

UNICEF HUMANITARIAN ACTION UPDATE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

5 November 2008

VIOLENCE IN EASTERN DRC ESCALATES FURTHER

- Renewed fighting in eastern DRC causes some 100,000 newly displaced in the last week, half of these estimated to be children; 250,000 newly displaced since late August in North Kivu province alone.
- Affected population living in critical conditions; urgent assistance required in water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, health, shelter/household supplies and protection
- UNICEF requires USD12 million to provide response for first 3 months



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1. ISSUES FOR CHILDREN

Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is experiencing a renewed humanitarian catastrophe. The recent confrontations in North Kivu follow a rapid deterioration of an already fragile security and humanitarian situation, beginning in August 2008 with the collapse of the Goma peace accords (see *UNICEF Humanitarian Action Update of October 13, 2008*). Humanitarian access is limited in many areas and nearly all humanitarian organizations have relocated their staff to safer areas. Despite intense diplomatic efforts, the security situation in eastern DRC remains extremely precarious and the humanitarian situation is deteriorating by the day.

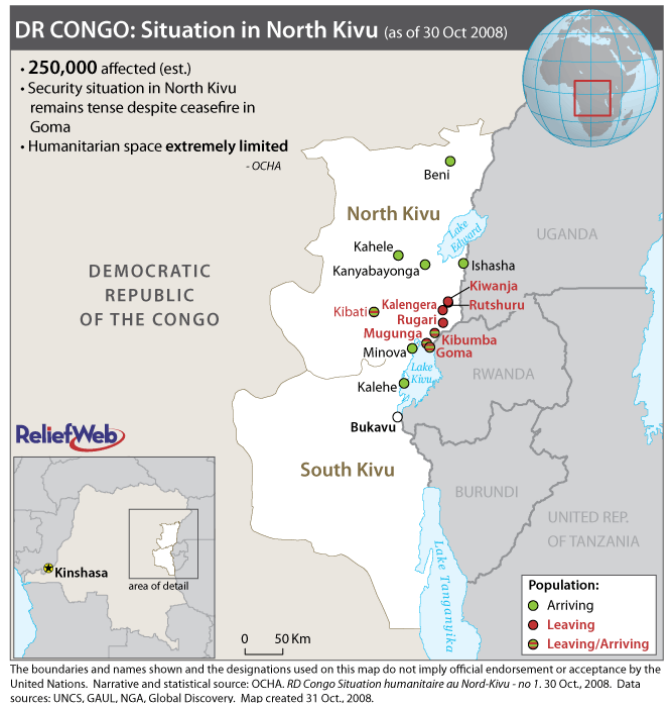
The hostilities which escalated in North Kivu on October 26 forced some 100,000 people to leave their homes—tens of thousands of these people are re-displaced as they were already living with host families or in displacement camps and sites. In recent days, fighting between the rebel CNDP (National Congress for the People's Defence) forces of Laurent Nkunda and Congolese government forces has propelled families from Kibumba, Rumangabo, Rutshuru and Kiwanja, with people fleeing northwest toward Kanyabayonga and northeast toward the Ugandan border. An estimated 50,000 of the newly displaced from Kibumba and Rumangabo are setting up makeshift shelters in and around the Kibati displaced person camps north of Goma. Others are staying with host families.

The 100,000 people displaced in the past week brings the estimated total number of newly displaced people in North Kivu since late August 2008 to 250,000, the majority of whom are women and children. OCHA now estimates that there are a total of over 1,000,000 displaced in North Kivu alone—one-fifth of the province's total population. The insecurity and recurrent displacement are having devastating effects on children and women. Local communities hosting displaced families and aid agencies struggle to assess and meet the critical needs of the affected population in a context where many areas are still plagued by insecurity and limited access.

While global attention is focused on the desperate situation in North Kivu, UNICEF and partners are simultaneously trying to address acute humanitarian crises in the Ituri and Dungu areas of Province Orientale where recent rebel hostilities by the *Front Populaire pour la Justice au Congo* (FPJC) in Ituri district and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Dungu region have displaced tens of thousands of people as well. On November 1, 2008, LRA rebels attacked Dungu town, reportedly abducting children and causing large-scale population displacement.

2. UNICEF RESPONSE: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

At present UNICEF's main objective in North Kivu is to conduct rapid multi-sectoral needs assessments and to provide essential humanitarian assistance to populations made critically vulnerable by the ongoing conflict. UNICEF's most extensive rapid assessment and response programme is the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), co-managed with OCHA, and implemented through the NGOs *Solidarités* and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). UNICEF and its network of partners currently provide the largest humanitarian response mechanism in the DRC for displaced persons and disaster-affected populations. With a focus on health and nutrition, education, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene, household relief supplies and emergency shelter reinforcement materials, UNICEF's partnerships and programmes in eastern DRC are being rapidly scaled up to adapt and respond to the current emergencies. Preliminary assessments have identified



urgent needs in all these sectors both for displaced and host communities. For the next three months, UNICEF's humanitarian objectives are the following:

Health and Nutrition

- Carry out emergency measles vaccinations and provide Vitamin A supplements for displaced and host community children.
- Provide essential medicine, equipment, and technical support to health centers in affected areas in order to reinforce their capacity to respond to influxes of displaced.
- Ensure standby capacity to rapidly respond to potential cholera outbreaks.
- Support the UNICEF network of partners working in therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes for acutely malnourished children.

Initial Response: As part of an immediate response while waiting for WFP food distributions scheduled in the coming days, UNICEF is working with its partner International Medical Corps (IMC) to distribute BP5 high energy biscuits to 15,000 children in the Kibati sites north of Goma. UNICEF has also provided IMC in Kibati with medicine and medical equipment to provide free health care to displaced families.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- Provide sufficient drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities and promote hygiene through water chlorination, water trucking, reinforcement of existing water supply systems, construction of latrines and showers, and hygiene education in displacement sites and host community areas.

Initial Response: At present, UNICEF and Mercy Corps are helping to provide clean drinking water in the Kibati camps and in Rutshuru town. Mercy Corps is also building additional latrines in and around the Kibati camps to accommodate the sudden surge in population. In Goma town, UNICEF continues activities at 26 chlorination points throughout the city and will reinforce these activities as needed. RRM partner *Solidarités* began water trucking to Kanyabayonga on Monday 3 November, serving an estimated 45,000 IDPs and host community members.

Child Protection

- Prevent the recruitment of children into armed forces and groups, and facilitate the identification, separation, and reintegration of children associated with such groups.
- Identify unaccompanied minors in zones of displacement to reunify them with their families or place them with host families while family tracing is conducted.
- Establish child-friendly recreational and informal learning areas in displaced person sites and camps in order to offer psycho-social support to conflict-affected children
- Provide access to a comprehensive set of services for survivors of sexual violence including medical care, psycho-social support, socio-economic integration and legal counseling.

Initial Response: UNICEF is working in partnership with Save the Children U.K. to identify separated children to be placed with host families until they can be reunified with their parents. Save the Children's *points d'écoute* (listening points) restarted their identification and family tracing for new unaccompanied minors after a 3-day suspension during the height of the insecurity.

Education

- Facilitate access to basic primary education for displaced and host community children through provision of adequate classroom space, equipment, and sanitary facilities; distribution of teacher, student, and recreation kits; and programs to ensure access to education for vulnerable children in affected areas.

Initial Response: In North Kivu, the official school year has still not started due to a teacher's strike. In addition to working with partners on assessments and a response in emergency education, UNICEF is preparing for its annual school kit distribution to around 400,000 children and 8,000 teachers in North Kivu when school resumes. In humanitarian crises such as North Kivu, UNICEF underlines the critical need to rapidly start emergency education activities to provide a sense of normalcy and protection for boys and girls.

Non-Food Items (NFIs) and emergency shelter materials

- Distribute essential household relief supplies (NFIs) and emergency shelter materials to affected families.

Initial Response: Through the RRM programme, UNICEF is the largest provider of NFI and emergency shelter materials in the DRC. To respond to the current emergencies, UNICEF is reinforcing its pre-positioned stocks in eastern provinces as well as its operational support capacity to partners *Solidarités* and IRC in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Orientale's Ituri and Haut Uele districts. RRM partners have already mobilized assessment teams to accessible areas to evaluate needs and begin planning assistance activities.

Inter-Agency Collaboration and Key Partnerships

UNICEF is participating in daily security and humanitarian coordination meetings. Regular RRM coordination meetings continue to plan emergency assessments and responses in the core RRM sectors of NFI, WASH, and Emergency Education. UNICEF leads the Nutrition; NFI/Emergency Shelter; WASH; and Education Clusters as well as the Child Protection working group. All UNICEF-led clusters have completed preliminary assessments to evaluate in-country response capacity, and to identify gaps and urgent needs in terms of supply and financial support.

3. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

UNICEF has requested US\$115.2 million for emergency response through the Humanitarian Action Report (HAR) 2008. Within this budget, UNICEF is prioritizing US\$12 million to respond to the immediate needs of children and women over the next three months. This includes US\$8 million for North Kivu alone, and an additional US\$4 million for urgent needs in Orientale and South Kivu.

As of the end October 2008, UNICEF had received US\$40.4¹ million in emergency funding in 2008 – or 35% of identified HAR needs.

In planning its HAR strategy and activities, UNICEF works in close collaboration with all other UN agencies, NGOs, and Government actors in the framework of the Humanitarian Action Plan.² UNICEF DR Congo expresses its deep gratitude to the donors and partners that have provided funding for emergency response in DRC this year.

Additional Emergency funding required per sector for November 1st 2008 – January 31, 2009

All figures in USD

Sector	Gap 3 months (Nov. 1, 2008 – Jan. 31, 2009)
Health and Nutrition	2,021,539
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)	2,190,000
Education	1,675,165
Child Protection	1,981,258
Rapid Response Mechanism	4,200,000
Total Needs *	12,067,962

*The total includes a maximum recovery rate of 7%. The actual recovery rate on contributions will be calculated in accordance with UNICEF Executive Board Decision 2006/7 dated 9 June 2006.

¹ This figure is 2008 income and does not include carry-over funding received in 2007.

² In DRC, there is not a CAP, but a HAP – a Humanitarian Action Plan. This document is a roadmap for humanitarian action for the year, but does not include individual projects for agencies. It is oriented around clusters, not organizations.

Details on UNICEF's emergency programmes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be obtained from:

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