

WEEKLY EMERGENCY UPDATE #28

Ituri and North Kivu Provinces, Democratic Republic of the Congo

13 – 20 January 2020



Operational context and protection situation

Ituri Province

The security situation in the town of Bunia remained calm, despite attacks in several localities. The situation in Ituri Province however remains of concern, with multiple inter-community attacks resulting in continued population movements. Violence in the territories of Djugu, Irumu and Mahagi continued, and is of particular concern as repercussions have started to spread beyond the traditional epicenter of community tensions, and beyond administrative territories. As the death toll continues to rise, civilians from all ethnic groups have fled their villages, heading towards safer areas in Djugu and Mahagi territories, towards Bunia town and even Uganda. The security situation and protection of civilians was calm in the city of Bunia despite attacks in surrounding localities.



Children run past tents at a site for internally displaced persons in Kasenyi, Ituri Province. © UNHCR/John Wessels

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.

North Kivu Province

The security situation and protection of civilians stabilized in Nobili and surroundings, after attacks by alleged ADF members in Kamango led to a significant wave of displacement in December 2019. The general security situation in Beni was relatively calm, despite the ongoing military operations against ADF militia in the northeast of Beni Territory. Ongoing attacks by armed groups continued to cause population movements. Populations from affected villages close to the military operations fled to urban areas, including to the cities of Oicha and Beni, in Beni Territory. In Lubero Territory, civilians continued to be victims of attacks by armed groups. In Rutshuru Territory, local militia attacked two villages (Katwiguru and Kinyandoni) with rifles and machetes, killing eight civilians.

BACKGROUND: Over 1.5 million IDPs are located in North Kivu Province as of 25 December 2019 according to the *Comité de Mouvement de Population, a mixed committee made up of Government and the national and international Humanitarian community*. The vast majority (94%) live with host communities, while some 90,263 reside in 22 IDP sites coordinated by UNHCR or IOM.

Immediate needs

- **Protection** of civilians from violence armed conflict.
- **Child protection:** Unaccompanied children, risks of child recruitment and SGBV against minors.
- **Birth registration:** 95% of IDP children in host families and displacement sites do not have birth certificates and are at risk of statelessness.
- **Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV)** against women and girls.
- **Shelter** support is needed for the displaced and host families.
- **Non-Food Items (NFIs)** are still needed for many IDP families, especially clothes and kitchen sets.
- **Menstrual hygiene kits** for women and girls.
- **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)** in IDP sites and host families.
- **Access to education:** 72% of children living in UNHCR-coordinated IDP sites are out of school.

UNHCR's response

Ituri Province

Protection: With the resurgence of attacks in Irumu Territory (Ituri Province), in particular in its southern parts, and due to the limited presence of humanitarian actors, the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster developed a protection analysis and advocacy plan, aiming to inform the humanitarian community and increase the engagement of protection partners. During the reporting period, UNHCR relocated 178 households to Kigonze IDP site in Bunia, in order to decongest the spontaneous IDP site next to the General Hospital.

Out of 20 newborn children registered during the relocation, only one had a birth certificate, posing high protection risks. Often, parents do not have identification documents either, which may hamper their access to state services and poses risks while travelling as suspicion of outsiders can lead to violence and other protection risks.

North Kivu Province

Protection: In response to intensified attacks against civilians in Nyabiondo (Masisi Territory) at the end of 2019, the UNHCR-led Protection Cluster, together with ICRC and Geneva Call, worked with Congolese authorities to reinforce the protective environment for civilians, through awareness-raising and advocacy of international humanitarian law.

UNHCR's partner Caritas conducted an awareness-raising session on child protection for 88 members of the community in Nobili, including men, women and children. The session focused on the prevention of school-based child sexual abuse. 50 IDP and returnee households with specific needs received cash assistance to establish income-generating activities in Mweso, Masisi Territory.

Shelter: UNHCR's partner AIDES completed the construction 18 community structures and 8 communal latrine blocks in Beni Territory. 770 shelters were also made with local material, as well as 348 emergency shelters, and 35 communal latrine blocks in Masisi 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. 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 in October 2019, and the Goma Sub-Office is being reinforced with permanent and temporary staff.

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