo, with the Cash grant and NFIs supplied by WFP and UNHCR, refugees can obtain household items and food for subsistence. At Inke camp the cash voucher system was introduced in October 2014 to the satisfaction of refugees. The combined actions of the government through the CNR and Humanitarian have permitted to establish a climate of trust and collaboration. This collaboration facilitates the organization of protection and assistance missions in the Centrafrican Refugees project area. The medical assistance of refugees is effective upon arrival at the point of entry as well as in the camps. In the context of the steady influx of new refugees fleeing atrocities in the Central African Republic (CAR), appropriate mechanisms were put in place for an effective and efficient coordination of the emergency response including specific activities relating to the prevention and protection against sexual and gender-based violence both inside and outside of the refugee camps that were set up for their accommodation in the Equateur and the Oriental provinces. Measures were taken in due course for the formation of SGBV Committees and the designation of SGBV Focal Points, thus involving from the very onset of the emergency the refugee community in efforts geared towards the prevention and response to this kind of widespread human rights violations which are, quite unfortunately, widespread within both the refugee community itself and the host communities.

### **Strategy for each PPG**

#### **Protection and Solutions Strategy (comprehensive)**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The number of CAR refugees living in the Equateur Province is expected to grow in from its current level (90,000) to 110,000 in 2016 as a result of an influx of 25,000 new refugees and the spontaneous return of 5000 persons. As for their number in the Province Oriental, there are no indications that this would undergo

any major variations neither upwards nor downwards. In terms of the overall protection and durable solutions strategy to be implemented for CAR refugees in 2016, it is envisaged that UNHCR will continue with community-based interventions benefiting both refugees and host communities so as to promote peaceful coexistence between the two communities and explore opportunities for refugees to settle in neighboring locations instead of being confined in camps without any prospects for them to achieve a sufficient level of self-reliance in the foreseeable future. As a matter of fact, the transformation of the CAR refugees-hosting Mboti camp in the Province Orientale will be undertaken as a pilot project which will be later on replicated elsewhere provided that the whole range of the pre-requisite conditions are fully met. Besides, efforts will be made for a transition to be made from the current blanket distribution of assistance into one which is targeted taking due account of the beneficiaries real needs while further strengthening community mobilization, prevention and response to SGBV, child birth registration as well as issuance of civil status documentation in general, border monitoring and advocacy for the preservation of the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum and observance of the principle of non-refoulement as the cornerstone of the international refugee protection and, last but not least, enhance collaboration and partnership with all relevant stakeholders including UN sister Agencies, NGOs and Civil Society organizations. • The ongoing humanitarian crisis in CAR, where human rights violations are reportedly committed systematically and deliberately against civilians, is unlikely to be fully and permanently resolved in 2016. The outlook is all the more bleak in some specific localities (Prefectures de Ouaka et de Basse Koto) situated on the other side of the Oubangui river across the Equateur Province and where sporadic fighting between ex-SELEKA rebels and the Anti-Balaka militiamen is likely to cause a significant number of persons (up to 25,000 in 2016 and 15,000 in 2017) to cross the border into DRC in quest of asylum. • It is also expected that a relatively small number of CAR refugees from the Equateur Province (no more than 5,000 persons in 2016 and 15,000 in 2017) will spontaneously go back to their places of origin in CAR where some level security and stability will have been achieved. • Should such expectations come true, additional budgetary resources will be needed for UNHCR to be able to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of the newly arriving refugees. • The enactment at the end of February 2015 of the Law on territorial apportionment which involves the subdivision of the current two Provinces (Equateur and Oriental) hosting CAR refugees into several smaller provinces may give raise to inter-ethnic tensions or conflicts, according to some analysts. • The upcoming presidential elections in 2016 may also trigger some political violence which may escalate into inter-ethnic clashes in some provinces including the Province of Equateur and Province Oriental. As a consequence, this could force a significant number of persons into displacement creating thus a very complex humanitarian situation.

## **Prioritized Results**

### **Operations Plan Document**

Within the available resources, the following areas of activities will be prioritized: - Favorable protection environment: particular attention will be paid to guarantee the free access to the territory and prevent refugee from the refoulement; humanitarian and civilian character of sites, camps and asylum will be preserved as well as access to justice - Civil documentation and registration: Will improve reception conditions and accommodation as well as registration and access to civil documentation to the refugees - Sexual gender based violence: prevention and response to SGBV issues will be prioritized in all the camps and areas where refugees are hosted - Access to basic needs and essentials services (education, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, wash, core relief items, reproductive health etc) - Community mobilization and empowerment: Will ensure that refugee communities participate in the process of decision making, particularly the women, peaceful cohabitation and livelihood and self-sufficiency will be prioritized. - Durable solution will be sought out and 5,000 refugees will be repatriated back to CAR

### **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

The limit of the funds available will leave out the following activities in Equateur: - Not all of the Children from 3 to 5 years will have access to preschool education. They correspond to 28% of the population -

Secondary education for 5,959 adolescents will be left aside. Only 7% of them manage to access to secondary school - No hope for the tertiary students and no literacy for adults. - Insufficient support to schools with educational materials In the Province Orientale, the recent JAM undertaken in Bongo where 580 CAR refugees are hosted, identified the following gaps: • medical support and equipment's are inadequate in the existing health structures • Education and SGBV are still gaps in the Operation • Population does not have access to potable water in Bondo where CAR refugees are hosted

## **Population Group: Congolese returnees**

### **Assessment for each PPG**

#### **Current Situation and Achievements to date**

##### **Operations Plan Document**

The number of Congolese refugees in Africa is estimated at 467.102 persons out whom 408,263 are to be found in neighboring countries. In 2014, there was a spontaneous return movement of Congolese refugees from Uganda into Rutchuru, North Kivu, even though the security situation was relatively still tense. This was exactly under these circumstances that a tragic accident occurred on the Lake Albert when a boat transporting Congolese refugees heading home from Uganda sank killing one hundred of them. In North Kivu, the activism of the armed groups in the areas of returnees, the several military operations conducted by FARDC, the circular note from the UNHCR HQ preventing the promotion of the repatriation of Congolese refugees in South Kivu and the lack of a good returnees' reintegration state policy have not facilitate the return of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda during the year 2014. In order to avoid similar tragic incidents in the future and in spite of the fact that the conditions prevailing at the time in the areas of origin of the refugees were not fully conducive to their return in safety and dignity, UNHCR, at the request of the DRC authorities, made necessary arrangements for the transportation of refugees willing to come back home from Uganda. Thus, UNHCR in collaboration with the National Commission for Refugees provide transportation support for 5400 out of the 53,000 Congolese refugee returnees coming back from Uganda in 2014. In addition and pursuant to a tripartite agreement between UNHCR, DRC and RoC, voluntary return was facilitated for tens of thousands of former Congolese refugees having sought asylum in RoC. It should be stated that by the time this voluntary repatriation programme was concluded at the end of June 2014, there were still some 25,000 Congolese refugees living in RoC mainly in the area of Betou and who did not express the wish to come back home. However, the latter seem to have now decided to come back home in the context of an organized return facilitated by UNHCR and discussions are currently underway between UNHCR and the government of the two countries concerned on the possible resumption of the voluntary repatriation programme for the benefit of the aforementioned residual caseload. While the plan is that this facilitated return should in principle take place in 2015, there is a high likelihood that it won't happen before next year as given the time it takes for the necessary arrangements to be fully put in place both in the country of asylum and the country of origin.

### **Strategy for each PPG**

#### **Protection and Solutions Strategy (comprehensive)**

##### **Operations Plan Document**

It is hoped that the ongoing FARDC-led military operation against the various armed groups including the FDLR combatants in eastern DRC will bring about some improvement in the security conditions, and keeping in mind the presidential elections which are due to be held in 2016, many Congolese refugees in neighboring countries might decide to come back and take part in the said elections. In this context, it is expected that 22,000 Congolese refugees would return from both Rwanda and Uganda in 2016 and another 35,000 would do so in 2017, most of whom, if not all, will be assisted by UNHCR. Besides, it is expected most, if not all, of the 25,000 Congolese refugees remaining in RoC will also opt for voluntary repatriation

with UNHCR's assistance either towards the end of this year or next year. In this regard, UNHCR's strategy for the facilitation the reintegration process for such spontaneous returnees will be based on the following:

- Strengthening coordination with UNHCR's Offices in the asylum countries (i.e. RoC, Rwanda and Uganda)
- Providing support in the form of cash grant to spontaneous returnees for travel-related costs;
- Returnee monitoring and supporting the process of their reintegration including through the construction of transitional and provision of shelter kits for the most vulnerable of them;
- Promoting returnees self-reliance through income-generating activities and vocational training especially for women and other persons with specific needs;
- Promoting access to property and peaceful coexistence between returnees and host communities including by further developing the capacity of the CLPCs in different return zones for amicable settlement of conflicts especially land-related conflicts;
- Strengthening social cohesion through the implementation of community-based projects such as the rehabilitation of health and educational facilities in return zones;
- Advocacy for the validation and effective implementation of the reintegration strategy elaborated in 2014 for a more effective coordination of humanitarian interventions in response to the needs of refugee returnees;
- Encouraging and supporting joint inter-agency initiatives for the sustainability of return;

Assumptions and constraints

Assumptions:

- Security in the DRC, particularly in South Kivu, Burundi and Rwanda continues to offer opportunities for the return of refugees;
- Cohesion between communities is restored;
- Commitment of the Government to redress the socio-economic situation;
- Upcoming different elections will be held under good security conditions;

Constraints :

- Massive return of Congolese refugees resulting in the emergence of tremendous humanitarian needs ;
- Inadequacy of logistical capacity to respond effectively and efficiently to significant refugee returnees influx;

## **Prioritized Results**

### **Operations Plan Document**

Overall, AGDM was conducted in the areas of return and among the returnees. The outcomes of the sessions confirmed that both returnees and host communities need supports and assistance, especially youths and women. In addition, the group of DRC Congolese who were expelled recently from RoC is exposed to the risks of protection, especially the children. UNHCR in 2016 will intensively advocate for transitional and development actors to include the returnees in their developed plan and strategy. In the meantime, active involvements will be needed through MOUs with UN and other operational partners. In fact, the survey conducted by UNDP to identify the roots of the conflicts in the South-Oubangui, an area of return, resulted in a joint initiative to set up and implement a sustainable return and early recovery programme. Agencies such as FAO, WFP and UNOPS joined the initiative; UNHCR will also be part of the process for to follow up on the sustainable return and reintegration pillar for the benefit of the returnees. It is a three years project from 2015 to 2017 and the cost is estimated at 20M\$. There are other opportunities to be explored with international such as Premiere Urgence and ACTED, which are about to expand their presence and reinforce their intervention in Equateur to cover gaps faced by the returnees UNHCR will pursue and consolidate the peaceful cohabitation among the communities with the support of UNHABITAT, UNICEF and SFCG Donor field visits will be organized to advocate for resource mobilization and funding of community based projects in the areas of returns.

## **Unmet Needs**

### **Operations Plan Document**

Unmet needs will particularly be felt under the reintegration activities. In fact, if the plan is not fully implemented only 6% of the income generation activities will be covered. Then, support to community based activities will be funded up to 5%, the protection monitoring and logistic support respectively to 40% and 50%. Therefore, the support to community empowerment will be weak