

WEEKLY EMERGENCY UPDATE

Ituri and North Kivu Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo

22-29 August 2019



Operational context and protection situation

Ituri Province

The situation is worsening in Ituri with new assaults carried out by the ADF, adding to the existing armed clashes in Djugu Territory. Attacks and killings targeting civilians continued, with an incursion from the ADF into the Boga Mission area recorded on August 23, resulting in the abduction of more than 100 civilians, two men wounded, and looting of properties. Fearing for their safety, around 150 households from Boga Mission, Budundu and Boga Center fled to Mitego. They have now already returned to their villages. On 26 August, unidentified gunmen raided the town of Bukachele (Djugu Province), beheading a 7-year-old boy and stealing livestock, money and other items. UNHCR's partner INTERSOS recorded 258 protection incidents, out of which 162 in Irumu territory (Ituri Province). This is still not an exhaustive depiction of the protection situation due to access constraints. The recurrent clashes between the FARDC and the different armed groups (including the ADF but not exclusively) result in a deep fear within the displaced population.

BACKGROUND: Since 6 June, generalized violence has 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 now estimates that 360,000 people were displaced by the recent crisis; some 145,000 towards IDP sites and the rest (215,000) in host communities. Outside of Bunia, the largest concentrations of IDPs are found in Drodoro, Rho, Fataki, Kasenyi and Tchomia, in Djugu and Irumu territories. In Mahagi Territory, there is a large concentration of IDPs in Ramogi. In June, 8,647 people also fled to Uganda according to UNHCR's Uganda office, nearly doubling the number of daily crossings compared to May 2019.

North Kivu Province

Overall, the security situation in North Kivu remains extremely volatile and unpredictable. Masisi Territory is particularly affected. Continued attacks against civilians and protection actors triggered new displacements. In Beni Territory, armed groups intensified their attacks against civilians and Government forces, rendering access to persons of concern increasingly challenging. Several deadly attacks on civilians and incursions were reported. Protests took place in Beni, Butembo, and Oicha in response to recent attacks by armed groups on civilians.

The Nobili Crisis Committee recorded 6,329 displaced households between June 10th and August 10th, 2019, in addition to the 15,991 households previously recorded by NRC and WHH. Other territories (Rutshuru) also witnessed killings over the past two weeks. In Rushaki (Rutshuru), crimes, mainly under the form of kidnappings, continue to occur. On 26 August, about 20 kilometres northwest of Goma, North Kivu Province, a convoy of three UNICEF vehicles was shot at by unknown assailants. No casualties have been reported. The continuous, almost province-wide deterioration of the security situation since the second half of July is severely affecting humanitarian access.

BACKGROUND: Since 30 March, and with a sharp intensification as of 7 May, attacks against civilians and military outposts by members of rebel group Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), led to significant displacements from the town of Kamango towards the town of Nobili (Beni Territory), near the DRC border with Uganda. As of 24 June, 94,612 displaced people (15,991 households) had been registered in Nobili and 9 surrounding localities, but displacements continue. In host communities, OCHA estimates that over 67,000 were newly displaced in May and June, while arrival numbers into several IDP sites have been significant. During July alone, UNHCR and the National Refugee Commission (CNR) recorded 5,256 new IDPs (1,225 households) in 8 IDP sites in Masisi, with the most (2,754 persons) having arrived to Bukombo site. In Masisi the security situation has deteriorated sharply since the beginning of the year, with 1,960 protection incidents, including 90 murders, recorded by UNHCR between January and July 2019.

Immediate needs

Ituri Province

- **Health:** the displacement area is Ebola-affected, exacerbating already-systemic health needs. A measles epidemic is spreading out, with insufficient vaccines and overwhelmed health facilities. Child mortality rates are high.
- **Shelter:** many IDPs are still sleeping in open areas or in public buildings, exposed to elements and to abuse. Despite the ongoing shelter construction work, the lack of space remains a high challenge and requires to strengthen advocacy towards local authorities to grant more space.

- **Food assistance** is urgently needed as WPF is out of stock due to the fact that a significant amount of food cannot be distributed because of poor quality. Food assistance is also limited with the looting of fields left behind in areas of origin that further exacerbates food insecurity.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)** are also urgently needed, including the need for clothes.
- **WASH** situation in the most overcrowded locations (Drodro, Kasenyi) is below standards. Women and girls lack access to feminine hygiene products, menstrual hygiene services and reproductive health services. An urgent need of clothing has also been identified.
- **Education:** due to schools closures, notably in Drodro and Kasenyi, IDPs use classrooms for shelter.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)** risks are high, due to overcrowding and the use of survival sex, notably in Bunia.
- **Protection:** there are tensions between “newer” and “older” waves of displaced persons. Newly-displaced people are facing discrimination to access facilities and services. Peaceful coexistence between ethnic communities is another major challenge.
- **Child Protection:** A lack of child-friendly spaces and the many unaccompanied minors create child protection needs.
- **Registration and “fixing”** urgently needed in most IDP sites to establish exact displacement numbers.

North Kivu Province

- **Shelter:** IDP sites under UNHCR coordination management in Masisi Territory do not offer sufficient adequate infrastructure, pushing IDPs towards host families. Around Nobili (Beni Territory), UNHCR assistance contributed in addressing part of the shelter needs, but new displacements (also caused by recent flooding that affected 838 households) created additional needs. During the reporting period, Nobili's Humanitarian Coordination Team shared an alert referring to the occupation of schools and churches by 655 IDP households a few days before the start of the school year
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)**, for those living with host families as well as in IDP sites are critically needed.
- **Health** services need to be strengthened to respond to overwhelmed facilities, prohibitive treatment costs, and simultaneous measles and Ebola epidemics.
- **Education**, as 3,000 children in Masisi Territory did not finish the last school year due to conflict and displacement.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)**, remains high as armed groups are using SGBV as a weapon of war in Masisi Territory.
- **WASH situation needs support** in IDP sites in Masisi and Rutshuru territories, and in Nobili where needs were exacerbated by recent floods.
- **Food assistance is critically needed**, particularly for those who lost their livelihoods to conflict but also for those living in managed IDP sites.
- **Protection:** the most significant needs are community-based protection, to promote the participation of both local and IDP communities in response mechanisms and solutions; peaceful coexistence; protection of vulnerable youth and women; and birth registrations to prevent statelessness.

UNHCR's response

Ituri Province

- UNHCR is **reinforcing Camp Management and Monitoring** in two IDP sites in Bunia. UNHCR has assessed the material requirements for the construction of an additional communal shelter at the ISP site to host 100 IDP households and decongest Block Zero.
- **Kasenyi:** During the week of 15-22 August, UNHCR and its partner CARITAS **continued construction of collective hangars** out of the 40 planned, to respond to the arrival of some 4,300 IDPs in Kasenyi. **21 hangars** are already occupied by 252 households and each hangar hosts 12 families while the remaining number is being constructed. The remaining hangars will be occupied when construction work for latrines is finalized. In addition, almost **333 individual shelters, out of 600 planned** were built and finalized by UNHCR and partner CARITAS and were occupied by families in Kasenyi. These shelters, added to the hangars, will host up to 5,400 IDPs (including older caseloads).
- To be noted that on site CE 39 there is a problem of access to drinking water: to date there is still no agreement between Tearfund and SNHR for the interrupted drilling work; the case is in court. Urgent advocacy is required with the Wash cluster for the positioning of an actor for water supply.
- The distribution of NFIs continues in Kasenyi where 1,505 households out of a total of 1,631 targeted received bedding items. The distribution of intimate hygiene items addressed to women of reproductive age has reached 891 beneficiaries out of 1,117 targeted beneficiaries. The remaining NFI kits will be brought back to the ISP site to serve the displaced families living in the communal hangars.
- **Drodro:** The construction of **39 collective hangars** is ongoing by UNHCR and its partner the Danish Refugee Council (DRC). 47 IDP households occupying the classrooms at Drodro primary school were installed in the completed communal shelter at the Tsuya site while DCR has identified 285 host families in the Duma and Ndjala localities, who agree to provide additional shelter space for IDPs living in collective centers.

- **Ramogi:** UNHCR completed the “fixing” exercise (Mahagi Territory) to establish a verified list of IDP and assess their needs based on their living conditions. Results are currently being analyzed.
- **Tchomia:** Joint border monitoring mission (UNHCR / INTERSOS) to Tchomia to assess the scale of the population flow of Congolese returning from Uganda in a self-organised manner through the official points controlled by the DGM. The authorities have confirmed that there is small-scale movement back, but that it is not at all controlled because of the porous borders. These returnees are mostly undocumented because they have lost them and are therefore referred to the local authorities for document clearance. The registration of spontaneous returnees at the level of the DGM is not systematic, but is done by counting individuals and by sex.
- UNHCR, through its partner INTERSOS, **conducts protection monitoring in accessible areas**, and provides referrals to some victims. **258 protection incidents** were recorded in Ituri Province.

North Kivu Province

- **Nobili:** UNHCR and its partner INTERSOS conducted a **protection analysis that highlighted tensions between ethnic groups**, mainly due to perceptions of unequal access to humanitarian assistance.
- **UNHCR helped setting up 10 sub-committees of IDPs** in the 10 displacement locations in and around Nobili. They received capacity-building and are active in registering new displacements.
- **General:** During the reporting period, a total of **79 people participated in two SGBV sensitization sessions** in Nyabiодо in the Masisi territory. These sensitization sessions were organized by the community protection network supported by UNHCR. In addition to this, a total of **103 people participated in sensitization on the economic exploitation of children** in mining squares in Kibabi through a community protection structure.
- **Masisi: 83 family shelters were constructed** as part of the shelter assistance project for returnee IDPs and IDPs. A total of 722 shelters of local construction already completed out of a total of 810 shelters of this type planned. The assistance plan has been revised in order to cover the needs of 380 IDP households in the ZS of Masisi (axe Masisi – Lushebere). In addition, 348 emergency shelters will be distributed in two IDP sites as follows: Bukombo (211) and Kalinga (137). The rehabilitation of 4 classrooms and provision of furniture equipment at Mwangaza Primary School is also planned in order to receive IDP children of school age. The aim is to promote peaceful coexistence between IDPs and the host community through the construction / rehabilitation of community socio-educational infrastructures.
- **SGBV:** Eight SGBV cases (three cases in Masisi, four cases in Lubero and one case in Nobili) were documented by protection monitoring and were referred to medical facilities for emergency management including the provision of Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) within 72 hours. Of these eight cases, four survivors are minors between 10 and 15 years of age. The alleged perpetrators are members of armed groups, armed bandits as well as civilians.

UNHCR's presence

- UNHCR's Sub-Office in Goma covers North Kivu and Ituri provinces, as well as supervising operations in South Kivu province. The Goma Sub-Office oversees all of North Kivu while a much smaller Field Unit (in Bunia) manages operations for Ituri. Both emergencies have so far been covered by a small team in Ituri, and by staff of the Goma Sub-Office on mission. This solution however is cost-ineffective, puts additional burden on human resources 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 is opening a Field Unit in Beni. This will help meet expectations of the Humanitarian Country Team and of the SRSG for UNHCR to play an active role in contributing to addressing the many challenges of this part of the country. In addition, to face the worsening situation in Ituri, the Bunia Field Unit is being strengthened with staff including Protection, Information Management, Field and Supply.

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