

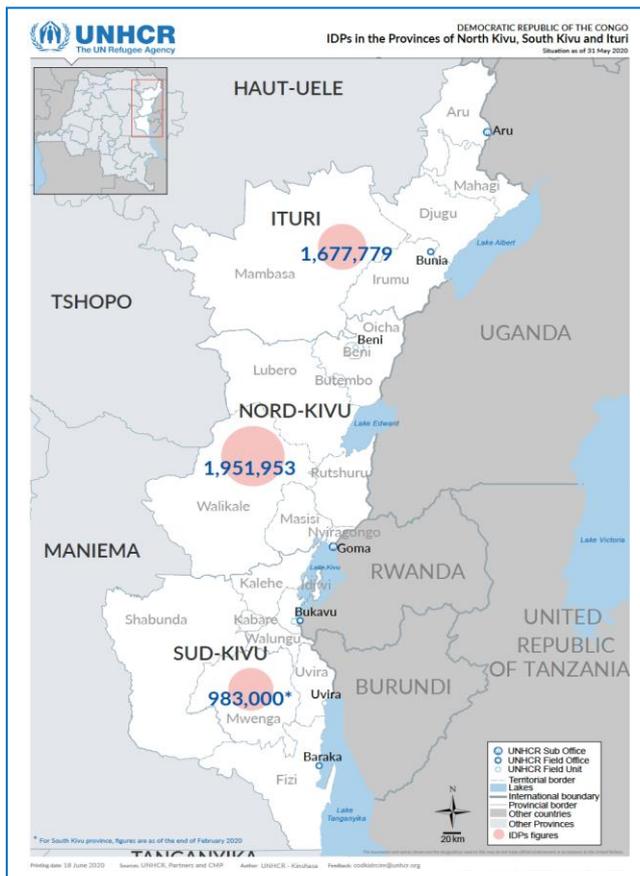
ITURI, NORTH KIVU AND SOUTH KIVU PROVINCES DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

11 May - 25 May 2020

UNHCR and community-based protection groups continued to raise awareness on COVID-19 and protection related risks among IDP, refugee and host populations in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri.

The COVID-19 related restrictions increase the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. There are too few PEP kits in several zones and shipments are delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The continuous rise of human rights violations by armed groups and members of security forces remains a concern for UNHCR as thousands continue to be uprooted in Eastern Congo.



KEY FIGURES

Over **4.5M***

Persons are internally displaced in Ituri (**1.6M**), North Kivu (**1.9M**) and South Kivu (**1M**) provinces.

93%*

Of all IDPs in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri are accommodated in host families and communities (4.2M)

267,000

IDs are hosted at CCCM coordinated IDP sites, while about 65,000 persons are resided at spontaneous sites.

* Due to continuous population movements these figures change regularly and are only an estimate

Operational context and protection situation

Ituri Province: Following the deployment of the Congolese army (FARDC) in Mahagi Territory as of 19 May and its reinforcement in Djugu Territory (Drodro health zone), recorded protection incidents decreased by 28% during the reporting period compared to the first two weeks of May. However, the number of documented incidents is still up compared to April. Increased presence of the FARDC is often accompanied by arson and looting because the army suspects militia elements of hiding among the local populations. Many people therefore fled their villages preemptively before the arrival of FARDC soldiers. CODECO militia attacked several localities of Walendu Watsi Chiefdom, Mahagi Territory which has forced some 15,000 persons into displacement according to initial estimates. UNHCR through partner INTERSOS is monitoring the displacement and the protection situation closely.

North Kivu Province: FARDC operations against FDLR militia in the Bwito Chiefdom, Rutshuru Territory have led to serious human rights violations including killings, looting and rape. Over 80,000 persons are estimated to have fled the area since the beginning of March. Attacks by alleged ADF elements in Beni Territory (Mutwanga and Oicha Health Zones) killed 27 civilians while 50 persons were abducted and multiple houses were looted. A

military operation led to more displacement, as people avoided to be involved in armed incidents, while heavy rain and floods have left several dead and destroyed dozens of homes and fields.

In Masisi Territory the situation remains fragile because of fights between armed groups, particularly affecting the Bashali-Mokoto chiefdom where ten out of sixteen villages are occupied by armed groups. The absence of the FARDC in the zone enables armed groups to act as *de facto* authorities, which has led to an increase of human rights violations in the region. Populations are also on the move in Lubero Territory as two Mai-Mai armed groups continue to stir the violence in the area. UNHCR's partner INTERSOS recorded 811 protection incidents including 84 cases of rape. Throughout May over 5,000 households reportedly fled their homes, bringing the total number of IDPs to over 1,9 million in North Kivu alone.

South Kivu Province: The heightened activity of armed groups and intercommunity conflicts in South Kivu continues to impact IDPs and others under UNHCR's mandate. In Fizi Territory, Mai Mai Yakutumba, Chanvivi and other armed groups attacked in local villages, while in Kabambare Territory, the cases of rape are attributed by survivors to Twa militia. In the Highlands in Uvira Territory local and foreign armed groups continued attacking civilians in the Kigoma and Katobo areas. The FARDC is present in the area, attempting to counter the attacks. At the same time, human rights violations committed by the FARDC and Congolese National Police (PNC) continued to be reported.

Over 900 protection incidents were reported by UNHCR's partner INTERSOS, mainly extorsions, assault and battery, forced labour and SGBV. In Fizi Territory, 500 households (2,708 people) fled following the public killing of three persons which led the FARDC and the PNC to arrest community members. Following clashes between the Mai Mai and the FARDC in Remeka in North Kivu, 1,427 IDP households (7,135 people) fled to Ziralo in Kalehe Territory, Maniema Province.

UNHCR's response

Ituri Province



PROTECTION UNHCR-supported community-based protection groups have started information sharing campaigns on the prevention of COVID-19 and protection related risks, reaching 1,069 persons so far including IDPs and members of the host communities in Djugu and Irumu Territories. The teams collaborated with 17 priests of local churches who can now act as vectors for awareness-raising amongst their communities.

Through the engagement of local communities, information on COVID-19 and its prevention can reach places where UNHCR currently has no access. UNHCR supports and guides community groups and community members from a distance. Following to the increased awareness, community members have started to request assistance to install hand-washing stations in public spaces, such as markets or displacement sites.

UNHCR's partner INTERSOS reached 168 displaced persons in six displacement sites in and around Bunia through door-to-door awareness raising about COVID-19. INTERSOS distributed 2 megaphones per site to the IDP committees to conduct further awareness-raising sessions and reach a large public.



SHELTER AND CRIs In Ituri, UNHCR's partner Danish Refugee Council (DRC) completed the construction of 40 emergency shelters in Tsukpa displacement site, Djugu Territory bringing the total to 703 shelters, further reducing the population density in the site.

In Mahagi Territory, DRC rehabilitated 300 traditional shelters by installing doors and repairing roofs. In addition, 138 emergency shelters were constructed in the same area.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE UNHCR's partner DRC completed the construction of 25 latrines and 15 showers in Tsukpa displacement site and of 20 latrines and 10 showers in Lala displacement site, both in Djugu Territory. This sanitary infrastructure improves the hygienic conditions in the displacement site and provides displaced persons with better opportunities for personal hygiene, which is critical to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, including COVID-19.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The COVID-19 prevention and response capacities of national and international health and humanitarian actors need to be strengthened. Health programmes in several displacement sites in Ituri have run out of funding, leaving IDPs without affordable access to basic health care.
- Limited humanitarian access linked to bad security, leave displaced persons and local populations vulnerable to negative coping strategies, hunger, and public health needs, as no humanitarian assistance has reached many in the worst affected areas. Food assistance to prevent malnutrition, notably among children, is amongst the most urgent needs expressed by the communities.
- Newly displaced persons that have arrived in displacement sites across the province are in urgent need of multisectoral assistance. The construction of new shelters in overcrowded sites is crucial, especially during the rainy season.

North Kivu Province



PROTECTION The UNHCR supported community protection groups continued to raise awareness about COVID-19 preventive measures, gender-based violence and human rights violations throughout North Kivu. Leaflets, banners and posters were distributed in local languages reaching 793 people.

Community members are advocating for health partners to intervene in Miriki health center (Lubero Territory) to address increased prevalence of severe malnutrition. 112 children were identified during April and 62 during May.

UNHCR and members of the Provincial Government have carried out an assessment in Kitchanga and Nyanzale to understand the protection needs in the context of COVID-19 and to assess the awareness of COVID-19. The populations emphasized the need for improved security allowing them to work on their land and reduce the risk of SGBV. Improved access to food and to health facilities are needed. COVID-19 preventive measures need to be reinforced. Finally there is a need to decongest overcrowded displacement sites.

Following the displacement of 14,000 households (about 80,000 persons) in Bwito chiefdom, Rutshuru Territory, as a result of FARDC operations against FDLR militia in the area, UNHCR coordinated a joint protection assessment in the area with other members of the Protection Cluster. UNHCR is working with local authorities in Nyanzale to strengthen their capacity, while distribution of 1,500 emergency shelters is underway. UNHCR has advocated to human rights partners follow up on human rights violations, while members of the protection cluster have positioned themselves to respond in multiple areas including cash, SGBV and child protection.

Protection Cluster

- The UNHCR coordinated Protection Cluster led an inter-agency mission in Lubero Territory to assess the security and protection situation of thousands of IDPs who recently fled due to violence. Humanitarian stakeholders have been urged to intervene in order to provide protection and assistance to the multiple needs. UNHCR is planning shelter support to 450 households while continuing protection monitoring and community-based protection activities through partners INTERSOS and Caritas.



CASH ASSISTANCE In May, a total of 2,756 IDP households received their cash assistance through mobile phones in Beni bringing the total of households assisted to 3,941 in the town since the beginning of the activities on 3 April 2020. The distribution is targeting a total of 5,974 IDP households in Beni and Butembo towns.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- There is a lack of latrines and WASH infrastructure and UNHCR coordinated sites, while the majority of the sites are overcrowded. Due to continued violence, IDPs cannot return home.
- The absence of protection actors in some areas hampers the effective protection of IDPs and others affected by armed conflict. Survivors of gender-based violence are particularly vulnerable and lack access to the services they need, including medical care, legal aid, and psycho-social assistance.

- Many of the newly displaced remain without any support, while the needs are multiple, including shelter support, access to clean water, health services and urgent support is needed for malnourished children.

South Kivu Province



PROTECTION The community-based protection groups supported by UNHCR's partner AVSI continued sharing information on the prevention of COVID-19, SGBV, child protection and positive masculinity in Fizi and Uvira Territories, reaching nearly 4,000 individuals through door-to-door, in small groups of 10-17 people, and via megaphone. About 1,500 of the individuals reached by community-based protection groups received information specific to COVID-19. Feedback by some of the participants indicate small successes. Two girls in Mulenge, Uvira Territory expressed that because of the information and resources they received, their parents no longer wanted them to be married before the age of 18. A woman in Fizi Territory, expressed that her husband now respects her in their home, which was not the case.

The community-based group in Nyange, Fizi Territory successfully set up their community radio, and have started recording radio broadcasts with members of community-based structures and IDPs sharing information. During the reporting period, these community-based groups did 3 broadcasts on themes related to SGBV.

UNHCR and partners carried out a multisectoral needs assessment in the localities of Bushaku, Katasomwa and Ziralo (Kalehe Territory) following the arrival of over 3,500 displaced families. The lack of security in the area remains a real concern while host communities are in urgent need of additional shelter and WASH support.

Protection Cluster

- Following floods and landslides that have affected over 80,000 persons in the city of Uvira, as well as several thousands in Baraka, in South Kivu, the Protection Cluster, led by UNHCR, coordinated two needs assessment mission in order to identify the protection needs and risks of the affected populations. The Cluster urged its members to respond to the multiple identified needs such as shelter, child protection and SGBV prevention. UNDP has taken up a role in the recovery of infrastructure in Uvira and its surrounding areas, while in Baraka no actors have been identified so far.
- The Protection Cluster shared a “Do No Harm” analysis note on the humanitarian response to the crisis after strong rains and floods hit the city of Uvira. The purpose of this note is to deepen humanitarian actors understanding of the context in Uvira, as many new actors are responding that were not previously working in this area, and to promote the protection principles of “Do No Harm.”



SHELTER AND CRIS UNHCR and its partner AIDES are implementing shelter projects for IDPs in South Kivu with: 300 shelters in Fizi centre, 400 shelters in Walungu, 1,500 in Kalehe, 4,000 shelters in Shabunda, and 1,000 shelters in Uvira. UNHCR and his partner AIDES have started to identify beneficiaries for the project in Fizi centre, through a community-based approach. UNHCR conducted a joint mission with the Government, Intersos, and AIDES in Kalehe, Mwenga and Walungu to analyse the feasibility of these shelter projects and ensure that these initiatives will “Do No Harm.”

Shelter Cluster

- The Shelter Cluster continues advocacy with the government to provide shelter as a durable solution for the population affected by the floods in Uvira.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The shelter sector lacks actors to respond to the needs of the population, especially after the floods and the army conflict in Kambabare, Lubutu, Fizi and Kalehe Territories throughout South Kivu.
- There are significant needs among those affected by the recent heavy rains and flooding in the Fizi and Ruzizi Plain Territories. These areas have received less media attention, but thousands have been displaced and are in need of shelter and other assistance.

Background

- An upsurge of violence forced over 400,000 persons into displacement between March and June 2020 in **Ituri Province**, in addition to over 230,000 people that were forced to flee from violence in June 2019. In total, **1.6 million persons** fled their homes in the province during the last 2 years, according to the *Commission de Mouvement de Population (CMP)*, a commission of the Government and humanitarian agencies. The majority reside in host communities (80%), while some 213,054 IDPs stay in 64 displacement sites under coordination of the CCCM Working Group, co-led by UNHCR and IOM.
- **Over 1.9 million IDPs** are located in **North Kivu Province** as of end of May 2020 according to CMP. As reported by OCHA, an estimated 436,000 persons fled their homes between September 2019 and January 2020. The vast majority of IDPs in North Kivu (94%) live with host communities, while over 89,933 reside in 22 IDP sites coordinated by CCCM.
- **994,917** persons have been displaced in **South Kivu** during the last 24 months according to CMP. 95% of all IDPs reside in host families, while a minority have gathered in spontaneous IDP sites (in Bijombo, Mikenge and Kalehe Territory). The main causes of displacement are clashes between various communities, particularly in the Highlands of Fizi and Itombwe, fights between armed groups and the Congolese army in Mwenga, Uvira and Shabunda Territories.

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. To meet growing needs in the northern part of North Kivu – including Ebola preparedness needs and emergency response – the operation opened a Field Unit in Beni in October 2019, and the Goma Sub-Office is being reinforced with permanent and temporary staff.

External Relations

As of 1 July 2020

Donors for UNHCR operations in DRC in 2020

CERF (10M) | United States of America (6.6M) | Sweden (3.1M) | European Union (1.6M) | France (1.1M) | Canada (0.72M) | Japan (0.56M)

Major donors of regional or other funds with soft earmarking 2020

Germany (47.6M) | United Kingdom (24.8M) | United States of America (21.9M) | Denmark (14.6M) | Canada (10.2M) | Private donors USA (7.4M) | Sweden (6.9M) | Private donors Germany (6.6M) | Private donors Japan (3.9M) | Private donors Australia (3.7M) | Ireland (3.3M) | Finland (3.3M) | France (2.8M) | Norway (2.4M)

Major donors of un-earmarked funds in 2020

Sweden (76.4M) | Norway (41.4M) | Netherlands (36.1 M) | Denmark (34.6M) | Private donors Spain (33.1M) | United Kingdom (31.7M) | Germany (25.9M) | Private donors Republic of Korea (17.3M) | Switzerland (16.4M) | France (14M) | Private donors Japan (11.7M)

Contacts

Jackie Keegan, Head of Sub-Office, UNHCR Sub-Office Goma, DRC,
keegan@unhcr.org, +243 817 009 315

Sanne Biesmans, Associate Reporting and External Relations Officer, UNHCR SO Goma, DRC.
biesmans@unhcr.org, +243 829 968 603

Gloria Ramazani, External Relations Associate, UNHCR SO Goma, DRC.
ramazang@unhcr.org, +243 812 636 039

Lena Ellen Becker, Associate Reporting Officer (Protection IDPs), UNHCR Ituri, DRC,
beckerl@unhcr.org, +243 818 286 580