

# WEEKLY EMERGENCY UPDATE

## Ituri and North Kivu Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo

1 - 8 August 2019



### Operational context and protection situation

#### Ituri Province

During the week under review, civilian killings continued on a smaller scale, in several localities of Djugu and Irumu territories. UNHCR recorded 579 protection incidents in Ituri Province in July (including 120 between 22 and 28 July alone). This is not an exhaustive depiction, due to access constraints. On 6 August, the new Governor of Ituri Province chaired a first meeting with the humanitarian community, in an attempt to coordinate the response. On 7 and 8 August, OCHA organized a workshop for the 2020 HRP/HNO. Overall, armed violence has decreased in much of Ituri Province compared to June, although police is coming under attack, and armed assailants continue to pose a serious security threat in Djugu Territory. Reinforced security measures in some localities have allowed the return of some 3,000 displaced persons to their areas of origin in Mahagi Territory. In some areas (Kpandroma, Tchomia), actual or rumored attacks are causing preventive, cyclical displacements as populations live in fear, and inter-community tensions are high. Several road axes in Djugu Territory remain too insecure, or require MONUSCO escorts to access.

**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 Drodro, 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

In Beni Territory, armed groups dramatically scaled up their attacks against civilians and government forces during the reporting period. On 5 August, there were 26 kidnappings near the village of Kisima. In the Nobili area on the Ugandan border (Beni Territory), deadly ADF violence is causing further displacements, and flooding has recently affected the displaced. Other territories (Rutshuru) also witnessed armed killings over the past week. The continuous, almost province-wide deterioration of the security situation since the second half of July is severely limiting humanitarian access, with all field missions suspended until further notice. Overall, the security situation in North Kivu remains extremely volatile. Masisi Territory is particularly affected. Armed groups are targeting civilians and protection actors, while Rwandan refugees living in the territory are also targeted. As a direct consequence, displacement from conflict-affected areas into host communities and IDP sites continues. The Ebola epidemic continues unabated, with its current epicenter once again in Beni and confirmed cases in Goma that has increased pressure on the response.

**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 1,593 protection incidents, including 577 murders, recorded by UNHCR between January and June 2019.

### Immediate needs

#### Ituri Province

- **Health:** the displacement area is Ebola-affected, exacerbating already-systemic health needs. A measles epidemic is gaining ground, with insufficient vaccines and overwhelmed health facilities. Child mortality rates are high.
- **Shelter:** many IDPs are still sleeping in the open or in public buildings, exposed to elements and to abuse.
- **Food assistance,** with the looting of fields left behind in areas of origin further exacerbating food insecurity.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs),** including the need for clothes.
- **WASH,** in the most overcrowded locations (Drodro, Kasenyi). Women lack access to feminine hygiene products.
- **Education** due to schools closures, notably in Drodro and Kasenyi, as IDPs use classrooms for shelter.
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)** risks, 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. 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 in Masisi Territory do not provide adequate infrastructure, pushing IDPs towards host families. Around Nobili (Beni Territory), UNHCR assistance reduced shelter needs, but more are caused by new displacements and by recent flooding that affected 838 households.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)**, especially for those living with host families.
- **Health**, with 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)**, as armed groups are using SGBV as a weapon of war in Masisi Territory.
- **WASH** in IDP sites in Masisi and Rutshuru territories, and in Nobili where needs were exacerbated by recent floods.
- **Food assistance**, particularly for those who lost their livelihoods to conflict.
- **Protection:** the most significant needs are community-based protection, to promote the participation of communities and of the displaced in response mechanisms and solutions; peaceful coexistence; protection of vulnerable youth and women; and birth registrations to prevent statelessness.

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## UNHCR’s response

### Ituri Province

- **Bunia:** On 17 and 18 July, **UNHCR distributed plastic sheeting for emergency shelters, hygiene kits and non-food items (NFIs)** to 155 households (962 vulnerable persons) out of a target of 173 in the “ISP” site in Bunia.
- UNHCR is **reinforcing Camp Management and Monitoring** in two IDP sites in Bunia.
- A new IDP site is being developed in Bunia, with IOM and provincial authorities. UNHCR will contribute with emergency shelter and NFIs for 2,000 families, if required.
- **Kasenyi:** During the week of 1-8 August, UNHCR and partner CARITAS **finalized 12 collective hangars** out of the 40 planned, to respond to the arrival of some 4,300 IDPs in Kasenyi. Each hangar is now occupied by 12 families.
- During the week of 1-8 August, UNHCR and partner CARITAS **began the construction of 600 emergency shelters** in Kasenyi. These shelters, added to the hangars, will host up to 5,400 IDPs (including older caseloads).
- During the week of 28-31 July, UNHCR **completed a “fixing” exercise** in Kasenyi to establish reliable IDP numbers and gain insight into their living conditions. Results will be available from next week.
- **Drodro:** During the week of 1-6 August, UNHCR **completed the “fixing” exercise** in Drodro.
- **Ramogi:** The **“fixing” exercise is ongoing** in Ramogi (Mahagi Territory) until 11 August.
- **General:** Since the second half of July, UNHCR’s partners AVSI and CARITAS have **identified 17 community-based protection structures** along various road axes in Djugu, Irumu and Mambasa territories. UNHCR and partners are providing capacity-building to three structures, which was ongoing as of 8 August.
- UNHCR, through its partner INTERSOS, **conducts protection monitoring in accessible areas**, and provides referrals to some victims. In July, 579 protection incidents were recorded in Ituri Province (120 of them between 22 and 28 July alone).

### North Kivu Province

- **Nobili:** From 16 to 18 July, UNHCR organized capacity-building for 112 participants in Nobili, to **strengthen collaboration and provide better protection to IDPs**. Participants included local authorities, civil society, IDP committees, humanitarian actors and members of local protection structures.
- UNHCR and partner INTERSOS subsequently undertook a **protection analysis that highlighted tensions between ethnic groups** being exacerbated by 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.
- In early June, **UNHCR distributed reusable sanitary pads to 100 girls and women** from the IDP and host communities in Nobili, as part of a pilot project. On 19 July, focus groups revealed that 96% of the women surveyed appreciated the washable, durable pads. Their continuous availability meets menstrual health needs, and can prevent infections.
- **General:** During the week of 1-8 August, **156 members of five community-based protection structures in Masisi Territory were trained** on their role. Another structure referred seven unaccompanied children to State social services for adequate care.
- In cooperation with AIDES, UNHCR **distributed tarpaulins to 500 IDP households (3,119 persons)** in Mweso, Masisi Territory. In addition, **1,700 shelter construction kits and 170 tool kits** were distributed for returned IDPs in Masisi, Lubero and Rutshuru territories to build their own semi-durable shelters. As of 31 July the project was 64% complete, with nearly 11,000 IDPs living in finished shelters.

- Through its partner INTERSOS, UNHCR **conducts protection monitoring** in accessible areas, and provides referrals to victims. Between January and June 2019, 1,593 protection incidents, including 577 murders, were recorded in North Kivu Province.
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### 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 SRSB 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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