

# WEEKLY EMERGENCY UPDATE

Ituri and North Kivu Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo

9-15 December 2019



## Operational context and protection situation

### Ituri Province

The protection of civilians remained of concern in Djugu Territory due to insecurity caused by unidentified armed men, and the presence of an armed group from North Kivu in Irumu Territory. Their presence disrupted commercial, agricultural and school activities. On 12 and 13 December, unidentified armed men attacked the villages of Mutanga and Kafe (Djugu Territory) killing 14 civilians and leading to the displacement of an estimated 65 households to the neighboring locality of Nyamamba, while some people from Kafe fled to Uganda. The resurgence of insecurity is affecting the return movement that has been observed in previous weeks in Djugu Territory; among those killed, seven had returned to their villages on 5 December from the Kasenyi displacement site. On the other hand, the security situation was relatively calm in the western part of Mambasa Territory, which can be explained by the reinforced presence of the national army and MONUSCO, mainly in the Biakato area. However, the presence of alleged members of the Mai Mai armed group was still visible.

**BACKGROUND:** Since 6 June 2019, generalized violence led to massive new displacements in Ituri Province. UNHCR and IOM recorded over 110,000 new arrivals in IDP sites in Djugu, Mahagi and Irumu territories between 31 May and 20 June. OCHA estimated that 360,000 people were displaced by the recent crisis; some 145,000 towards IDP sites and the rest to host communities. As displacements continued, Ituri's Site Management and Coordination Working Group (CCCM) now estimates that almost 227,000 people are staying in 72 IDP sites, 12 of them coordinated by UNHCR, and housing over 82,000 individuals (17,000 households). Outside of Bunia, the largest concentrations of IDPs are found in Drodro, Rho, Fataki, Kasenyi, Tchomia and Ramogi, in Djugu, Irumu and Mahagi territories. Overall, some 1.1 million people are displaced throughout the Province according to OCHA. UNHCR's Protection Monitoring system documented 6,970 human rights violations between January and November 2019 in Ituri Province.

### North Kivu Province

The security and protection situation in Masisi Territory remained of concern this week. Elements from the national army raided displacement sites in Kibundi and Katale (Rutshuru Territory), where they looted IDPs' goods in retaliation for displaced people's alleged collaboration with armed groups. Meanwhile, military operations against armed groups were ongoing in Bwito Groupement (Rutshuru Territory). In Beni Territory, presumed elements of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) armed group continued to target civilians, at a lower scale than previous weeks. Following the storming of the townhall and of MONUSCO's base in Beni town at the end of November, and subsequent evacuations of humanitarian staff, essential UNHCR staff are starting to be redeployed following a UNHCR safety assessment. Ongoing conflict in North Kivu led 2,130 households to flee their villages this week in Rutshuru and Masisi territories.

**BACKGROUND:** Over 1.5 million IDPs are located in North Kivu Province as of October 2019. The vast majority (94%) live with host communities, while some 89,000 reside in 22 IDP sites coordinated by UNHCR or IOM. Displacements are mostly cyclical, with numerous causes including armed conflict, human rights violations committed by armed groups and state armed forces, land conflicts, inter-ethnic violence, illegal exploitation of mineral resources, and others. Between March and early June 2019, attacks against civilians and military outposts by a prominent armed group led to significant displacements from Kamango to Nobili (Beni Territory). Until recently, OCHA estimated that 112,000 IDPs were located in the Nobili area. However, as of late October, most of them have returned. In Masisi and Rutshuru territories, OCHA estimates that over 67,000 people were displaced towards host communities in May and June alone, while arrivals into several IDP sites have been significant. UNHCR's Protection Monitoring system documented 12,311 human rights violations between January and end of November 2019 throughout the Province.

## Immediate needs

### Ituri Province

- **Protection:** Persistent violence exposes populations to several protection risks: killings, lootings, rape, abductions and others. Peaceful coexistence between communities remains a major challenge.
- **Child protection:** The lack of child-friendly spaces (especially outside of Bunia), and high numbers of unaccompanied minors exacerbate child protection needs. Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) against minors is on the rise.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)** risks are high, including sexual exploitation, survival sex, and early forced marriage, as consistently reported by women.
- **Shelter:** IDPs outside established sites still live in precarious conditions, exposed to abuse. Despite ongoing shelter construction, the lack of space remains a challenge. Advocacy is needed for local authorities to grant more space.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)** are still needed for many IDP families, namely clothes and kitchen sets.

- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)** conditions in most sites and in host families are below standard. Women and girls lack access to menstrual hygiene products and to reproductive health services.
- **Access to education** is hindered by host communities' incapacity to enroll IDP children in school, notably due to limited teachers and classroom space. 72% of children aged 6 to 12 and living in UNHCR-coordinated IDP sites are out of school. This requires advocacy for relevant partners to intervene.
- **Statelessness:** 95% of children aged 0 to 4 who live in UNHCR-coordinated IDP sites do not have birth certificates, which exposes many to various human rights abuses.

### North Kivu Province

- **Protection** needs are enormous, including physical security for civilians in and around IDP sites, and for those on the run; community-based protection for host and IDP communities to participate in responses; peaceful coexistence; and protection for vulnerable youth and women.
- **Child protection** needs are pronounced in northern North Kivu, with many unaccompanied children, frequent kidnappings and child recruitment by armed groups, or former child soldiers facing reintegration issues.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)** remains widespread. Women are reticent to report incidents due to stigma and exclusion, thus incidents are underreported. Despite referrals to medical facilities, legal follow-up is quasi non-existent, perpetuating impunity. Displaced girls and women experience disproportionately high risks and are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and survival sex. As many IDPs live in squalid conditions, their sexual and reproductive health and hygiene needs are generally unmet.
- **Shelter:** IDP sites under UNHCR coordination in Masisi Territory do not have sufficient shelters, which has forced some IDPs towards host families. UNHCR is therefore reinforcing shelter support in sites. In Beni Territory the situation has become particularly dire considering recent mass displacements, with an unconfirmed number of IDPs sleeping in the open air. In Masisi and Rutshuru territories, shelter needs are exacerbated by cyclical displacements.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)** are urgently required for newly-arrived IDPs around the towns of Oicha and Beni.
- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** There are urgent needs in IDP sites in Masisi and Rutshuru territories. Water scarcity and the increasing number of IDPs in Oicha and Beni are endangering peaceful coexistence with local communities. The WASH situation is particularly affecting girls and women, as crowded toilets and the lack of water pose higher risks for them.
- **Education:** In several localities in Masisi, Lubero, and Beni territories, school closures are regular because of conflicts. IDPs who cannot find shelter in host communities also tend to occupy school classrooms, disrupting classes.

---

## **UNHCR's response**

### Ituri Province

- **Protection:** This week, UNHCR and partners conducted a joint mission to evaluate protection needs in displacement sites on the Katoto-Lita axis in Djugu Territory. According to the report, 3,991 households are living in the Sesele (566), Luvangire (632), Bahwere (447), Mbala (900), Tsere (359), Landa (237) and Nyama-Ziza (850) displacement sites. Affected communities reported shelter and site management as their biggest needs, followed by WASH, food assistance, health, hygiene kits for women and girls, and non-food items such as kitchen sets.
- From 19 November to 12 December in Bunia (Ituri Province), 585 households (2,810 individuals) were relocated from the General Hospital site to the new IDP site of Kigonze. Some 2,250 households (9,000 individuals) remain to be relocated to the new site. The hosting capacity of the site is of 2,200 households.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs):** During the reporting period, UNHCR distributed 304 mats, 306 blankets, 169 menstrual hygiene kits, 184 jerrycans and 262 laundry soaps in the new displacement site of Kigonze, in Bunia.
- **Community-based protection:** After receiving capacity building from UNHCR and partners Caritas and Avsi, local community-based protection structures conducted awareness-raising on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), child protection, and peaceful coexistence. A total of 1,420 IDPs and members of host communities participated in Linga and Fataki (Djugu Territory).
- **Protection monitoring:** UNHCR and partners recorded 162 human rights violations between 8 and 14 December, compared to 226 the previous week; the decrease does not necessarily reflect an improvement in the situation. Instead, worsening insecurity on the shores of Lake Albert did not allow access to some affected areas and may have led to under-reporting. Civilians endured lootings (46), killings (24), injuries (15), and extorsions (13).
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):** Nine cases of rape were committed on girls aged 12 to 17 in Djugu, Mambasa and Irumu territories. Among them, seven survivors were referred to medical facilities for emergency treatment within 72 hours, and received PEP kits. One survivor did not benefit from treatment due to a lack of medication in the Rimba health center. Presumed offenders were civilians, presumed elements of armed groups, and members of state armed forces.
- For the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, UNHCR distributed 1,008 menstrual hygiene kits (comprised of two soaps, three pairs of underwear, two pack of pads, five female condoms and a three-liter plastic bucket) to displaced women and girls in the ISP site in Bunia. In addition, 1,667 male condoms were distributed to men and boys in the site. UNHCR and local NGO "Synergy for the self-reliance of women and girls" also organized a

workshop on for 104 women, girls and men on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, reproductive health and family planning.

### North Kivu Province

- **Community-based protection:** UNHCR and partner Caritas provided multi-purpose cash assistance to 200 people with specific needs, specifically women at risk of sexual exploitation in Minova, Kalungu, Kinyezire and Mukwija in Kalehe Territory, South Kivu Province. Each household received \$150.
- Awareness-raising sessions continued on peaceful coexistence, referral mechanisms and the prevention of SGBV.
- As part of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) around Nyanzale, Rutshuru Territory, ten water networks were completed and used in Katsiru, while a health center, a primary school and a communal market are still under construction.
- **Protection monitoring:** Between 6 and 12 December, 161 human rights violations (mainly extortions and arbitrary arrests) were recorded in North Kivu Province, compared to 207 the previous week. The decrease could be explained by the relatively calm and decrease of violence in the Beni and Butembo areas. The most affected territories during the reporting week were Masisi and Rutshuru.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):** Three cases of rape committed against minors were identified by community-based protection structures, and referred to the Panzi Foundation and the Numbi Health Center in South Kivu Province. Five other survivors were referred to medical structures on the Mushababwe-Bambu axis in Rutshuru Territory.

---

### UNHCR's presence

- UNHCR's Sub-Office in Goma covers North Kivu and Ituri Provinces and supervises operations in South Kivu Province. The Goma Sub-Office oversees all North Kivu while a smaller Field Unit in Bunia manages operations for Ituri. Both emergencies were initially covered by a small team in Ituri, and by staff of the Goma Sub-Office on mission. This solution however is cost-ineffective and complicates security management in a volatile area of responsibility.
- To meet growing needs in the northern part of North Kivu – including Ebola preparedness needs and emergency response – the operation has opened a Field Unit in Beni as of October 2019, and the Goma Sub-Office is being reinforced with permanent and temporary staff. In addition, to face the dramatically worsened humanitarian situation in Ituri since early June 2019, the Bunia Field Unit has been strengthened with additional staff in Protection, Security, Reporting, Supply, Shelter, Programme, CCM and Drivers. Further emergency response staff (Field and Protection) are expected between now and the end of the year; however, needs still outpace available human resources.

---

### Contacts

**Jackie Keegan**, Head of Sub-Office (A.I.), UNHCR Sub-Office Goma, DRC, [keegan@unhcr.org](mailto:keegan@unhcr.org), tel: +243 817 009 315

**Hanson Ghandi Tamfu**, Reporting Officer, UNHCR SO Goma, DRC, [tamfu@unhcr.org](mailto:tamfu@unhcr.org), tel: +243 824 413 770

**Alexandra Stenbock-Fermor**, Associate External Relations and Reporting Officer, UNHCR's Regional Representation in Kinshasa, DRC, [stenbock@unhcr.org](mailto:stenbock@unhcr.org), tel: +243 822 253 121

**Gloria Ramazani**, External Relations Associate, UNHCR SO Goma, DRC, [ramazang@unhcr.org](mailto:ramazang@unhcr.org), tel: +243 812 686 039