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PROFILE OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT : DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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PROFILE SUMMARY

DR Congo: renewed fighting, killings, rapes slow down IDP return and cause new displacement

Since the mid-1990s, millions of Congolese have fled their homes to escape fighting between rebel groups and the national government in a complex conflict which has, at times, involved as many as nine neighbouring states. Close to four million people are believed to have died as a result of the conflict which was accompanied by widespread human rights violations. Displacement peaked in 2003, with an estimated 3.4 million people forced from their homes, most of them in eastern DRC. The UN estimated that over 2.3 million people remained displaced as of mid-2005.

Hundreds of thousands of IDPs returned home in the wake of the establishment of a transitional power-sharing government in June 2003 and following the strengthening of international peacekeeping operations. The situation deteriorated in the second part of 2004, however, when clashes among armed groups and against civilians escalated in eastern DRC. Large numbers fled their homes, particularly in Ituri District and in the Kivu Provinces, and the return process slowed down. Displacement has been accompanied by the killing of civilians, widespread sexual violence against displaced and other women, child recruitment and looting and burning of IDP possessions. Aid organisations have responded to the renewed crisis by bringing assistance to the displaced, but fighting and attacks on aid workers and peacekeepers by armed groups have prevented access to the most vulnerable. According to the UN Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, by the number of lives lost, the humanitarian crisis in eastern DRC is the most serious in the world.

Background of displacement and recent developments

While the eastern province of North Kivu was the location of ethnic clashes and the displacement of thousands in the early 1990s, internal displacement spread throughout the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire) during fighting in 1996 and 1998. The underlying causes of displacement have been the disintegration of the state, which started long before the 1996 demise of President Mobutu Sese Seko's regime, and the subsequent competition among various ethnic groups for political and economic power in their respective provinces. A series of rebel groups, more or less closely linked to outside powers such as Uganda and Rwanda, have competed to control large areas of eastern DRC. These groups have repeatedly clashed among themselves, as well as with the Kinshasa government and foreign troops. Civilians have borne the brunt of the violence, often being targeted for ethnic or political reasons. Their meagre resources have been seized, children have been conscripted into armed forces, and women and girls have been used as sex slaves by combatants. Displacement peaked in 2003, with an estimated 3.4 million people forced from their homes, most of them in eastern DRC.

Following an upsurge of violence by militias in Ituri in mid-2003, the UN Security Council authorised the MONUC (UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo) peacekeeping force, under "Chapter VII" of the UN Charter, to use all necessary means to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence in Ituri and in the Kivus. MONUC was also tasked with monitoring compliance with the arms embargo imposed by the UN Security Council in July 2003 on armed groups operating in eastern DRC. With the establishment in mid-2003 of a Transition Government, which included the main armed groups and the political opposition, violence decreased until mid-2004.

In the second half of 2004 and in 2005 however, a series of crises caused heightened insecurity and displacement, and the Congolese government struggled to affirm its authority in the east of the country, particularly in Ituri and in the Kivus. One major problem was that while in theory former belligerents who

joined the transitional government should have handed control of their armed groups to a new national army, in reality most of the combatants were still controlled by the same military hierarchies as before the transition (ICG, 30 March 2005). Also, the looting of DRC's natural resources by various armed groups continued, and those responsible for their illegal exploitation had not been held responsible (IRIN, 3 September 2004; HRW, 2 June 2005). Weapons continued to be channelled to various armed groups in DRC from neighbouring countries, despite the establishment of the arms embargo (AI, 5 July 2005). National elections planned for June 2005 were delayed, notably due to insecurity and to the logistical challenge of registering 28 million voters in a country with limited infrastructure (Reuters, 1 June 2005). The voter registration process started on June 20, 2005 (IRIN, 26 July 2005).

In March 2005, the UN Security Council noted that the situation in the DRC continued to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region (UNSC, 30 March 2005). The Hutu Rwandan Armed Liberation Forces (FDLR), Mai Mai factions, and other local armed groups were still attacking the local population. Unruly and unpaid Congolese military personnel were also reported to terrorise farmers, steal livestock and pillage local plantations (ODI, 25 May 2005). According to the UN Secretary-General, reports have been received of collaboration between Rwandan Hutu rebels and Mai Mai militias, and between Rwandan Hutu rebels and elements of the Congolese army (UNSC, 22 March 2005). Despite the presence of UN peacekeepers, militias in Ituri attacked the population, collected revenues from gold-mining, and smuggled goods and weapons to and from neighbouring Uganda.

From February 2004, dissident officers from the former rebel movement Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma (RCD-G) sparked clashes in North and South Kivu which resulted in the displacement of tens of thousands in May/June 2004, particularly of ethnic Tutsi (ICG, 30 March 2005). Many also fled after the fighting out of fear of ethnically-based reprisals, since the dissident commanders were Tutsi (USAID, 20 August 2004; MONUC, 4 August 2004). Years of war have contributed to hostility against the Congolese Tutsis as they are increasingly identified as "Rwandan" by other Congolese (HRW, 12 June 2004). Over 150 ethnic Tutsi refugees from DRC were also massacred across the border in Burundi in August 2004. Following the targeting of ethnic Tutsi, the Rwandan government mobilised its troops along its border with DRC, interpreting the violence as a threat against all Tutsi. The military mobilisation as a response to the massacre played on the fears of many people in DRC that Rwanda might still be planning a large-scale intervention. In response to threats by Rwanda in December 2004 to enter the DRC to disarm Rwandan Hutu rebels by force, additional Congolese troops were sent to North Kivu. Since then, different segments of the Congolese army in the region – members of the former Congolese Army and members of the former rebel group RCD-Goma reportedly backed by Rwanda – have repeatedly clashed. In December 2004, fighting and soldiers' looting of homes and shops in North Kivu caused the displacement of more than 180,000 people, many of them into forested areas (HRW, 21 December 2004).

The peacekeeping mission MONUC has over 16,000 troops, who are mainly tasked to facilitate and assist the transition process. The main countries contributing troops are Pakistan, India, Uruguay, Bangladesh and South Africa (MONUC, 15 July 2005). In September 2004, the UN and the Congolese government started to disarm and reintegrate ex-combatants in Ituri. Delays and a slow disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration and rehabilitation process, however, led to the remobilisation of militias and widespread insecurity, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (OCHA, 23 June 2005). Still, some 10,000 combatants – 3,000 of them children – had put down their weapons, either voluntarily or by force, as of April 2005 (OCHA, 20 April 2005; AFP 19 April 2005). One of the biggest clashes involving MONUC troops in eastern Congo occurred in early March 2005, when peacekeepers killed at least 50 militiamen a few days after nine Bangladeshi UN troops were killed in an ambush in Ituri.

Most IDPs live with host communities or hide in forests. Following massive influxes of people, IDP camps have also been set up, particularly in Ituri, North Kivu and Katanga. The latest IDP estimate from OCHA is some 2.3 million. This figure is to be taken with caution, as the IDP estimates of several provinces have not been updated since 2003, and while new IDPs figures are usually added, those IDPs who return are not always taken off the lists. About 95 per cent of IDPs are in six provinces: Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema, Equateur and Katanga (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

While some return, many others are displaced in 2005

From mid-2003 to mid-2005, an estimated 900,000 IDPs returned to their homes in eastern DRC, particularly in the provinces of Ituri, Maniema, Katanga and the Kivus, according to OCHA (OCHA, 8 June 2005). Most of them returned home with little or no assistance. The pace of returned slowed down in the second half of 2004, due to heightened insecurity in eastern DRC.

Hundreds of thousands were displaced in the region in the first half of 2005. From the end of December 2004 to March 2005, some 100,000 ethnic Hema Congolese fled the attacks of ethnic Lendu militias in Djugu, a territory to the north of Ituri's main town, Bunia. Over 80,000 of them are now living in IDP camps. During their attacks, Lendu militias burnt down homes, looted food and animals, and destroyed crops that were growing in the fields (IRIN, 4 April 2005). UN observers and NGOs reported that the Lendu militias' objective was to change the ethnic composition of Djugu (IRIN, 23 March 2005).

Mai Mai militias continued to destabilise eastern DRC, despite having signed an agreement that incorporates them into the new national integrated army. In May 2005, for example, at least 1,700 people fled attacks by Mai Mai in Katanga Province, during which the militias raped women and girls and burnt houses (IRIN, 8 June 2005, Mai Mai).

In June 2005, members of the Congolese army caused the displacement of 190 families from villages close to Bukavu, South Kivu Province, following looting, extra-judicial executions and rapes (MONUC, 7 June 2005). The same month the Congolese army, supported by the Rwandan Hutu militia FDLR, caused the displacement of populations in Bukavu, South Kivu, during fighting against another Hutu group called Rastas (OCHA, 7 June 2005). The FDLR signed an agreement at the end of March 2005, under which it would demobilise and return to Rwanda, but it continued to attack civilians nevertheless, causing the displacement of thousands in North and South Kivu (IRIN, 8 June 2005, North Kivu; MONUC, 13 June 2005). In July 2005, the UN Security Council condemned the massacre of some 50 people, most of them women and children, who were reported to have been burned alive by Hutu militias in South Kivu (UNSC, 13 July 2005; IRIN, 14 July 2005).

The International Rescue Committee estimates that 3.8 million people have died as a result of the war since 1998 (IRC, 8 December 2004).

Physical security

The protection of the displaced and other civilians remains a serious concern throughout DRC, particularly in the Kivus, Katanga, Maniema and Ituri. In June 2005, the UN Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division reported continuing widespread human rights violations by armed groups, including killings, rape, sexual exploitation, abductions, forcible conscription of children, looting, plundering of crops, illegal taxation and general harassment of civilians. It also said that the illegal exploitation of natural resources (gold, coltan and diamonds), and the smuggling of goods and weapons added to the violence (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

Rape has been used extensively as a weapon of war by virtually all the forces involved in the conflict (HRW, 7 March 2005; AI, 27 November 2003). Soldiers and rebel fighters have engaged in acts of sexual violence in the context of fighting, to attack the fundamental values of the community, to scare the civilian population into submission, to punish them for allegedly supporting enemy forces or to provide gratification for the fighters (HRW, 7 March 2005; AI, 26 October 2004). Thousands of women have also been abducted and kept as slaves in the forces' camps to provide sexual, domestic and agricultural services. Often the combatants take the women's clothes so that they cannot run away (International Alert & al., 2005). From 1998 to 2004, over 40,000 women were raped in eastern DRC, according to a World Health

Organisation representative (IRIN, 8 March 2004). In July 2004, the UN reported that 70 per cent of the women interviewed in the town of Kalemie, Katanga Province, and in neighbouring IDP camps had been victims of rape (OCHA, 31 July 2004). In the first half of 2005, over 200 women and girls were raped in Walungu territory, South Kivu, mostly by armed men (OCHA, 31 May 2005). Men and boys in increasing numbers are also reporting having been sexually assaulted by combatants (HRW, 7 March 2005). The UN agency UNIFEM also denounced sexual mutilation and cannibalism by various armed groups against Pygmy women (UN News Service, 4 November 2003). Members of the MONUC peacekeeping force have also committed abuses against displaced women and girls. The highly publicised scandal over UN peacekeepers and child prostitution led to an investigation by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services. The office identified a pattern of sexual exploitation by uniformed personnel involving women and girls and asked the concerned troop-contributing countries to take swift disciplinary action. In a report to the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General noted that the reputation of MONUC had been severely damaged by acts of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by some peacekeepers against the local population (UNSC, 22 March 2005).

Many displaced children have been forced into the ranks of the armed groups. Although the total number of children associated with the armed forces and groups is unknown, estimates vary from 20,000 to 40,000 (UNICEF, 7 May 2004). Save the Children said in 2003 that it was difficult to escape the impression that the town of Bunia, Ituri District, had been taken over by children, who were used by local militias to terrorise its residents (SCF-UK, 9 June 2003). As of mid-2005, according to UNICEF, at least 3,000 children were still in the hands of militias in Ituri and an even greater number remained in armed groups in the rest of the country (IRIN, 5 April 2005). Girls too are recruited, and often suffer both sexual abuse and forced labour (AI, 9 September 2003). Up to 12,500 girls were estimated to be in armed groups as of early 2005 (Save the Children Alliance, 25 April 2005).

Humanitarian conditions

Despite the establishment of the Transition Government, civilians continue to live in crisis conditions in many parts of the DRC. Millions lack access to basic infrastructure (health centres, schools and roads), potable water, food, seeds, tools, clothes and straw to build houses.

With DRC's healthcare structures collapsing, displaced people are particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases. In Maniema Province, for example, 80 per cent of healthcare structures have been destroyed during the fighting or in subsequent looting (OCHA, 2 January 2004). In Ituri, over a thousand people were believed to have caught the Bubonic Plague in 2004. A DRC Health Ministry official attributed the upsurge to incessant population displacements caused by the continued fighting between rebel groups (IRIN, 29 July 2004). Also in Ituri, overcrowding and poor sanitation were killing some 25 IDPs every day in just one camp in early 2005 (Reuters, 23 March 2005). In March and April 2005, aid workers were unable due to insecurity to reach thousands of displaced in camps in Ituri, where cholera had broken out (IRIN, 22 April 2005). Displaced people are also disproportionately exposed to HIV/AIDS infection, as they usually lack the means to protect themselves and do not have information about its transmission. In eastern provinces, up to 20 per cent of the population may be infected with HIV (IRIN, 5 November 2003).

The displacement of farmers, the burning of fields and food stocks, and the destruction of infrastructure have caused widespread malnutrition in eastern DRC, an area with considerable agricultural potential. According to the UN, an estimated 1.9 million children suffered from acute malnutrition as of mid-2004 (UNICEF, 7 May 2004). Save the Children Alliance also reported that in the first four months of 2005, 59,000 children died as a direct and indirect result of the conflict in the DRC, the vast majority of them from easily preventable and curable causes such as diarrhoea, malnutrition and malaria (Save the Children Alliance, 27 April 2005).

Without food, medicines and shelter, displaced people have also been denied a range of other essential rights. Few attend school in the current war-damaged education system, reducing their prospects for a more

secure future. Only 40 per cent of children in eastern DRC are enrolled in school, and in some areas, such as in North Kivu, only a third of girls go to school (UNICEF, 16 December 2004).

Inadequate response to the needs of IDPs and returnees

At the national level, both the Ministry for Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs and the Ministry for Social Affairs have responsibility for responding to the needs of IDPs. The first focuses on protection and assistance during displacement, while the second is the focal point for return (OCHA, 23 September 2004). Other ministries also have some responsibilities towards IDPs, which complicates coordination arrangements (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

In November 2004, the UN Secretary-General appointed Ross Mountain, a national of New Zealand, as his Deputy Special Representative for the DRC. In this capacity, he also serves as Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the DRC and is responsible for ensuring a strategic and coordinated response to internal displacement in the country (UN SG, 18 November 2004).

UN agencies, national and international NGOs and the ICRC are providing IDPs with food and non-food items, seeds and tools, health care, and emergency education. However, according to the Internal Displacement Division, while a number of agencies are involved in activities related to return and reintegration, there is as yet no overall strategic framework. As a result, in most cases humanitarian and development actors operate in separate worlds (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

Humanitarian activities related to the return of IDPs have up to now been focused on transport assistance and the distribution of return packages, mainly because of lack of funding for other projects, such as the rebuilding of infrastructure and basic services in return areas. In 2005 UNDP launched, in partnership with the Congolese Ministry of Social Affairs, a Pilot Project on Return and Reintegration of IDPs in the DRC. Close to 1,600 IDPs were helped to return to their villages in Equateur and Orientale Provinces (IRIN, 23 May 2005). According to the Internal Displacement Division, the project demonstrated that many IDPs in the DRC are ready to return to their homes if minimal support is provided. It also showed that for returns to be sustainable, improved collaboration between a wide range of government authorities, humanitarian and development organisations is needed.

The worsening security situation since mid-2004 slowed down assistance to IDPs, particularly in Ituri. Armed groups in Ituri killed several peacekeepers, and repeatedly attacked, looted and took hostage humanitarian staff operating in that region (Medair, 17 June 2005). In June 2005, several humanitarian NGOs suspended their assistance activities in certain part of Ituri, like Solidarity in the IDP camp of Gina (Solidarités, 19 July 2005). Other factors hampering the response to the needs of displaced people and returnees include the sheer size of the country, the absence of roads and the high degree of geographical dispersal of IDPs.

Funding has also been inadequate. In order to address this question, DRC has been chosen as a pilot country for the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. Under this initiative, 18 donors have pledged to improve the flexibility of their financing, provide funds based on need, reinforce local capacities to prevent crises, respond rapidly and support the transition from emergency to development through appropriate funding (OCHA, 31 July 2004). Still, the level of funds committed to respond to the humanitarian needs of IDPs has remained disappointing. The 2004 UN Consolidated Appeal, which requested \$163 million compared to \$268 million for the 2003 Appeal, received just 73 per cent of the requested funds. For 2005, the humanitarian community has requested some \$185 million for essential life-saving assistance (UNSC, 22 March 2005).

(July 2005)

CAUSES AND BACKGROUND OF DISPLACEMENT

Political developments

DRC political developments- Chronology: 1870-2002

1870s: Commissioned by King Leopold II of Belgium, the explorer H.M Stanley establishes the King's authority in the Congo basin.

1884-85: Leopold's claim on the Congo is formalized at the Berlin Conference. The "Congo Free State" was created as a personal fiefdom of the Belgian Crown.

1908: The Congo becomes a Belgian colony.

1960: The Congo becomes an independent state, with Patrice Lumumba as Prime Minister and Joseph Kasavubu as President.

1961: Lumumba is murdered, reportedly with US and Belgian complicity.

1965: President Kasavubu is ousted by General Mobutu, army chief of staff.

1990: Mobutu announces multiparty democracy but keeps significant powers.

1991: Anti-Mobutu sentiments explode in mass rioting and looting by unpaid soldiers in Kinshasa.

1992: Riots and looting by unpaid soldiers in Goma, Kisangani, Kolwezi; ethnic tensions rise between the Hunde, Nyanga and Nande and the Banyarwanda in North Kivu.

1993: Ethnic strife between the local populations and the Banyarwanda breaks out in Masisi area. The coup in Burundi against new Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye results in the arrival of some 80,000 Burundian refugees in Zaire.

1994: Genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda. Following the Tutsi led counter offensive, one million refugees, mainly Hutus, cross the border with Zaire.

1995: Renewal of the ethnic war in Masisi.

1996: Revolt of the Zairian Tutsis "Banyamulenge" in South Kivu; the ADFL's (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire) "Liberation" war led by Laurent-Désiré Kabila begins from the east.

1997: Mobutu is ousted by the ADFL forces and flees in exile to Morocco.

1998: Congolese rebel forces, backed by Rwanda and Uganda, start attacking Kabila's forces and conquer the east of the country. Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe come to Kabila's aid and push the rebels back from Kinshasa.

1999: First confrontation of Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani. Signature of a cease-fire agreement by all six of the countries involved in the conflict; MONUC observers are deployed in the DRC.

2000: Six-day war between Rwanda and Uganda in Kisangani.

2001: President Kabila is shot dead by one of his bodyguards; his son Joseph takes over.

2002: Eruption of volcano Nyiragongo in Goma. Accord signed between Presidents Kabila and Kagame of Rwanda committing Rwandan to withdraw its troops from the DRC and Kinshasa to address Rwanda's security concerns in the DRC." (MSF 19 Nov 2002, p64)

A chronology of peace talks for DR Congo and political developments (1998-2004)

1998

Aug 8: The first summit on the DRC conflict brings together seven heads of state from southern and east Africa at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

Sept 13-14: The annual summit of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) recognises Zimbabwe's, Angola's and Namibia's intervention on behalf of the Kinshasa government and condemns Rwanda and Uganda for supporting DRC rebels.

Oct 26-27: Ministers from 11 African countries meet in the Zambian capital Lusaka and adopt the framework for a ceasefire in DRC. Zambia acts as regional mediator.

1999

July 10: A ceasefire agreement is signed at a summit in Lusaka by the DRC government and its allies Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia, and by Rwanda and Uganda. The Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC, backed by Uganda) and the two factions of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD, backed by Rwanda) ratify the agreement in August.

2000

Jan 24-26: Seven regional heads of state meet in New York with UN mediators.

Feb 23: Seven African heads of state meet in Lusaka and adopt a new timetable for applying the DRC ceasefire.

2001

Feb 15: DRC's new President Joseph Kabila -- who came to power after his father Laurent was assassinated in January -- takes part in his first summit on the DRC in Lusaka, together with four other countries involved in the conflict and the rebel movements. Announcement of deployment of UN observers for DRC, MONUC, and appointment of Sir Ketumile Masire as Inter-Congolese Dialogue facilitator.

Oct 15: Inter-Congolese Dialogue officially opens in Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa but is suspended after three days and later adjourned.

2002

Feb 25-April 19: Inter-Congolese Dialogue opens in Sun City, South Africa. The talks run on for six weeks and eventually result in a non-inclusive accord on power sharing, which is never implemented.

Sept 6: The DRC and Uganda ratify a protocol of agreement for Kampala to withdraw its troops from DRC soil.

Dec 17: All parties to the DRC war sign an agreement in Pretoria on a power-sharing transition government aimed at taking DRC through to its first democratic elections since 1960.

2003

March 6: After 11 days of talks in Pretoria, delegates adopt a draft constitution and a memorandum on the military and security arrangements during the transition period.

March 16-30: At the end of talks on integrating rebels into the DRC armed forces and on security measures during the transition period, only the RCD rebel group signs an agreement in Pretoria on a high command for an integrated armed force.” (AFP, 31 March 2003)

“1 April: In Sun City, South Africa, DRC government and rebel groups unanimously endorse a transitional constitution to govern DRC for two years. They also endorse the global agreement signed in Pretoria on 17 December 2002. [...]

30 June: Kabila names his transitional government to lead the country out of nearly five years of war to democratic elections in 2005.” (IRIN 5 Jan 04)

2004

14 May: Representatives of seven armed militia groups from the embattled northeastern district of Ituri sign an agreement in Kinshasa with the government to disarm and participate in the transitional process towards democracy.

16 May: Transitional government appoints 11 provincial governors.[...]

26 May: Fighting breaks out in the eastern town of Bukavu, between soldiers loyal to the Kinshasa government and renegade soldiers of a former Rwandan-backed rebel group.[...]

21 Jul: In a report, the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in DRC accuses the Rwandan government of supporting Congolese dissidents who, in June, seized Bukavu, thus breaking an arms embargo instituted in 2003 by the Council.[...]

25 Aug: The DRC, Rwanda and Uganda agree, at a meeting in Kampala, to disarm groups operating in their territories within a year.[...]

1 Sep: A programme involving the disarmament of some 15,000 ex-combatants in the northeastern district of Ituri, and their reintegration into civilian life, is officially launched in Bunia, the main town in the area.[...]

20 Sep: A five-day conference for representatives of NGOs in the Great Lakes region opens in Arusha, Tanzania, as part of a preparatory process for an UN-AU international conference on the region.[...]

6 Oct: The International Criminal Court and the DRC sign an accord allowing the prosecutor to begin investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the country.[...]

29 Nov: President Kabila announces he will send some 10,000 more troops to the east of the country, in response to a threat by Rwandan troops to invade.[...]

15 Dec: Fighting resumes in the town of Kanyabayonga in North Kivu Province. "Kanyabayonga has been emptied of its inhabitants," Mamadou Bah, MONUC spokesman, says." (IRIN 4 January 2005)

From the 1996 war to the establishment of a transition government in 2003

"In 1996 Rwandan and Ugandan forces invaded the Congo, ousted long-time ruler Mobutu Sese Seko, and installed Laurent Desiré Kabila in power. In July 1998 Kabila tried to expel the Rwandan troops, but they and the Ugandan forces instead engaged Kabila's government in the second Congo war, one that eventually drew in Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia (supporting Kabila) and Burundi (allied with the Rwandans and Ugandans). Often termed as Africa's first world war, the conflict resulted in the deaths of 3.5 million people, the great majority in eastern DRC. Many victims were displaced people who died from exposure, hunger, or lack of medical assistance. A first peace agreement, signed in Lusaka in 1999, had little effect but the U.N. agreed to establish a peacekeeping force known as the U.N. Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) in November 1999. Through continued international pressure, the national government and major rebel movements eventually signed a power-sharing agreement at Sun City in April 2002 that allowed for the establishment of the Global and All Inclusive Peace Agreement which set up the transitional government in June 2003. Despite this agreement and other bilateral and regional security agreements, insecurity continued in large parts of eastern Congo.

The war in northeastern Congo, specifically in Ituri, sprang from the larger Congo war, and became a complex web of local, national, and regional conflicts. It developed after a local land dispute in 1999 between Hema and Lendu ethnic groups was exacerbated by the Ugandan army who occupied the area and by national rebel groups keen on expanding their power base. The availability of political and military support from external actors, notably Uganda and Rwanda, plus growing extremists' sentiments, encouraged local leaders in Ituri to form more structured movements. Armed groups were born, generally based on ethnic loyalties [...]. Each of these groups received military and political support from either the DRC, Ugandan or Rwandan governments at different times turning Ituri into a battleground for the war between them." (HRW 2 June 2005, pp.12-13)

MONUC Peacekeeping mission works to bring security to eastern DRC (1999-2005)

- 16,700 troops currently deployed
- MONUC has had to transform itself from a ceasefire observation mission to one that handles a multitude of other tasks in support of the transition
- More forceful response by MONUC to protect civilians in March 2005, following criticism
- UNSC has imposed a mandatory arms embargo on the provinces of North and South Kivu and the Ituri region of the eastern DRC, but according to Amnesty International, reports of arms and related deliveries continued despite the embargo

"Since its arrival in the Congo in 2000, the UN Mission has had to respond to constantly changing challenges in a complex political environment. It has often been hampered by an unwieldy bureaucracy and organizational problems. While the media and the Congolese often see MONUC inefficiency as a problem of mandate and resources, a more fundamental impediment has been the lack of coherent strategy and vision to implement the mission. As a consequence, it has been unable to live up to its mandate in several areas, most notably protection of civilians, support to the national army in demobilizing the FDLR and enforcement of the arms embargo.

MONUC has had to transform itself from a ceasefire observation mission to one that handles a multitude of other tasks in support of the transition. According to Security Council Resolution 1565 (October 2004), it is responsible primarily for the following:

- deployment of its 16,700 troops to discourage violence, protect civilians in imminent danger, and protect UN personnel and installations;
- establishment of three joint commissions with the transitional government to move forward essential legislation, security sector reform, and the electoral process;
- support of the new army's operations to disarm foreign combatants;
- and help in monitoring and enforcing the embargo on the illegal flows of arms imposed by Security Council Resolution 1493.

By the time the Secretary General's latest report was released in March 2005, however, the mission had not yet been able to devise coherent strategies to implement these four tasks." (ICG 30 March 2005, p23).

"Emphasizing that MONUC is authorized to use all necessary means, within its capabilities and in the areas where its armed units are deployed, to deter any attempt at the use of force to threaten the political process and to ensure the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, the Council encouraged the Mission to continue to make full use of its mandate in the eastern part of the country." (UNSC 30 March 2005)

"In response to widespread criticism within the UN and from member states, MONUC has recently promised to act more robustly against armed groups that threaten the civilian population, especially in Ituri. On 1 March 2005, in response to an attack there by the Nationalist and Integrationist Forces (*Forces nationalistes et integrationnistes*, FNI) that killed nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers, it carried out a series of aggressive cordon and search operations. These operations, led by Major General Patrick Cammaert, the new Eastern Divisional Commander, were seen to represent a reinterpretation of MONUC's mandate to include use of preventive force. In other words, the very presence of the militia in Ituri would be considered a threat to the civilian population sufficient to justify MONUC's forceful intervention." (ICG 30 March 2005, p25)

"One of the biggest clashes involving U.N. troops in eastern Congo was in early March [2005], when peacekeepers with helicopter gunships killed at least 50 militiamen a few days after 9 Bangladeshi U.N. troops were killed in an ambush." (Reuters 25 May 2005)

"UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has named a five-member panel of experts to monitor an arms embargo the UN has imposed against the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), according to a letter from Annan to the UN Security Council, dated 17 May [2005].

The panel's mandate expires on 31 July [2005], Annan said. [...]

On 18 April the Security Council passed resolution 1596, extending the embargo on arms in eastern DRC to "any recipient" across the country, and included a travel ban on violators and the freezing of their assets. The Council also condemned the continuing illicit flow of weapons into eastern DRC that, it said, 'continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region'.

The resolution banned military equipment for any recipient in the country, except the police and soldiers who make up the country's national army and arms used for technical training and for the UN Mission in the DRC, MONUC.

The panel of experts are expected to monitor the embargo until 31 July, when the Council would review progress made in the country's peace process and political transition." (IRIN 20 May 2005)

"Yet, before and after the imposition of the UN embargo, reports of arms and related deliveries continued.

International arms flows into the region have corresponded to the clandestine supply of military aid by powerful forces in the DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda to their competing client armed groups and militia in eastern DRC who practise banditry and show little or no respect for human rights." (AI 5 July 2005)

To view the UN SC Resolution of March 2005:

UN Security Council, 30 March 2005, Security Council extends Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo until 1 October, unanimously adopting resolution 1592 (2005) [[Internet](#)]

The [home page of MONUC](#) contains links to recent UN documents on DRC

Conflict in DRC consists of three different sets of dynamics involving security reasons and search for economic survival (Oct 2002)

- First level: regional dimension of the Great Lakes conflict
- Second level: armed struggle among the Congolese themselves for the control of national political power
- Third level: in eastern DRC, historical and continuing conflict between communities
- All these level have own logic but also influence each other

"The rationality behind the current conflict, indeed, should be seen as a mixture of security reasons and the search for economic survival. Today, the DRC war can be explained as the next phase in a much larger and more deeply rooted conflict consisting of at least three different, yet closely related, sets of dynamics. The most analysed of these is the regional dimension or the Great Lakes conflict, which at present is strongly linked to a larger regional struggle (involving at least six countries) for zones of political influence and economic control. This layer is related to the disparity of wealth between the different countries of the Great Lakes region and the relative weakness of the Congolese state. As a consequence, the presence of the Rwandan army on Congolese territory can be explained as part of a strategy to protect its borders from incursions from Interahamwe forces and to guarantee the Rwandan regime's economic survival. Although one should not read the Rwandan presence in the DRC as part of a broader strategy of Rwandan or Tutsi commercial expansionism, the search for economic and politico-military security of the Rwandan regime adds an additional dynamic to the Congolese conflict. The second level of conflict is the armed struggle among the Congolese themselves for the control of national political power. The causes for this level of the conflict are strongly linked to the two other layers and concern the political system and the access to resources. This national dimension, however, is strongly influenced by the respective links of the rebel movements and their foreign patrons. Finally, in both North and South Kivu, there is an historical but continuing conflict between different communities that is unrelated to, but highly influenced by, events in neighbouring countries. These conflicts are caused by a complex set of factors including access to and control over land, political representation and the respect of traditional authority. All three different levels exhibit a certain logic of their own but, at the same time, influence one another. In eastern Congo, however, the situation is very particular since local, national and regional dynamics are closely intertwined. When analysing the current situation in the Kivus, one has to acknowledge that the 10-year old political crisis has resulted in a situation that is characterised by a profound social disintegration, a shift from patrimonial to military control over resources, a growing importance of armed militia as an escape from further alienation (with violence becoming the main mode of discourse) and a total 're-tribalisation' of politics and society as a consequence of the search for strategies of control and resistance for which ethnic identity offers a perfect instrument." (JHA 28 Oct 02, sect.2)

Fighting continues despite establishment of transition government (2004-2005)

- While in theory the former belligerents who have joined the transitional government should hand over the control of their armed group to a new national army, in reality most of the combatants are still controlled by the same military hierarchies as before the transition (March 2005)

- Hutu Rwandan Armed Liberation Forces (FDLR), Mai Mai factions, and other local armed groups continue to threaten security (Aug 04)
- Events in South Kivu and reactions to them domestically and internationally, as well as outbreak of fighting in northern Ituri underscore the fragility of peace process in entire country (Aug 04)
- UN says that Uganda and Rwanda continue to support some of the insurgent groups (July 04)
- Creation of Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) to monitor the DRC-Rwandan border (September 2004)
- At the end of March 2005, the Hutu Rwandan rebel group FDLR announced it was giving up its armed struggle and agreeing to go back to Rwanda
- Delays and a slow Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation (DDRR) process have led to the remobilisation of militias and widespread insecurity (June 05)
- National elections planned for June 2005 have been delayed, notably due to the logistical challenge of registering 28 million voters in a country without roads

Nature of Transition Government

“The transitional government, which was sworn in on 30 June 2003, is a political compromise between the five main armed groups:

- Joseph Kabila's *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC, the old government's army);
- Jean-Pierre Bemba's *Mouvement de Libération du Congo* (MLC);
- Azarias Ruberwa's *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma* (RCD-G);
- Mbusa Nyamwisi's *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Mouvement de Libération* (RCD-ML);
- Roger Lumbala's *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-National* (RCD-N);
- as well as Mai-Mai militias from the east of the country.

These disparate groups have in theory converted themselves into political parties that now share power in Kinshasa with representatives from civil society and the political opposition. According to the transitional agreement and the constitution, the former belligerents should hand over control of their armed groups to a unified and apolitical new national army, the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC).

The reality is very different. Most of the 300,000 combatants in the country are deployed in the same positions and are controlled by the same military hierarchies as before the transition. These parallel chains of command have also been replicated in the administrative and financial structures in the capital and provinces.” (ICG 30 March 2005, p.1)

2004

“Although peace prospects have improved at the national level, the transitional government has yet to extend its authority to eastern DRC. Rwandan Armed Liberation Forces (FDLR)/Interahamwe (Rwandans implicated in the 1994 genocide who subsequently fled to eastern DRC), Mai-Mai factions (bands of local Congolese originally formed to resist Rwandan army occupation), and, in some areas, ethnic or clan-based local armed opposition groups continue to threaten security.” (USAID 20 Aug 04)

“When the Security Council met today, it had before it the report of a United Nations expert group investigating the weapons embargo against militias in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (document S/2004/551), which has found that Rwanda supported dissident military leaders in the area and violated the ban directly and indirectly. [...]

The report says that shortly after the early June confrontation in the DRC town of Bukavu between the national Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) and the troops of dissident Colonel Jules Mutebutsi, "the

Group travelled in two teams at different times to the Rwandan border area of Cyangugu and directly witnessed and documented Rwanda's non-compliance with the sanctions regime".

The four-member Group also calls on Uganda to "consider investigating localized complicity or involvement of Ugandan authorities and agents in certain border areas and restrict the provision of armed escorts, official transportation and other advantages to Ituri armed group leaders, except in the framework of international peace negotiations".

It acknowledges that a major problem facing the arms embargo regime is that the weak border controls of the nine countries neighbouring the DRC "allow for readily available weapons to flow into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where they are recycled". [...]

Members of the Rwandan military had forced more than two dozen young men in Rwanda's Cyangugu camp, run by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to join Colonel Mutebutsi's troops, but, under pressure from the men's families and the refugee agency, had returned them to the camp, the Group says.

The whereabouts of other young men rounded up in and around the Cyangugu market is not known, according to the report. Still other young men testified that Rwandan officials had offered them the equivalent of \$100 or mobile phones to join Colonel Mutebutsi's forces in Kamanyola, DRC, the Group's report says.

"It may be recalled that from approximately 2 to 9 June, Mutebutsi's and [General Laurent] Nkunda's forces systematically looted areas of Bukavu, including \$1 million to \$3 million from the Central Bank, giving them ample cash for further recruitment, as well as for the payment and supply of troops."

The Rwandan Government said when Colonel Mutebutsi fled to Rwanda from Kamanyola, it disarmed his troops. The Group of Experts, however, "was denied permission by the Rwandan regional commander to view Mutebutsi's weapons", though "it is highly likely that [his heavy weaponry] is in storage in Rwanda".

Young Rwandan men who had been through the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement process in the DRC testified that after they were repatriated they were sent back to the DRC "with the complicity of Rwandan immigration officers", to join the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) of dissident General Nkunda.

In Gihembe camp in Byumba, Rwanda, in the months before the looting of Bukavu, "in the presence of Rwandan officials, Nkunda personally requested that refugees enrol and conveyed to them that the time had come to continue warfare inside the Democratic Republic of the Congo against the Kinshasa Government", the experts say. Among its many recommendations to the Security Council, the Group calls for tightening border security by creating a joint verification mechanism, which would include representatives of the African Union, MONUC and other parties." (UN SC 27 July 2004)

"Essentially, the May-June events, therefore, were a contest for control of the province between the transitional government and the elements of RCD-Goma supported by Rwanda. These rebellious elements have no interest in a transition based on the reconstruction of a unitary state. They aspire to an immediate federalism that would give them security through political and economic control of the Kivus. The two provinces would then become satellites of Rwanda, which considers the economic and political control of these regions to be necessary for its own stability and long-term development." (ICG July 2004, p5)

For more information on the May-June events, please see

Institute for Security Studies (ISS), 14 Oct 2004

Continuing Instability in the Kivus: Testing the DRC transition to the limit [Link below]

“The Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and neighbouring Rwanda have agreed to a joint mechanism to address border security issues, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced today.

The new technical body, first discussed in June at a summit convened by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, will be launched in October and be known as the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM). It will comprise experts from the Governments of both countries as well as the UN and the African Union. [...]

In a related development, Mr. Annan also welcomed the statement adopted today by the International Committee in Support of the Transition (known by its French acronym CIAT) that endorsed the "critical path" of the DRC transition, called for a mechanism for sustained dialogue between the Committee and the country's transitional institutions, and urged the international community to provide the assistance in military integration and police training. [...]

"He stresses that at this critical juncture of the peace process in the DRC, the international community must increase its involvement to ensure that the progress achieved to date is consolidated, and that many outstanding tasks of the transition are completed," the statement by Mr. Annan's spokesman said." (UN News Service 22 Sept 04)

“After hiding in the jungles of the east of the DRC for the past 11 years, on March 31 the FDLR announced in Rome they were giving up their armed struggle and agreeing to go back to Rwanda.

Their presence has soured relations between the DRC and Rwanda for a decade, with Kigali charging that the rebels took an active part in the genocide of an estimated 800,000 minority Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 1994.

The DRC argued that Rwanda had used the presence of the FDLR as an "excuse" for regular forays into its territory." (AFP 22 April 2005)

See also Human Rights Watch (HRW), 4 Dec 2004
Are Rwandan army troops in Congo? Q-and-A [Link below]

“Democratic elections in Congo will be delayed well beyond the original end of June deadline, with voter registration for post-war polls ready in October at the earliest, a top United Nations official said on Wednesday.

‘Compared to Congo, organising elections in Iraq was a walk in the park. It's a nightmare,’ Ross Mountain, the U.N.'s chief coordinator for the Democratic Republic of Congo, told a seminar in Stockholm. Congo's first democratic elections in 40 years were a key part of a 2003 peace deal to end a five-year war that killed an estimated 4 million people.

They were supposed to be held by the end of June but government wrangling, legislative delays and logistical hitches in the massive country have held-up preparations, causing widespread expectations of a postponement.

‘Congo is facing enormous challenges. ... It's the size of western Europe, with no roads,’ Mountain said. Before elections can be held, a process of registering some 28 million voters must be completed. After that a referendum would be held on Congo's new constitution, electoral laws formally adopted and elections held.

‘We are starting the registrations and we hope they will be done by October,’ Mountain said.” (Reuters 1 June 2005)

“In Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), delays and a slow Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration, Rehabilitation (DDRR) process, which has led to the remobilisation of militias and widespread insecurity, have marked the country’s political transition.” (OCHA 23 June 2005)

For more information on the challenges related to the election process, please see:

Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 29 April 2005, Elections between hope and fear [Link below]

International Committee overseeing transitional process in DRC deplored climate of intolerance to MONUC (March 04)

“An international committee overseeing the two-year transitional process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has again expressed concern over the national unity government's continuing failure to undertake key actions, as well as the "climate of mistrust that has taken root in the government and its various constituent bodies".

In a statement issued on Friday following a meeting with President Joseph Kabila and his four vice presidents, the International Committee to Accompany the Transition (known by its French acronym, CIAT) called on the leaders of the transition to undertake efforts to re-establish a spirit of trust immediately; pass legislation necessary for the holding of elections; install a national government administration and integrated police force; accelerate the process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, as well as the integration of a unified national military; and to normalise relations with neighbouring countries.

CIAT also said it "deplored" the "dangerous rise of a general climate of intolerance" with regard to the UN Mission in the DRC, known as MONUC, in areas such as the Kivus, Ituri, Katanga and Kinshasa.

"Those responsible for these digressions will bear a heavy responsibility before the Congolese people and the international community," CIAT said.

CIAT comprises ambassadors accredited to the Congo, meeting under the presidency of William Swing, the UN secretary-general's special representative to the country.” (IRIN 15 March 2004)

Renewed tensions in Eastern DRC following the massacre of Tutsi Congolese refugees in Burundi (2004-2005)

“On the evening of 13 August, an armed group carried out the massacre of 150-160 Tutsi Congolese who were seeking refuge just across the border from South-Kivu Province in Gatumba, Burundi. A Burundian Hutu rebel group, Forces for National Liberation (FNL), immediately claimed responsibility but preliminary reports from a UN investigation indicated that Rwandan Hutu rebels and ex-Mayi-Mayi coming from DRC may have been the perpetrators. The repercussions of the massacre at Gatumba were instantaneous. Burundi immediately closed its border with DRC. Authorities from both Burundi and Rwanda threatened to return to Eastern DRC to secure their own borders. Vice-President Azarias Ruberwa (RCD-G) announced from Goma the temporary suspension of the RCD-G participation in the Transitional Government. Security check points multiplied in many cities and border areas.

By the end of the month, the situation in the Kivus had improved slightly. After spending one week in Goma following his momentous announcement, Ruberwa returned on 30 August to Kinshasa with the

facilitation of MONUC. On the evening of 01 September, the founders of the RCD-G met and in a press release signed by Ruberwa announced that the RCD-G had decided to revoke its previous decision to suspend its participation in the transitional government. Another positive sign for the month was that insurgent leader General Nkunda respected the 04 August ceasefire and there were no major confrontations in the Kivus.

The problem of the integration of former rebel groups into the national army continued throughout DRC this month. The demobilization and community reintegration program for armed groups in the Ituri District, supported by the UN Mission in Congo (MONUC), is expected to officially take off on 01 September.” (UN OCHA 31 August 2004)

According to the International Crisis Group, “Recent events in South Kivus and the reactions to them domestically and internationally, as well as an outbreak of fighting in northern Ituri between two of the armed groups, underscore the fragility of the peace process in the entire country.” (ICG 26 August 2004)

“The Banyamulenge, often referred to as Congolese Tutsi, are Congolese people whose ancestors migrated generations ago from Rwanda and Burundi to the high plateau area in South Kivu. Relations between the Banyamulenge and other Congolese groups have been strained and are frequently manipulated by politicians in both Rwanda and the DRC. The past six years of war have contributed to hostility against them, as they are increasingly identified as “Rwandan” by other Congolese. Rwanda has partially justified its presence in the DRC as an effort to protect the Banyamulenge people. This justification was significantly undermined, however, when in 2002 they attacked the Banyamulenge homelands killing scores of Banyamulenge civilians, shooting some of them from Rwandan helicopters.” (HRW 3 July 2004)

“The Kinyarwanda speakers -- called Banyarwanda in North Kivu and Banyamulenge in South Kivu -- are caught between two mutually reinforcing ideologies. On the one hand, the Goma political leadership has recently tried to bind the various Hutu and Tutsi communities together behind a new rwandophone concept, claiming that their very survival is at stake. This rhetoric is used to justify their campaign to keep the economic and political assets of North Kivu away from Kinshasa. On the other side of the country, politicians in the presidential camp have roused popular sentiment against the Rwandan threat, attributing all the Congo's woes to Kigali's meddling and describing all Kinyarwandaspeakers as foreigners and puppets.” (ICG 30 March 2005, p8)

UP International Criminal Court has jurisdiction to investigate crimes committed in DRC (2003-2004)

“After initially indicating in July 2003 that it might investigate the situation in Ituri, the International Criminal Court (ICC) formally announced on 23 June 2004 that it would commence its first investigation into crimes committed in the DRC since 1 July 2002. This was preceded by a letter of referral from President Kabila in March 2004. ICG [International Crisis Group] welcomes this development. Ituri is the proper locale for the court's debut for a number of reasons. There are a number of individuals there who have been directly involved in the deaths of approximately 5,000 people since July 2002 (and another 55,000 since 1999). The main perpetrators are the leaders of the still active armed groups. Their prosecution would not only advance justice but would also be a significant deterrent. The ICC can isolate this initial investigation so that it does no political damage to the fragile transitional process, without excluding the possibility that future investigations might examine the roles of those in or associated with the Transitional Government. The fact that the potential targets in Ituri are outside the wider political process minimises the likelihood of outside interference. Successful prosecutions in Ituri would serve as a clear demonstration to all in the DRC, including those currently destabilising the Kivus, that the time of impunity is over.” (ICG 26 Aug 04, p18)

“The Office of the Prosecutor has selected the situation in Ituri, Democratic Republic of Congo, as the most urgent situation to be followed. The Prosecutor himself and selected staff are analysing the information

available and will request additional information on the occurrence of crimes and assess the ability of the State to deal with them.[...]

The report on the latest of four Security Council missions to the Democratic Republic of Congo, issued on 16 June 2003, described the occurrence of gross violations of human rights in the eastern part of the country, including murder, mass rape, large-scale displacement of civilians, the use of child soldiers and even, reportedly, cases of ritual cannibalism. These crimes could constitute genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, and could thus, fall within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.” (ICC 16 July 03)

“The International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) signed an accord on Wednesday allowing the court to begin investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed within the country.[...]

The court is due to be properly established in the country by the beginning of 2005.” (IRIN 8 October 2004)

Insecurity caused by continuous attacks by Hema and Lendu militias in Ituri District (2002-2005)

- Conflict between the Hema and Lendu has previously occurred in 1972, 1985 and 1996
- According to MONUC, conflict in 1998 was sparked by land dispute between ethnic Hema and Lendu escalated conflict since mid-December 1999
- Use of modern weapons such as Kalashnikov instead of traditional weapons
- New phase of violence at the end of 2001 with the intensification of ethnically targeted attacks on villages
- When Hema militia UPC took over Bunia, first in August 2002 and again in May 2003, they adopted an ethnic cleansing policy against Lendu, Bira and Nande communities
- Exploitation of natural resources fuels violence in Ituri
- In 2003, the UNSC mandated a French-led EU Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF) to restore order and prevent further massacres by warring Hema and Lendu ethnic militias
- IEMF stabilized Bunia, and paved the way for the UN to return a substantially reinforced MONUC
- In May 2004, Ituri armed group leaders signed an "Act of Engagement" with the Transitional Government
- In July 2004, fighting broke out between the armed group FNI and the national army
- According to the International Crisis Group, since the reinforcement of MONUC in Ituri, the Hema-Lendu conflict is largely over, and violence is mainly within groups and alliances.
- MONUC imposed an April 1, 2005 deadline for voluntary disarmament for all militia groups or threatened that they would be disarmed by force

Struggle to keep control over rich Ituri region

"Ituri province, created in 1999 out of part of Orientale province, is rich in gold, timber, and coltan (colombo-tantalite, a precious mineral). In addition it produces substantial amounts of coffee. Because of its location near Lake Albert and the Ugandan frontier, Ituri is a locus of trans-border trade that offers lucrative opportunities for transporting and taxing goods.

Several groups rebelling against the Kinshasa government have fought each other and splintered within themselves as they struggled to get and keep control over this wealthy region. The conflicts over political preeminence and control of resources have taken place increasingly along ethnic lines and have spilled over to encompass groups not originally touched by these hostilities. Thus a long standing rivalry between Hema and Lendu over the control of land and access to fishing rights now brings violence to various groups -- like the Nande, Gegere, Bira, and Alur -- said to be associated with one or the other of the original contenders. The conflict first involved some 40 percent of the local population -- roughly the numbers of Hema and Lendu -- but now brings devastation to far greater numbers. With the increase in attacks and victims on both sides, the level of fear has risen, making it easier for leaders to mobilize people for violence, supposedly as a measure of self-defense." (HRW 31 Oct 02)

"Ituri province is ruled by UPC (Congolese Patriotic Union) under Thomas Lubanga with Hema militias and the northern part of Nord Kivu including Beni, is under Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD ML Kisangani (Congolese Rally for Democracy Liberation Movement) and Forced Combattantes Mayi Mayi -- a tribal militia.

The Ugandan People's Defence Forces that entered DRC four years ago to flush out Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebels, has a strong base in Bunia in Ituri." (WV 8 Nov 2002)

Ethnic clashes in Ituri have increased over the past years

As of June 2002, "The UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) -- known as MONUC -- is to investigate reports of up to 500 people having been killed in recent clashes between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups in the northeastern DRC province of Ituri, mission force commander Gen Mountaga Diallo told IRIN on Monday." (IRIN 10 June 2002)

"The ethnic clashes that have raged between the Hema and the Lendu since 1999 have grown and now include other tribes such as the Alur, Ngiti, Babira and N'do Okebo. The authorities and the military appear to do very little to control these tensions, and in many cases even fuel them. There is consistent information, including reports from the UN Human Rights Rapporteur, that the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) has sided with the Hema tribe. Local sources indicate that some UPDF commanders have now also started to arm the opposing Lendu, making inter-ethnic clashes much more deadly." (Oxfam 25 April 2002)

"Unrest in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is extremely alarming, with an ethnic dispute being inflamed by the use of modern weapons, the military commander of the United Nations Mission to the DRC (MONUC) said on Sunday.[...]

Where as before conflicts between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups were resolved with traditional weapons now they are using Kalashnikov assault rifles. Even worse, the Hema, like the Lendu are both running training camps where hundreds of recruits trained in how to use modern arms." "(AFP 9 June 2002)

"There have long been tensions and conflict between the Hema and Lendu communities in the district, fuelled by bad governance. The latest conflict - which has provoked so many of the abuses - was sparked off by a particular land dispute in 1998 when some Hema concessionaires took advantage of the weakened State apparatus to illegally enlarge their estates to the detriment of neighbouring mostly Lendu agriculturalists. The agriculturalists revolted when law enforcement agents came to evict them and in response they tried to destroy the land of the Hema concessionaires. Initially starting to the north of Bunia, this violence gradually extended to the whole of Ituri district. Moreover, while spreading through the district, the conflict quickly turned into a confrontation opposing the two communities, the Hema and the Lendu. This conflict would not have reached such a level of violence without the involvement of national Congolese players, as well as of foreign Governments. The Ugandan army, already present in Ituri since late 1998, fuelled the conflict by initially supporting some Hema notables and allegedly bombed hundreds

of Lendu villages. Some Lendu traditional authorities created self-defence units. Believing that a Hema conspiracy existed against them, the Lendu militias began attacking Hema villages solely on account of their ethnicity. They also benefited from external support to organize themselves, from either the Congolese (pre-transition Government, rebel movements) or individual Ugandan officers.

The conflict entered a new phase of violence at the end of 2001 with the intensification of ethnically targeted attacks on villages, including killings, torture, rape of civilians, looting of homes, and destruction of social infrastructure. When the Hema militia UPC took over Bunia, first in August 2002 and again in May 2003, they adopted an ethnic cleansing policy, to empty the town of its Lendu and Bira populations, as well as the "non-Iturian" Nande community, which was a commercial rival to the Hema businessmen. Hundreds of Lendu villages were completely destroyed during attacks by Ugandan army helicopters together with Hema militia on the ground.

Different rebel faction leaders struggling for political power in Ituri have continued to profit from the ethnic resentment originally created by the land dispute. A series of splits, from 1999 to mid-2003, have in fact resulted in Bunia, the capital of Ituri, being the stage for repeated power struggles and skirmishes. At each stage in the fragmentation of the rebel groups, new militias were recruited loyal to one or another commander or faction leader. Often half of the militias were children. They were deployed not only to fight each other but also to whip up insecurity in the countryside and seize strategic localities and commercial opportunities. Ugandan army commanders already present in Ituri, instead of trying to calm the situation, preferred to benefit from the situation and support alternately one side or the other³ according to their political and financial interests.

The chiefs of armed groups took over the roles traditionally held by administrators, businessmen, traditional chiefs and law enforcement officers. They appointed "public officers", collected local taxes, sold the natural resources of their area of control, arrested civilians, judged them and in some cases executed them. The competition for the control of natural resources by combatant forces, exacerbated by an almost constant political vacuum in the region, has been a major factor in prolonging the crisis in Ituri. Those resources have also been of continued interest to foreign business networks in the region. One source of revenue for rebel groups has been the sale of concessions to foreign businesses." (UN SC 16 July 2004, para 4-7)

Stabilization of Bunia by French-led EU Interim Emergency Multinational Force

"The district of Ituri, in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), came to international attention in mid-2003 as inter-ethnic conflict, long suppressed under former President Mobutu Sese Seko but inflamed in the anarchy that accompanied his ousting, exploded. Thousands of civilians were killed and many more displaced, and the prestige of the UN Mission (MONUC), which had failed to protect them, suffered. The UN Security Council authorised Operation Artemis, a French-led EU Interim Emergency Multinational Force (IEMF),¹ which undertook a limited intervention to restore order and prevent further massacres by warring Hema and Lendu ethnic militias. It was able to stabilise the capital, Bunia, and win time and space for the UN to return a substantially reinforced MONUC, including the some 3,500-strong Ituri Brigade. Authorised under Chapter VII, meaning it is entitled to take a range of strong measures including the use of force, MONUC now seeks to secure control over the entire district and allow a more durable pacification process to resume." (ICG 26 Aug 04 p.1)

"Since MONUC took over from Artemis, the dynamics of the armed groups have changed. The Hema-Lendu conflict is largely over, and violence is mainly within groups and alliances. There has even been a degree of cooperation between the UPC of Thomas Lubanga and Floribert Ndjabu's FNI and others, mostly driven by economic and political considerations.[...]

While customs and tax revenue, the traffic on the lake and the artisanal exploitation of gold in locations such as Ngeti and Mongbwalu finance the access of all seven of the armed groups in Ituri to fresh supplies of weapons and munitions, MONUC has taken little military action against these economic activities." (ICG 26 Aug 04, p8)

UN Peacekeeping force MONUC deployed Ituri Brigade

“The Ituri Brigade of the new MONUC is a potentially potent force, though it has military deficiencies -- particularly its intelligence capacities -- and uncertain doctrine. It has managed to re-establish reasonably normal conditions in the towns where it is stationed, but wherever it is absent, including in two thirds of Bunia, Ituri is divided up and controlled by armed groups, who are not committed to the peace process and who continue to prey on civilians. Until the security situation improves, meaningful political and humanitarian progress is not possible. At best, the situation is static, at the mercy of the armed groups, who are largely self-financing because they control much of the district's revenue producing activity, including gold mines and toll taxes on the movement of goods. Neighbouring Uganda and Rwanda maintain the ability to manipulate powerful proxies for their own interests.” (ICG 26 Aug 04 introduction)

Despite UN peacekeepers presence, instability in Ituri

“Despite the presence of UN peacekeepers, much of Ituri had remained under the control of militias, who collected revenues from gold-mining, smuggling goods and weapons to and from neighbouring Uganda, and taxing the civilian population.” (IRIN 17 May 2004)

“The latest attempt to engage the armed groups, on the Transitional Government's invitation and with MONUC's facilitation, produced a meeting in Kinshasa from 10-14 May 2004. The purpose was to negotiate on peace and security in Ituri, restore state authority, gain acceptance for appointment of District and Territory Commissioners, and clear the way for the June 2005 elections. It ended with the armed group leaders signing an "Act of Engagement" with the Transitional Government and submitting their political demands to it. [...]

In early July 2004, the first major fighting between armed groups since the Act of Engagement broke out near Mahagi, allegedly caused by an FNI attack on the FAPC. There are a number of possible explanations. The government's rejection of many of their demands left the armed groups feeling they were not taken seriously. They know that if their demands are not met, they risk little by resuming hostilities. (ICG 26 Aug 04, pp.10-11)

2005

“While Ituri has remained relatively calm for most of 2004, fighting among six militias in the district began anew in December. MONUC imposed an April 1, 2005 deadline for voluntary disarmament for all militia groups or threatened that they would be disarmed by force. As a result, 10,000 of the 15,000 militia soldiers active in Ituri have voluntarily joined the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program. As security and peace have begun to arrive in Ituri, 8,500 displaced persons in Aero Camp voluntarily returned home, but many remain. Refugees International visited the Aero camp and interviewed some of the residents there.” (Refugees International 17 May 2005)

Positive developments:

“- The disarmament of over 10,000 militiamen in Ituri through the Demobilization and Community Reinsertion Program (DCR) as of April 12th, 2005. This can largely be attributed to a new proactive approach to demobilization, including forced disarmament, which has been backed up by both firm statements and actions of the MONUC and the Congolese Army.

- The deployment of the Congolese Army throughout the district, including the control of revenue collection points along the principal road between Tchomia and Kasenyi.

- The arrest of four top militia leaders by authorities in Kinshasa for their possible role in the killing of nine UN peace-keepers on the 25th of February. [...] These arrests constitute a step towards the abolishment of impunity and restoration of judicial procedure.” (OCHA 20 April 2005)

“More than 3,000 of those who have surrendered were child soldiers.” (AFP 19 April 2005)

“La MONUC et les autorités congolaises ont lancé une mission de pacification sur les axes inaccessibles. Une mission de pacification, composée des autorités du District, des FARDC, de la MONUC, des églises et des communauté Lendu et Hema, a été conduite le mercredi 04 mai à Katoto, Lopa, Iga barrière et Centrale Soleniama pour encourager les populations à dénoncer les miliciens qui s’opposent au désarmement, à collaborer avec l’armée nationale, etc. » (OCHA 6 May 2005)

For more information on the background of the conflict, please see Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, 31 Oct 2003 **Ituri: Stakes, actors, dynamics** [\[link below\]](#)

For more information on the disarmament process in Ituri, see Tsjeard Bouta, *Assessment of the Ituri Disarmament and Community Reinsertion Programme (DCR)* May 2005 [\[link below\]](#)

Lack of common approach to the conflict by international actors (July 2003)

« The first lesson to be learned from the Congolese experience is that conflicts in Africa are made even more intractable by the lack of cohesion among the main international, in particular Western, actors. True, restoring peace in a country plunged into chaos by brutal and greedy local warlords is not an easy task. [...] [T]he most effective way to restore peace is probably to bring pressure to bear on the factions’ sponsors and real major actors, the governments of the region (Kinshasa included), until they cease warring by proxy and devise other means for settling their disputes. Yet, such a policy would require the third circle of international actors (including, in this case, the US, EU member states and South Africa) to be cohesive and coherent. The failed to happen in Congo, first of all because of major differences among the third-circle actors in the perceptions and analysis of the conflict. Whereas a group of (francophone) states would consider that the DRC has been in essence invaded and systematically plundered, others such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands would stress that Rwanda and Uganda merely acted in self-defense against cross-border raids by rebel groups based in Congo and exploited the country’s natural resources quite understandably to finance their operations.” (Rogier July 2003, p44)

Overview of armed groups

Overview of armies and groups involved in eastern DRC (2005)

Congolese Armed Groups:

Forces Armées Congolaises (FAC)

"When Kabila came to power, he decided to reform the army. This was to become an integrated force comprised of soldiers of Mobutu's Forces Armées Zairoises (FAZ), and Kabila's own core force of Banyamulenge and Katangan gendarmes. However, neither of the latter elements was sufficiently well equipped or adequately trained to take command of the new FAC army. [...]"

Most of the better-trained FAC troops belonged to the elite unit of the 10th Battalion stationed in Goma. It was this unit, numbering 25,000 men, which launched the rebellion on 2 August 1998 from FAC headquarters in Kivu. An official announcement that the FAC had started a war to liberate their country was broadcast over Radio Goma by one of their officers, Sylvain Mbuki. Kabila denounced them as traitors and puppets of Rwanda and Uganda. Their defection led directly to the loss of Kivu. They immediately started marching north towards Oriental and Equateur provinces, south to Northern Katanga and also towards the centre of the country; the FAC troops stationed in those provinces all defected to the rebel movement.

In response, Kabila has embarked on a massive recruitment exercise to plug the gap in the FAC's ranks. However, the deserters included the more experienced FAC soldiers and the new and obviously inexperienced recruits have not proved up to the job. Kabila has therefore had to co-opt more seasoned fighters from among the ex-FAR and Interahamwe militias, soldiers who formerly fought for Idi Amin, and the Burundian FDD in order to beef up his war machine." (ICG 21 May 1999, "The Congolese parties to the Conflict")

Mai-Mai militias

For many Congolese, the idea of Mai Mai is linked to a state of mind: the determination to take up arms against the presence and domination of foreigners on Congolese soil. The Mai Mai are regarded by a large proportion of the population as groups of resistance fighters opposing the occupation,²⁷ and some Mai Mai commanders do present themselves as symbols of Congolese resistance.[...]

One of the cornerstones of the Mai Mai movements is, in a reflection of the 'Simba' [lions in Kiswahili] of the 'muléliste' rebellion of the 1960s, the use of magical religious practices which basically consist of initiation and immunisation rites, and specific prohibitions. These practices have the dual function of protecting the combatants on the battlefield and enhancing discipline and the internal cohesion of the group.[...]

These movements are by their nature highly diversified and very unstable. Many of them were set up spontaneously around a leadership which had no previous political experience. The ups and downs, the risks inherent in fighting, the internal conflicts, the constant splits and regrouping that these movements experience mean that their structures and their methods are constantly called into question. This results in a lack of cohesion within the groups and in opportunism on the part of many Mai Mai fighters who, while presenting themselves as symbols of the resistance, kill, pillage, rape, seize local people's property, and engage in the illegal exploitation of resources." (International Alert & al., 2005, p20)

Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie/Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD)

"The RCD-Goma had its own army, l'Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC), which was the main armed opposition to the regime in Kinshasa. This heterogeneous army was made up of soldiers from the remnants of Mobutu's army, 'Kadogos' [child soldiers] of the Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre (AFDL), who had taken part in the capture of Kinshasa in 1996, elements from Kasai, recruited under the patronage of Dr Adolphe Onusumba Yemba, former president of the RCD, Banyamulenge militias, who had fought in the ranks of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1990, Congolese Hutus recruited in Rutshuru, and other Banyamulenge militias. The RCD army numbered between 20,000 and 30,000 men.

The RCD exercised political, administrative and military control in eastern DRC from 1998 to 2003, thanks to the active support of Rwanda. It justifies its existence by the need to protect the Congolese Tutsi population.[...]

The RCD joined the transitional government of national unity which was set up in Kinshasa in June 2003, following the signing of the Pretoria Accords. Having been originally a politico-military movement, the RCD transformed itself into a political party, whilst its army was to be integrated in the new national army. However, this integration has still not taken place, since the transitional government continues to be undermined and torn apart by internal power struggles and also is paralysed by mutual suspicion among its different components. The former RCD factions, and other armed groups that are part of the new government in fact retain their own military structures, under the aegis of the restructured national army. Moreover, despite the official reunification of the country in June 2003, the transitional government has met with enormous difficulties in exercising its political, military and administrative authority throughout the country, especially in the provinces of South and North Kivu, where the RCD remains very influential." (International Alert & al., 2005, p19)

Foreign armies and groups

Rwandan Army

“Until its official withdrawal from the east of the DRC in September–October 2002, the Rwandan army retained a strong presence there. It was obliged to withdraw its troops under pressure from the international community, notably the United States of America, but Rwanda nevertheless reorganised itself, restructuring the military arm of the RCD-Goma and creating a rapid intervention force which could be redeployed in eastern Congo if necessary. Before their withdrawal, it was estimated that the Rwandan troops numbered between 25,000 and 35,000.

Rwanda cites security considerations as the justification for its presence in the DRC; i.e. the need to protect its borders from Rwandan Hutu rebels operating in North and South Kivus under the banner of the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), numbering between 15,000 and 20,000 men.” (International Alert & al., 2005, p19).

Burundian Army

“The Burundian army was present in the Fizi and Baraka regions before it officially withdrew from South Kivu in September 2002. Its presence in DRC was dictated by Burundi’s concern to protect its borders from infiltration by the various rebel movements opposed to the government in Bujumbura, in particular the Forces de Défense pour la Démocratie (FDD) and the Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL). It was in this context that the Burundian army allied itself with the Rwandan army to fight against the FDD. » (International Alert & al., 2005, p20)

Rwandan Hutu militias

“The Rwandan Hutu rebels present on Congolese territory have, since 2000, been grouped together in a politico-military formation called Forces Démocratiques de la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), which numbers between 15,000 and 20,000 men. This rebel force is made up of three main groups: the ex-FAR and Interahamwe who took part in the genocide in Rwanda in 1994; the ex-FAR who did not take part in the genocide; and new, post-genocide recruits, who constitute the majority of the troops. Since 1994, Congolese territory has been used as a home base for Rwandan Hutu militias in their war against the regime in Kigali. After the Hutu refugee camps in the east of the DRC were dismantled in 1996, almost 20,000 militiamen and soldiers of the former Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR) formed the Armée de Libération du Rwanda (ALiR) and, starting from Kivu, infiltrated the north-west of Rwanda. Here, for two years they led an insurrection, which was eventually crushed by the RPA in mid-1998. The Rwandan Hutu militias, better known in the region under the label of Interahamwe, were allied for several years with the Burundian FDD rebels. However, this alliance came to an end when the FDD laid down their arms after signing a ceasefire agreement with the Burundian government. The Hutu militias have committed widespread acts of violence in eastern DRC. In the course of the research for this study, they were identified as the armed group most actively engaged in acts of sexual violence and assaults against women in South Kivu.” (International Alert & al., 2005, p21)

“The Congo: Solving the FDLR Problem Once and for All, [...] from the International Crisis Group, examines the continued existence in the Congo of 8,000 to 10,000 FDLR troops, Hutu rebels with links to the 1994 genocide in their home country, Rwanda. Though too weak to threaten Kigali, and though many of its members are not themselves genocidaires, the FDLR remains a key source of regional instability.” (ICG 12 May 2005)

The Burundian Hutu militias: Forces de Défenses de la Démocratie (FDD) and Forces Nationales de Libération (FNL)

“The FDD and FNL used eastern DRC as a home base from which to attack Burundi. The FDD made alliances with Maï Maï, Babembe and Bafulero groups of combatants. They also carried out particularly bloody attacks on the Haut Plateaux of Itombwe, where a large Banyamulenge community lives. The FNL

also benefited from the military support of Mai Mai groups. The ceasefire agreements signed between Burundi's transitional government and the two rival branches of the CNDD-FDD35 in November and December 2002 respectively, provided for the withdrawal of the FDD militias from Congolese territory. The FNL, for their part, remain active in South Kivu." (International Alert & al., 2005, p21).

Ugandan Armed Groups

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

"Information gathered by MONUC indicates that only one of the six Ugandan armed groups mentioned in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is still active in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, namely, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF).[...]

The Allied Democratic Forces are reckoned to have 200 to 300 fighters, mainly in the Ruwenzori Mountains close to the border with Uganda. Unlike some of the other foreign armed groups operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, ADF are not known to have external allies. Like most other armed groups, ADF are believed to be only lightly armed." (UN SC 5 April 2002, para.12-13)

Main armed groups in Ituri (June 2005)

"Union of Congolese Patriots (Union des Patriots Congolais, UPC)

Leader: Thomas Lubanga.

The UPC is an armed group in Ituri promoting the interests of the ethnic Hema. It took control of Bunia in August 2002 with the help of Uganda. Soon after the UPC received support from Rwanda. In late 2003 the UPC split into two factions, one under Kisembo Bahemuka (known as UPC-K) and the other under Thomas Lubanga (known as UPCL).

The Lubanga faction was militarily stronger, led by Commander Bosco Taganda in the absence of Thomas Lubanga detained in Kinshasa. Despite series allegations of human rights abuses carried out by Commander Bosco Taganda, he was offered a position as a general in the new Congolese army, the FARDC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo), in January 2005. To date he has refused to take up his post.

Nationalist and Integrationist Front (Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes, FNI)

Leader: Floribert Njabu.

The FNI is an armed group in Ituri promoting the interests of the ethnic Lendu.

Established in late 2002 it temporarily integrated the Lendu militia, known as the FNI, together with the Ngiti militia (Lendu from the south) known as the FRPI. The two branches split into separate armed groups in 2004 after leadership wrangles. The FNI is supported by Uganda. While Ugandan forces were in Congo in 2003 they carried out joint military operations with the FNI. In 2002 and 2003, the FNI also benefited from military training and support from a national rebel group, the RCD-ML. One of their senior commanders, Gode Sukpa, was integrated into the FARDC as a general in January 2005. No checks were carried out as to his suitability for the role.

People's Armed Forces of Congo (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais, FAPC)

Leader: Jérôme Kakwavu Bukande.

An Ituri armed group based in northeastern Congo (Aru and Ariwara), established in March 2003 with the support of Uganda. Commander Jérôme switched alliances several times since 1998 moving from the RCD-ML, to the UPC before launching his own armed group. In May 2003 a mutiny attempt to overthrow Commander Jérôme was brutally put down with Ugandan support. Despite serious allegations of war crimes carried out on the order of Commander Jérôme, he was integrated into the new Congolese army, the FARDC, as a general in January 2005." (HRW 2 June 2005)

See also IRIN, 20 April 2005, DRC: Who's who in Ituri - militia organisations, leaders [link below]

Main causes of displacement

Plunder of natural resources by warring parties continues to be major factor causing displacement (1998-2005)

- In May 2001, UN report on exploitation of natural resources accused foreign armed forces and Congolese fighters of using DRC's natural resources to fuel the conflict
- In Oct 2002, the final version of the UN report stated that due to elite criminal networks, the illegal exploitation of DRC's resources would continue, despite the withdrawal of foreign armed forces
- NGOs stress that the UN must address the role of multinational corporations in war (Oct 03)
- Various NGO reports show the central role of natural resources, such as coltan and diamonds, in the conflict
- The UN failed to follow up on the UN panel's reports recommendations, and those responsible for the illegal exploitation of the resources have not been held responsible (June 2005)

"In 2000, the U. N. Security Council expressed concern that Congo's natural resources such as gold, diamonds and other minerals were fuelling the deadly war. They appointed a panel of experts¹¹ to look into the matter who published four separate reports between April 2001 and October 2003. ¹² In these series of reports, the U.N. panel of experts reported that Rwandan, Ugandan, and Zimbabwean army officers as well as members of the Congolese elite were growing rich from the wealth of the Congo. They showed how extraction of these resources helped fund armed groups, thus fueling the war. They further documented how the minerals of the Congo were fed into the networks of international commerce. The panel concluded in its report of October 2002 that the withdrawal of foreign armies would not end the resource exploitation because the elites had created a self-financing war economy.

In 2002, following heavy international pressure, in part because of the U.N. panel reports, both the Rwandan and Ugandan governments agreed to withdraw their soldiers from Congo. Uganda subsequently arranged with the Congolese government to keep some forces in northeastern Congo until 2003 when the last of their troops withdrew. This report [by HRW], focused on control of gold in northeastern Congo, shows that the pattern of exploitation of natural resources described by the U.N. panel of experts, does indeed continue as of this writing, resulting in widespread abuses of human rights. The trade in gold is just one example of a wider trend of competition for resources and resulting human rights abuses taking place in mineral rich areas throughout the Congo.[...]

During eighteen months of conflict in 2002 and 2003, Hema and Lendu armed groups fought to control the gold-mining town of Mongbwalu in Ituri. As they passed control of the rich prize back and forth five times, they also slaughtered some two thousand civilians, often on an ethnic basis. In addition, they carried out summary executions, raped and otherwise injured thousands of civilians, engaged in torture, and arbitrarily detained persons whom they saw as enemies. During the frequent clashes, tens of thousands of civilians were forced to flee their homes, losing much or all of their goods to looting or destruction." (HRW 2 June 2005, p14, p23)

To see the Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/357), 12 April 2001, [[External Link](#)]

For the UN SC 13 November 2001 Addendum to the report on exploitation of natural resources, please see source below.

For May 2002, UN SC 22 May 2002 Interim Report on the exploitation of natural resources in the DRC, see reference below. "

To see the 2002 report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of DR Congo, 16 Oct 2002, see [\[External Link\]](#)

For the 2003 report of the Panel, 23 October 23, see reference below

"The panel's reports raised the expectation that U.N. member states would hold to account those companies that were responsible for misconduct, but these hopes were misplaced. After the publication of their final report in 2003, its mandate of the U.N. panel of experts was ended and the information uncovered by the panel was archived for 25 years. The failure of the U.N. to follow up on the panel's recommendations has been a major blow to further progress on the critical issue of the link between conflict and natural resources in the DRC and beyond." (HRW 2 June 2005, p120)

According to a statement by several national and international NGOs: "The Security Council has failed to act on previous reports from the panel showing the link between the activities of multinational corporations and armed groups guilty of massacres and other atrocities." (HRW 27 Oct 03)

Study by Pole Institute (North Kivu)

"The study found that:

as crisis and war in North Kivu have severely hampered industrial mining, existing industrial mining concessions have been turned over to informal or artisanal mining, mainly of coltan. This phenomenon has led to a population exodus of all age groups with the aim of finding coltan;

as a result, agricultural and pastoral activities are being abandoned in favor of coltan. There is a real danger of food insecurity in North Kivu if the agricultural populations continue to leave their fields in order to mine coltan or turn their fields into mines;

young people, easily attracted by easy money, abandon school in favour of coltan mining. [...]

unplanned coltan mining and export in a context of State collapse and prolonged crisis has been a source of wealth for a handful of businessmen working with old and new mineral trading networks in Eastern Congo, but has also meant the emergence of a mafia economy organized around the rebel armies and their allies and the armed Mai-Mai groups. [...]

The coltan trade is closely intertwined with the activities of all armed groups present in the area. No demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programme can succeed without taking economic security into account. Proper regulation of mining and other trade is essential for disengagement and reconciliation programmes. [...]

Coltan is an abbreviation for colombite-tantalite, a mineral from which the precious metals Tantalum (Ta) and Columbium (Cb), also known as Niobium (Nb) are extracted. [...] According to mining specialists, 80% of known tantalite reserves are found in the Democratic Republic of Congo, almost entirely in the Eastern part controlled by rebel movements allied to Rwanda and Uganda." (Pole Institute Jan 2002)

For more information on the coltan trade and the role of European companies, please see "Supporting the War Economy in the DRC: European Companies and the Coltan Trade" by the International Peace Information Service (IPIS), January 2002 [\[External Link\]](#)

2002 and 2003 Study by Partnership Africa Canada (Ottawa), International Peace Information Service (Antwerp) and the Network Movement for Justice and Development (Freetown):

"The report provides details of numerous lucrative commercial enterprises undertaken by foreign armies in the Congo, suggesting that a failed state can offer significant financial rewards to the political and military elite of adjacent countries." (Partnership Africa Canada 17 June 2002)

"Where diamonds are concerned, instead of citing OECD guidelines with false teeth, the UN's DRC Expert Panel might have been better advised, where it had concrete evidence, to consult some basic definitions of

war crimes. The Constitution of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal, for example, included as a war crime, the 'plunder of public or private property' and said that 'leaders, organizers, instigators and accomplices participating in the formulation or execution of a common plan or conspiracy to commit [war] crimes are responsible for all acts performed by any persons in execution of such plan.'" (Smillie, June 03)

Reports by Amnesty International (2001 & 2003):

"Amnesty International is [...] concerned at reports of human rights abuses such as killings, torture, use of forced labour, including by children and prisoners, and displacement of population that have taken place in the context of the exploitation of the resources. For example, Amnesty International has received reports of unarmed civilians being killed during fighting between the RCD-Goma troops and Hutu armed groups over mining areas; of villages being burned down; or people attacked and forced to flee the area. An independent observer told Amnesty International delegates that 'when a new RCD-Goma or RPA commander is nominated in the mining area of Walikale, Masisi, or Shabunda, the insecurity in the region decreases. However, once a commander is in a region for a while, he understands that insecurity has an advantage. His troops start shooting, killing and provoking massive displacement of the population, in order to make access to the extraction of the mineral wealth easier because the population is dead or has fled.'" (AI, 19 June 2001)

"The report, entitled '*Democratic Republic of Congo - 'Our brothers who help kill us'*', identifies the drive to control and exploit the DRC's natural resources as the biggest single factor underpinning the continuing violence in the country.[...]

Wealth for a small military, political and commercial elite has come at a huge price. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese civilians have been tortured and killed during fighting to secure control of natural resources. Thousands of others have died due to malnutrition and lack of access to humanitarian assistance after being forced to flee their homes.

Foreign forces have also deliberately stoked inter-ethnic conflicts and mass killings in order to promote their economic interests. This has been the case in Ituri for example, resulting in further mass killings and large scale destruction of habitations. Thousands of women have been raped. Children as young as 12 have been forced into hard labour in the mines. Human rights defenders who have denounced these abuses have been beaten, detained, forced to flee or killed." (AI, 28 April 2003)

Exploitation of resources and displacement in Walikale, North Kivu (March 2004)

"The fighting here in June [2004] was accompanied by such widespread looting that nearly all of Walikale's 15,000 residents fled the area. The United Nations and foreign aid agencies left too.

Walikale is now a ghost town, with rows of mud houses along the main road abandoned and stripped to the bone, their wooden doors kicked in and thatched roofs sagging from neglect. The market consists of empty wooden shacks.

"We are cut off, living in a black hole in the jungle. We are still at war," says one of the few remaining residents.

"There are fabulous riches being pulled out from underneath us, but the population does not benefit at all. Instead, we suffer," he said, too afraid to give his name.[...]

Since August 1998, most of the cassiterite concessions have reportedly been sold on by RCD to Rwandese interests," said a June report by the London-based organisation, Global Witness.

"A highly efficient network has been set up by the RCD and the Rwandan army to transport the resources by planes and trucks from eastern Congo to Kigali," the report said.

Rwanda is also a cassiterite producer and shipments can easily be "lost" among the country's own supplies while flight paths used for resource extraction also move "troops, equipment, supplies and arms into Congo", the report added.[...]

In Walikale, the nightly whine of mosquito swarms is replaced by the daytime drone of airplanes swooping in from the eastern border city of Goma to collect their precious cargo.

About 10 planes a day land on a short strip of remote, skid-marked tarmac 30 km (19 miles) from Walikale, near the town of Mubi, where the market is thronging with traders selling 50 kg (110 lb) bags filled with heavy cassiterite stones.

Each flight brings in goods from Goma and carries off up to two tonnes of cassiterite, removing a daily total of about \$50,000, or some \$1 million per month of the mineral, which is cleaned or sold in Goma and exported at a higher price.

Cassiterite has been legally mined for decades in the former Zaire, but war has turned the business into a deadly racket that forces terrified villagers from their farms and into the bush, where too often they starve, fall sick and die.

The gunmen profit by charging local taxes, while RCD administrators in Goma do the same, often doubling taxes set by Kinshasa, according to miners, traders and exporters." (O'Reilly 12 August 2004)

For more information on the extent and use of DRC's natural resources, see Global Witness, 30 Jun 2004 **Same old story - A background study on natural resources in the DR Congo** [[Internal Link](#)]

Continued fighting between various armed groups causes displacement in North & South Kivu (2004-2005)

- 25,000 people were displaced by fighting between FDLR and the Congolese army troops in Uvira Territory, South-Kivu Province (April 04)
- 20,000 new IDPs in Masisi in North Kivu following attacks of Kalehe in South Kivu (Sept 04)
- More than 15,000 civilians have fled their homes in September in North Kivu Province and found safety in Butembo (Sept 04)
- FDLR (Democratic Liberation Forces of Rwanda) causes the displacement of thousands in South Kivu (Aug 04)
- Over new 180,000 IDPs in North Kivu in December 2004
- In May 2005, 6,000 people fled attacks in South Kivu
- In June 2005, according to MONUC, members of the Congolese army caused the displacement of 190 families, following looting, extra-judiciary executions and rapes
- In June 2005, Congolese army supported by the Rwandan Hutu militia caused the displacement of populations in Bukavu, South Kivu, during their fighting against RASTAS militias
- In June 2005, 2,000 families fled their homes in North Kivu, due to clashes between the Congolese Army and the Rwandan Hutu militia, and 3,000 families fled in South Kivu

"Beginning in February 2004, dissidents from the former rebel movement Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma (RCD-G) sparked clashes in the Kivu provinces of the eastern Congo. These were the

result of disagreement within the transitional government over power-sharing in the army and the administration but the conflict was exacerbated by the interference of Rwanda, which sent troops across the border in November 2004, claiming to pursue the Hutu extremist FDLR. The resulting fighting displaced over 100,000 civilians and pushed the transition to the brink of collapse.” (ICG 30 March 2005)

“The humanitarian situation in North Kivu deteriorated in the end of 2004, with more than 100,000 displaced in the Kanyabayonga/Kayna crisis alone. The cause of crises in North Kivu over recent months has been an escalation of conflicts between armed groups, characterized by pillaging, rape and murder of civilians by military forces, leading to mass movement of populations to host communities or to isolated forest areas. Epicentres of displacement in North Kivu include Kanyabayonga/Kayna/Kirumba, and north as far as Lubero, where up to 150,000 were estimated to have fled from their villages during the end of November/start of December due to conflict between ex-ANC and FARDC (Kinshasa) military; Nyabiundo town was systematically looted by ex-ANC following an advance of their position against Mayi-Mayi forces, leading to 100% displacement of the population of the town and surrounding localities (estimated at 26,000 people); and Mangerudjipa, west of Butembo, which was totally deserted following Mayi-Mayi movement into the town, which has been subsequently retaken by FARDC forces.

South Kivu also experienced a number of acute emergencies in recent months, including flooding in Uvira, displacements in Walungu and Minova due to conflict, and an outbreak of cholera throughout the province.” (UNICEF 24 March 2005)

“Recent combat between rival units of the Congolese army has forcibly displaced more than 180,000 civilians, raising the risk of a new humanitarian disaster in the Congo's eastern Kivu region, Human Rights Watch warned today. Fighting between loyalist troops and rebel factions at Kanyabayonga in North Kivu, and soldiers' looting of homes and shops in nearby villages caused residents to flee, many of them into the forest. [...]

In November, authorities in neighboring Rwanda threatened repeatedly to intervene militarily in Congo, claiming that Rwandan Hutu rebel groups (including some former Rwandan Armed Forces, known as ex-Forces armées rwandaïses, or ex-FAR) there endangered Rwanda's security. Following reports that Rwandan soldiers had crossed into the Congo in late November, troops of the Congolese army who used to fight for the Rwandan-backed rebel movement, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma, or RCD-Goma) rebelled again against the Congolese army and are now advancing against them north of Kanyabayonga.” (HRW 21 December 2004)

“There has been ongoing fighting between troops loyal to the DRC government (FARDC), and elements of the RCD-Goma backed by Rwanda, in the territories of Walikale, Rutshuru and Massisi in North Kivu, since early December 2004. There are strong indications that Rwanda has reinforced and resupplied the dissident RCD-Goma forces and it is widely reported that Rwandan government troops (RDF) entered the DRC in strength in November [2004].” (AI 21 December 2004)

“The situation in North and South Kivu remains very tense. In response to threats by Rwanda in December 2004 to enter the Democratic Republic of the Congo to forcibly disarm FDLR, additional FARDC troops were sent to the area. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of inter-FARDC clashes. Reports have also been received of collaboration between FDLR and the Mayi-Mayi and between FDLR and elements of FARDC.” (UNSC 22 March 2005)

“Due to an increase in FDLR activities throughout North and South-Kivu Provinces resulting in armed conflicts and tension between this group and the Congolese national army and Rwandan troops, IDP movements during April were the greatest in this region. The humanitarian community estimated that nearly 25,000 people were displaced by fighting between FDLR and the Congolese army troops in Uvira Territory, South-Kivu Province between 19 and 27 April. The massive population movement started when fighting broke out between 19 and 23 April near Lemera and Lubarika (Uvira Territory) and then again on 27 April near Lemera. The majority of the displaced population (an estimated 15,000 persons) sought

refuge in Sange, which is also in Uvira Territory. Another 10,000 IDPs sought safety in Luberizi, Luvungi, Mutarule, and Runingu (also in Uvira Territory)." (UN OCHA 30 April 2004)

"Renewed fighting in the volatile Kivu region of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has forced 20,000 people to flee their homes, according to international aid agency Oxfam. This new information comes as the UN Security Council discusses the fate of the UN's military presence in Eastern DRC on Monday 27 September.

Oxfam Staff in DRC report that in the last two weeks more people have fled their homes from nearby villages arriving at the makeshift camp in Ngungu, North Kivu, 60 km from Goma the provincial capital.

"Some people saw armed groups attacking villages and burning houses, others left because they were scared of what could happen to them if they stayed in a place where there is no one to protect them," said Oxfam's Gemma Swart." (Oxfam 24 Sept 04)

« ...des nouveaux déplacés estimés à 17.000 (tous des Rwandophones) ont quitté Kalehe vers Masisi au Nord Kivu alors que les déplacés qui avaient fui les localités Nyabibwe, Bushushu, Lushebere et Mukwidja vers Kalehe centre et dans les îlots commencent à revenir dans leurs villages d'origine. [...]

Une mission inter agences a eu lieu le 16/09/04 à Ngungu, territoire de Masisi, afin d'évaluer la situation des déplacés qui avaient commencé à arriver le 10 septembre.

L'afflux massif des déplacés dans le Masisi en provenance de Kalehe, au Sud Kivu, a été au centre de la réunion CPIA du 14/09/04 et de la réunion inter agences du 17/09/04. » (UN OCHA 23 Sept 04)

« Par ailleurs, le Chargé de l'Information au sein de la Section Humanitaire de la MONUC, Patrice Bogna, a fait part à la presse de la situation préoccupante des nombreux déplacés à l'Est de la RDC. Il a relevé la complexité de ces mouvements de populations qui préoccupent la communauté humanitaire. « Avec l'avancée des troupes des FARDC, certaines personnes, se sentant rassurées, regagnent leurs domiciles tandis que d'autres, notamment les Banyamulenge, fuient les zones occupées par les troupes régulières congolaises », a-t-il indiqué. » (MONUC 15 Sept 04)

« More than 15,000 civilians have fled their homes in the past two weeks in North-Kivu Province, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, according to humanitarian sources. Fearing armed confrontations and exactions from armed groups, civilians have reportedly taken flight from villages around Mangurejipa and Ndjiyapanda, North-Kivu Province to seek refuge approximately 80 kms away in the Butembo region (also part of North-Kivu). All IDPs have reportedly endured a three-day trek through a dense forest to reach relative safety. [...]

The Mangurejipa zone, inaccessible to humanitarian actors since 1999, is a mineral rich region and has been a battleground for armed groups for the past five years. A radical branch of the Mayi-Mayi armed opposition maintains control in this area and is reportedly refusing integration into the national army." (UN OCHA 10 Sept 04)

« Des milliers de personnes continuent d'être affectées par les attaques des FDLR dans les localités riveraines du Parc National de Kahuzi-Biega, dans la province du Sud-Kivu. On estime à 13.000 le nombre de personnes actuellement déplacées par ces attaques. Des mouvements de populations sont observés ces dernières années dans ces localités où continuent à sévir les FDLR. Parmi les villages les plus touchés, on cite Cisaza, Cindubi, et Mushwere, en territoire de Walungu, et Ninja, en territoire de Kabare. Les déplacés venus récemment de ces villages se retrouvent actuellement à Kaniola, Izege, et Chagala. » (UN OCHA 27 Aug 04)

"Innocent civilians have been once again caught up in the fighting between armed groups in South Kivu, with 19 people killed and many others wounded during an attack on the Collectivity of Nindja, 75km north-west of Bukavu, South Kivu, last Monday.

An estimated 1,280 families, or 6,000 people, have now fled towards the village of Ihembe, fearing further attacks.

"Once again it is innocent civilians who suffer", said Jean Marc Cordaro, OCHA's Head of Office in South Kivu. "OCHA condemns all acts of violence against civilians. Such attacks must cease immediately." Amongst the wounded were those who had limbs hacked off by machetes, with at least four people reportedly still in a critical condition. Up to 50 more villagers have disappeared –carried off by the armed men into the bush. Kidnapping of civilians for ransom is common in the area, with more than 70 people abducted over the last six months. Of these, 18 have already been executed.

To add to the list of horrors, over 200 women and girls have been raped in the wider Walungu area since the beginning of the year, mostly by armed men.

"Humanitarian access to the conflict area is severely limited, with local people reporting that attacks are continuing", said Mr Cordaro. "Life-saving aid could only be sent on Friday, when the security of the convoy had been assured" (OCHA 31 May 2005)

« Des militaires de l'armée nationale causent le déplacement d'environ 190 familles dans la localité de Bukavu:

La Section humanitaire de la MONUC a mené une mission d'évaluation dans les localités de Mukanda et Chiruko, situées dans un périmètre de 3 km de Kavumu, près de Bukavu. La mission visait essentiellement à vérifier les allégations d'exactions commises par des militaires des forces armées congolaises (FARDC) sur des civils et le déplacement subséquent d'environ 190 familles. La MONUC a noté le pillage de maisons privées et a enregistré des allégations d'exécutions sommaires de civils par les militaires des FARDC aussi bien que des cas de violence sexuelle dont ils seraient également les auteurs. La plupart des déplacés vivent dans des familles d'accueil dans les villages voisins. Une autorité locale, dont le témoignage corrobore les allégations, a annoncé que le climat social s'améliorait graduellement. Une éventuelle enquête de la MONUC ainsi qu'une assistance aux personnes déplacées, y compris les victimes des violences sexuelles, est à l'étude.

De nouveaux combats provoquent un déplacement accru de populations dans la localité de Bukavu: L'ONG américaine IRC a informé qu'environ 1 300 familles déplacées ont été identifiées dans la localité de Nindja, située à environ 80 km à l'ouest de Bukavu. Ce nombre pourrait s'amplifier à cause des combats en cours dans la région entre les FARDC aidées des FDLR contre les milices RASTAS. Les organisations non gouvernementales IRC et Malteser fournissent respectivement des non-vivres et des kits médicaux aux personnes déplacées. L'ONG Malteser a également annoncé son projet de réhabilitation de l'axe routier Izege-Ihembe distant de 36 km. Ce projet devrait faciliter l'accès au centre médical de la localité d'Ihembe et donner également un nouvel essor aux activités commerciales dans la région. » (MONUC 7 June 2005)

« Environ 2 000 familles dans la localité de Kanyabayonga, à 150 km de Goma, auraient récemment fui leurs domiciles. Cette nouvelle vague de déplacements des populations civiles est attribuée à des affrontements entre militaires des FARDC et ceux des FDLR dans les localités de Kibirizi et Miriki, situées respectivement à environ 153 km et 176 km de Goma. [...]

La communauté humanitaire a noté un nouvel afflux d'environ 3 000 personnes déplacées de la localité de Nindja à Mule, dans la zone de santé de Kalonge, à environ 80 km à l'ouest de Bukavu. Ce nouveau mouvement de populations porte désormais le nombre total de personnes déplacées dans cette localité à 13 000.» (MONUC 13 June 2005)

Thousands of displaced in mid-2004 in South Kivu (August 2004)

- Bukavu residents found refuge in MONUC compound
- 20,000 Congolese Tutsi fled to Burundi
- Thousands of people were displaced following clashes between insurgent group and Congolese army

“The Bukavu crisis. In late May and June 2004, dissident ex-RCD/Goma officers Jules Mutebusi and Laurent Nkunda mutinied against the Kinshasa-appointed regional military commander in South Kivu resulting in two weeks of fighting in and around the town of Bukavu. Humanitarian assistance for the area was disrupted, local populations displaced, and the border with Rwanda closed as tensions between the two countries again mounted. Local residents suffered extensive violence, looting, and rape. At least 88 people died, more than 100 were injured, and thousands of residents became either internally displaced or fled to neighboring Burundi and Rwanda.

At one point during the crisis, nearly 1,300 local residents felt sufficiently insecure to take refuge inside the MONUC compound in Bukavu. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 3,500 Tutsi residents of Bukavu fled to Rwanda out of fear of ethnically-based reprisals, since the dissident commanders are both Tutsi. An estimated 20,000 Congolese Tutsis fled to Burundi.

When Bukavu fell to the dissidents, students and others in many major cities throughout the DRC rioted for two days against the lack of international action to end the violence. The riots caused considerable damage to the property of U.N. and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Humanitarian agencies lost an estimated \$1.5 million in supplies, equipment, and vehicles during the violence, and three OCHA offices sustained considerable damage. Humanitarian organizations suspended efforts in the Bukavu area for nearly a month as expatriate personnel were evacuated and local staff remained restricted to Bukavu center.

Once MONUC convinced the dissident leaders to leave Bukavu, the GDRC deployed Congolese Armed Forces (FARDC) reinforcements to eastern DRC in July to prevent further destabilization attempts. Since then, clashes between the FARDC and remaining armed opposition forces in the Kalehe area have caused the displacement of an additional estimated 20,000 persons.” (USAID 20 August 2004)

“Five government soldiers were killed and tens of thousands of civilians displaced when dissident soldiers battled the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) army in the east, UN officials said Saturday.

Nine DRC army soldiers were injured in a series of clashes near the Sud-Kivu province capital of Bukavu, close to the Rwandan border, a UN observer mission (MONUC) spokesman, Eliane Naaba, told AFP in Kigali by telephone.

The fighting, which in the past couple of weeks has pit renegade soldiers led by General Laurent Nkunda against the army deployed by Kinshasa, has also driven 36,000 local people from their homes, Naaba said.

The UN official said he had no details of casualties among the dissidents or civilians.

Jean-Marc Cordaro, who runs the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Bukavu, said about 31,000 people had fled southwards into the region around Kalehe, while 5,000 others had gone up to the high plateaux to the north.” (AFP 31 July 04)

« En ce qui concerne les déplacés internes du territoire de Kalehe, OCHA estime leur nombre à 36 000, dont 31 000 ont fui vers le sud du territoire dès le début des combats et quelque 5 000 autres se sont dirigés plus au nord vers la fin du mois de juillet. » (MONUC 4 Aug 04)

Fighting by Hema and Lendu armed groups in has caused major displacement in Ituri District (1999-2005)

- According to MONUC, more than 60,000 people have been killed and 500,000 displaced in the northeastern Ituri district between 1999 and 2003
- UN OCHA reported displacement following fighting in July 2004 between the FAPC (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais) and FNI (Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes) in Mahagi Territory
- Displacement caused by armed groups continued in Ituri in 2005
- UN observers and NGOs believe the Lendu militias' objective in displacing the Hema is to change the ethnic composition of Djugu, a territory to the north of Ituri's main town, Bunia (March 2005)

“More than 60,000 people were killed, 50,000 houses burnt and 500,000 people got displaced in DR Congo's Ituri region between 1999 and September 2002, a reliable source at the UN Observer Mission in the country (MONUC) here said.

Violence against civilians and hard-line positions among belligerents in Ituri caused ‘the most worrying humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo,’ the source disclosed Wednesday.

Thirteen UN agencies and three NGOs need about 270 million US dollars in the short- and long-term to extend humanitarian aid to the most affected regions of DRC, including Ituri, where about 15 organisations are operating, according to the report.

Initially, the conflict in Ituri (Eastern province where Bunia is capital) was a feud between Hemas and Lendus, before the involvement of armed groups whose leaders are fighting in a power struggle over the region.

The rebel factions of RCD-National led by Roger Lumbala (supported by Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC), the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC led by Thomas Lubanga) and the Mbusa Nyamwisi's RCD-ML, evicted from Bunia and Mambasa, are engaged in the bloody struggle.

In the past two weeks, clashes have intensified between the first two movements, causing more than 100 deaths and several thousand persons freshly displaced.” (PANA, 26 December 2002)

“In early November [2003], Bunia experienced an escalation in violent clashes between several entities: 1) between the two major ethnic Hema militias (the Rwandan-backed Union des Patriotes Congolese (UPC) and the Ugandan-backed Parti pour l'Unité et la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo (PUSIC)), 2) between the UPC and MONUC, and 3) to some degree between the ethnic Lendu militia Forces de Résistance Patriotique en Ituri (FRPI) and MONUC following the arrest of the FRPI commander, Colonel Ngodjolo, for his alleged involvement in the assassination of an UPC advisor. A series of attacks occurred when approximately twenty UPC soldiers opened fire on several MONUC positions, including MONUC headquarters. These attacks prompted retaliation by MONUC, which initiated the arrest of suspected gunmen in armed assaults, night foot patrols, and a ban on all uniforms and public meetings within a designated perimeter around MONUC headquarters in Bunia. MONUC's approach brought renewed calm to the city, but questions remained regarding civilian control of Bunia. Also in Bunia, MONUC completed the re-training of a 70-member national police force. The French Cooperation allocated 180,000 Euros for the rehabilitation of judicial infrastructures such as courts and a prison in Bunia. The UPC militia returned its zones of control to the Ituri Interim Administration on November 14, 2003. Before this handover, Bunia was controlled by two administrations: the UPC and the Ituri Interim Administration (IIA). Having one administration governing Ituri and recognized by the national and international community is an important

symbol of unity in the region, which will also improve the effectiveness, credibility, and legitimacy of the IIA.” (USAID 30 Nov 03)

“[T]he numbers of persons displaced by three weeks of fighting in July between the FAPC (Forces Armées du Peuple Congolais) and FNI (Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes) in Mahagi Territory, Ituri District continued to rise this month. By 28 August, the number of IDPs displaced in this region had risen to 90,000. Despite the fact that roughly 75,000 of these IDPs were accessible only 20-30,000 had received emergency food and NFI assistance.” (UN OCHA 31 Aug 04)

“Déplacement des populations de Berunda suite à l’attaque des éléments de l’UPC, le 12 Mai 2005. Au lendemain de l’offensive de l’UPC sur Berunda, quelques 4000 personnes se seraient déplacées vers Kandoyi, Katanga et leurs environs. Certaines sources ont aussi signalé que la population de Kandoyi passe la nuit en brousse fuyant les tracasseries et harcèlements des soldats des FARDC venus de Berunda.” (OCHA 20 May 2005)

“Since mid-December 2004, violent attacks have caused the displacement of some 100,000 Hema; 80,000 of them are now living in the Kakwa, Gina, Tchomia and Tché displaced camps.” (OCHA 2 May 2005)

UN observers and NGOs believe the [Lendu] militias' objective is to change the ethnic composition of Djugu, a territory to the north of Ituri's main town, Bunia (IRIN 23 March 2005).

For an overview of the armed groups in Ituri in 2002-2003, and a chronology of major political events human rights violations in 1998-2003, please see UN SC DR Congo: Letter dated 16 July 2004 from UN SG addressed to the President of the Security Council, 16 July 2004, annex I and II [Reference below]

Displacement caused by Hutu Rwandan militias (2005)

- Attacks against civilians in North and South Kivu in 2005
- Hutu Rwandan militia FDLR signed an agreement at the end of March 2005, according to which they would demobilise and return to Rwanda

“Deux fosses communes ont été signalées à la Mission de l’ONU en République démocratique du Congo (MONUC). Elles renfermeraient les cadavres de 39 civils tués samedi dans le village de Ntulumamba, dans la commune de Kalonge, à 75 km au nord de Bukavu, a déclaré une porte-parole de l’ONU. [...]”

Des survivants ont affirmé à la MONUC que les attaques avaient été menées par les rebelles hutus rwandais des Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), un avis partagé par Didas Kaningini, gouverneur de la province de Sud Kivu.

Les rescapés affirment que les rebelles ont agi durant la nuit et qu’ils ont enfermé les villageois dans leurs cases, avant d’incendier ces dernières. Ceux qui ont résisté ont été mutilés à coups de machettes.

« Ils nous ont demandé des dollars et comme nous n’en avons pas, ils nous ont ligotés avant de nous asperger d’essence et de mettre le feu », a expliqué un survivant à Radio Okapi, la station radio de l’ONU. Edmong Ngarambe, un officier supérieur des FDLR, nie toute responsabilité au nom de son groupe. Il accuse les Rastas, un groupe de dissidents des FDLR qui, selon lui, opère en collaboration avec des milices congolaises. Un autre survivant a confirmé la version de Ngarambe à la radio congolaise.” (IRIN 14 July 2005)

“The Security Council this evening condemned the massacre of some 50 people, most of them women and children, which occurred on 9 July in Ntulu-Mamba, Democratic Republic of the Congo.” (UNSC 13 July 2004)

“Trois soldats congolais ont été tués et quatre autres blessés lors de combats qui ont opposé dimanche dernier les forces gouvernementales à des miliciens hutus rwandais dans la province orientale de Nord-Kivu en République démocratique du Congo (RDC). Les combats ont entraîné le déplacement de centaines de civils. [...]

Des centaines de civils déplacés ont fui Miriki pour Kanyabayonga, selon le chef de village, Joël Luhonu.

'Pour le moment, ils demeurent auprès de leurs proches là-bas', a-t-il dit.

Selon Amisi, le calme était revenu à Miriki, et a demandé aux civils déplacés de regagner leur village.

Les rebelles hutus du Rwanda basés dans l'est de la RDC ont été accusés de nombreuses attaques menées contre des civils, particulièrement sur le territoire de Walungu et de la Plaine de la Ruzizi au Sud-Kivu.

Murwanashyaka a signé un accord le 31 mars au nom des FDLR, annonçant que les miliciens rebelles sous son autorité déposeront les armes et retourneront au Rwanda. » (IRIN 8 June 2005, North Kivu)

“An armed group of mostly Rwandan Hutus in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is accused of killing 18 civilians, mutilating 11 others and taking around 50 hostages on Monday.

The group, known as the Rastas, has been committing numerous human-rights abuses in the region, according to sources in the government and the UN Mission in the DRC, known as MONUC.” (IRIN 26 May 2005)

Thousands flee due to ethnic clashes in Kasai Oriental (April 2005)

“[I]n the southwestern province of Kasai-Occidental thousands of civilians are ‘fleeing raging ethnic conflict’.

‘Several reports suggesting growing armed robberies, rapes and other cases of sexual violence highlight the deterioration of the security conditions in and around Kananga [capital of Kasai-Occidental],’ Patrice Bogna, the information focal point for MONUC's Humanitarian Affairs Section, said on Monday.

The fighting in recent days was mostly taking place near Luiza, about 250 km south of Kananga.” (IRIN 27 April 2005)

People flee Mai Mai attacks in the Katanga Province (2003-2005)

- Massacres and clashes despite setting-up of transition government in June 03
- Over 15,000 people displaced in Katanga by Mai Mai exactions (Feb 04)
- Displacement continued as of mid-2005
- In March 2005, fighting between Mai Mai militias and government troops caused the displacement of 5,300 civilians. The militias mutilated some of the displaced and burned down their homes
- At least 1,700 people fled villages in Katanga Province following attacks by Mayi-Mayi militiamen (May 2005)
- Mai Mai militias raped 15 women and girls in an attack on a remote Congolese village in May 2005 stealing their clothes so they were forced to flee naked

“Insecurity

Over the past six months, human rights organizations have reported massacres of civilians and clashes between Mai-Mai, self-defense forces (FAP) and the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) along the former disengagement line in northern Katanga. When fighting broke out in May after the assassination of a Mai Mai chief named Makabe in Malemba Nkulu territory, thousands of people fled their homes to take refuge in the bush. A second larger displacement took place in October along the border between Mitwaba and Pweto territories as a result of a Mai Mai attack on a FAC base. Most of the 10,000 civilians who fled the violence are only now returning to their villages.

The problems between the Mai Mai and the FAC can be traced to Laurent-Désiré Kabila's call to arms in 1998, and the perception among the Mai Mai that while they were defending Lubumbashi and Kamina from Rwandan-backed RCD forces, FAC soldiers were looting their villages and abusing their families. As a result, most Mai Mai today don't trust the FAC, and feel they haven't been properly compensated for their efforts to defend Kabila Sr. They claim to be ready to turn in their weapons to the international community, but not to the local authorities.

Ethnic tension

During the last decade, Katanga has been the scene of violent ethnic clashes. In 1992 and 1993, Kasaians were victims of ethnic cleansing by the Mobutu regime in retaliation for the election of Etienne Tshisekedi as prime minister. The Governor of Katanga, Gabriel Kyungu, was encouraged to persecute people from Kasai province. Katangans themselves became involved, enticed by the promise of Kasai-held jobs at the Gecamines, the country's largest state-owned mining company. According to MONUC's human rights section, thousands of Kasaians were killed and over 500,000 sequestered in inhuman conditions before being evacuated by humanitarian organizations to Kasai, where most of them had never set foot before. Although tension has decreased in the past few years, there is a risk of flare-up especially during the pre-elections period when ethnicity may be exploited for political gain." (MONUC 27 Nov 03)

"Au moins 15.000 personnes ont fui le village de Kitenge où des miliciens Mayi-Mayi ont tué plus de 100 civils et sept militaires depuis le début de l'année, ont déclaré mardi à IRIN des militants des droits de l'homme.

Kitenge est situé à 700 km au nord de Lubumbashi, chef-lieu de la province du Katanga, dans le sud-est de la République démocratique du Congo.

Selon Bin Masudi, coordonnateur du Comité de défense des droits de l'homme basé dans cette province, ces 15.000 personnes vivent dans les localités voisines alors que certaines d'entre elles ont rejoint Lubumbashi.

"La population de Kitenge vit dans la peur et dans le traumatisme. Elle ne vaque plus à ses occupations habituelles car les Mayi-Mayi extorquent et pillent leurs biens. L'ONG, Médecins Sans Frontières France (MSF), a dû quitter le village à la suite des pillages des équipements sanitaires et humanitaires en novembre dernier.

Les autorités militaires ont confirmé ces tueries, mais les ont attribuées à un groupe de Mayi-Mayi dissidents.

"Ces Mayi-Mayi s'en prennent à la population. Ils ont, un dimanche, lancé une grenade dans une église en pleine messe et tué 25 personnes. Ils tuent des civils et ravissent leurs biens, leur coupent les doigts, les sexes et les cheveux. Ils ont même tué sept militaires et la femme d'un militaire qui voulait protester," a ajouté le général Dieugentil Mpia Nzambe.

Ces parties des corps humains leur servent de "gri-gri". » (MONUC 26 Feb 04)

"Further south, fighting between Mayi-Mayi groups in central Katanga Province continued to provoke the displacement of populations. Clashes this month between Tshinja-Tshinja Mayi-Mayi led to the

displacement of at least 300 families who took refuge in Kaboto, Kabongo Territory, according to local sources.

With tension continuing among Mayi-Mayi groups themselves, as well as between Mayi-Mayi and Congolese national troops, more population displacement may be expected in these zones. The same is true for Manono Territory where tension continues between another Mayi-Mayi group (led by commander "Gédeon") and the Congolese national army. As for the rest of the country, no other major IDP movements were reported to OCHA during the month." (UN OCHA 30 April 2004)

"[I] northern Katanga, especially in the localities of Kitenge and Mitwaba, new and violent conflicts have left approximately 100,000 people displaced and in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. Villages have been attacked, looted and destroyed by opposing factions of armed groups. Access has been limited and humanitarian actors have been forced to flee and close life saving operations in both zones." (UNICEF 7 May 2004)

"5,300 civilians displaced in the Democratic Republic of Congo's southwestern province of Katanga following fighting between government troops and Mayi-Mayi militias, a UN official told IRIN on Wednesday.

The fighting took place on 17 March but information on the incident reached the capital, Kinshasa, late due to lack of communication with the village of Konga, 446 km northwest of the provincial capital, Lubumbashi, where the fighting took place.

An officer in charge of special investigations in the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC), Sonia Bakar, said a UN inter-agency meeting in Kinshasa on Friday discussed the incident.

"These people fled their village, heading to Mitwaba, 60 km to the south, after a Mayi-Mayi attack on the 17 March," she said.

Apart from the deaths, she said, the militias also mutilated some of the displaced people and burnt down 15 homes." (IRIN 7 April 2005)

"At least 1,700 people have fled villages in the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) Katanga Province following attacks by Mayi-Mayi militiamen, a UN official told IRIN on Tuesday.

"The Mayi-Mayi raped seven women, eight under 18-year-olds and burnt eleven houses," Rachel Scott, the spokeswoman for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said.

The attacks had been occurring since late May in the villages of Manono, Mpiana, Kayongu and Nkumbu in Kalemie Territory in the north of Katanga, Scott said. The most recent was at Manono on 29 May, where civilians there fled 100 km northwest to Mpiana.[...]

The attacks follow a dispute between the local population and the Mayi-Mayi militia over the reinstatement of a local chief, allied to the Mayi-Mayi.[...]

The DRC's transitional government, installed in June 2004, recently began its disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process for former combatants countrywide. However, Mayi-Mayi militias continue to destabilise the eastern parts of the country despite signing an agreement that would see them incorporated into the nation's newly integrated army." (IRIN 8 June 2005, Mai Mai)

"Pro-government militiamen raped 15 women and girls in an attack on a remote Congolese village last month, stealing their clothes so they were forced to flee naked, the United Nations said on Monday.

The attack by Mai Mai militiamen and policemen took place in the village of Sonsa -- some 250 km (156 miles) southwest of the lakeside town of Kalemie, which separates Congo and Tanzania.

Anne Edgerton, head of the U.N. Office for Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs in Kalemie, said the women had fled for six days to seek assistance, but had only been able to move at night because they had no clothes on.

She said the raid on Sonsa appeared to be a revenge attack after the village's residents turned away a village chief dispatched to their village by local authorities.” (AFP 6 June 2005)

“Les plus récents déplacements de populations enregistrés dans la localité de Lubumbashi au mois de mai 2005 touchent environ 250 familles à Mpiana, à environ 90 km au sud de Manono, près de Lubumbashi. Un groupe de 750 personnes aurait trouvé refuge dans les forêts, près de Kyabondo, au sud-est de Mpiana. L'ONG GOAL y a mené une mission d'évaluation afin de s'enquérir de leurs conditions de vie ainsi que de leurs besoins dans le cadre des préparatifs d'une possible assistance humanitaire. Par ailleurs, un groupe d'éléments armés identifiés comme étant des combattants Mayi-Mayi et des éléments de la police locale auraient attaqué puis incendié le village de Sonsa, à environ 60 km au sud de Manono. Plusieurs rapports font état de cas de viols perpétrés par les assaillants au cours de l'attaque. » (MONUC 13 June 2005)

Fighting between UN peacekeepers and Ituri militias may have displaced thousands (June 2005)

“Thousands of Congolese civilians may have been displaced by recent fighting between UN peacekeeping troops and local militiamen in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the UN mission's public information officer, Mohammad Abdoul Wahab, said on Tuesday.

A Medu resident who arrived in Bunia late Monday, Jean Mbafele, said: ‘We all fled into the bush. Only people who participated in the fighting stayed in the village.’

They escaped as an eight-hour battle raged around their village of Medu, 25 km south of Bunia, in Ituri District, Orientale Province. Medu has a population of some 4,000.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in the area has not yet been able to access the humanitarian situation, its information officer in the area, Idrissa Conteh, said on Tuesday. He said the humanitarian community had ceased activity in the area since 20 June and only restarted on Sunday.

During Monday's fighting, UN Bangladeshi and Indian troops fought more than 1,000 militiamen of the Fronts des nationalistes et intégrationnistes who were armed with mortars, rockets and grenades, Wahab said. The UN used two MI-25 combat helicopters in the operation and reinforced its troops with Pakistanis.

The UN troops repelled the militiamen who tried to return again in the afternoon, Wahab said. UN troops are continuing to patrol the area and, Wahab said, Medu was now calm.” (IRIN 28 June 2005)

Women and girls from eastern Congo flee to escape sexual violence (2002)

“Women and girls of eastern Congo, their families, and the larger community have developed different strategies to protect them from sexual violence. Some families have sent their women and girls to safer locations. A Bukavu resident told Human Rights Watch researchers, “I have a girl in my house whose parents sent her away to keep her from being raped.” In other cases, most of the family has fled to safer areas. A priest from a rural parish said, “Women, girls and young men are not in the villages anymore—you only find old people.” (HRW June 2002, p75)

Demobilized Mai Mai fighters commit abuses against the population in Beni, North Kivu, and cause displacement (October 2004)

- Demobilized Mai Mai await assistance in transit camp and terrorize the local population
- Reports of abuses including rapes, lootings of harvests and cattle, houses destroyed

« A la suite de récurrentes allégations reçues par la MONUC Beni, au sujet d'exactions des Mayi Mayi sur les habitants, dans la collectivité de Mangango, une délégation composée des sections DH, AH, et PIO escortées par des éléments de la TF1 se sont rendues à Mangango Centre à une vingtaine de kilomètres de Beni sur la route de Mangina et de Mambasa, pour se rendre compte des faits. Mangango, c'est le centre d'accueil des Mayi Mayi du Grand Nord Kivu, de Mangurejipa notamment qui attendent leur démobilisation. Impossible d'accéder à ces villages par voiture, mais les récits des notables que nous avons rencontrés sont tout simplement pathétiques. Des villageois systématiquement dépouillés de leurs biens et forcés à abandonner ce qui reste pour prendre la route de l'inconnu, l'exil.

Des villages entiers vidés petit à petit de leurs populations dans la localité de Mangango, c'est la réalité dans cette collectivité située à une vingtaine de kilomètres de Beni. «Le phénomène a commencé un peu il y a quatre ans, mais c'est depuis l'installation du camp de transit des Mayi Mayi à Mangango que l'exode s'est accentuée» nous a raconté le chef du village de Kambao. «Mon village comptait 500 familles, mais aujourd'hui il est pratiquement vide», a ajouté le chef Jacques Mangala Lusenge.[...]

Depuis la création du centre de transit des Mayi Mayi à Mangango, ces nouveaux arrivants ont tout simplement investi les lieux pillant tout ce qui appartient au villageois qui vivent dans la localité : champs dévastés, volaille, bétail, récoltes systématiquement pillés, maisons détruites avec les pièces (tôles, poutres) emportées pour construire des habitations dans le camp de transit. Même au centre ville ici, il vous ne trouverez plus une seule chèvre (effectivement, on n'en a pas trouvé), ils ont tout pris.

Ils viennent en tenue militaire ou en civil avec des flèches ou des armes et soumettent la population assujettie à toute sorte de sévices, de mauvais traitements y compris le viol, s'ils ne trouvent rien. » (MONUC 5 October 2004)

POPULATION FIGURES AND PROFILE

Global Figures

2.3 million IDPs as of mid-2005

“Over 90% of the IDPs in the DRC are with host families rather than in camps. This makes it difficult to gain an accurate picture of the number and location of IDPs and of the conditions in which they are living. The latest estimate from OCHA is that there are some 2.3 million IDPs. About 95% of these are in six provinces: Orientale, North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema, Equateur and Katanga.

This total figure of 2.3 million IDPs includes figures for some provinces which have not been updated since 2003. New IDPs are usually added, while those that return are not always struck off the lists. The correct figure is probably lower than 2.3 million. Population Movement Committees (Commissions sur les Mouvements de Population), comprised of national authorities and humanitarian agencies, have been set up in most provinces and have made significant progress in updating information on IDPs. However, these have not yet been set up everywhere and methodologies for counting IDPs remains vague.” (OCHA 8 June 2005)

Table of IDPs and Returnees in DRC As of August 2004*			
Provinces	Displaced	Returns	Date of Information
Katanga	365,000	190,000	August 2004
Province Orientale	455,000	260,000	August 2004
Maniema	165,000		August 2004
North-Kivu	785,000		August 2004
South-Kivu	254,000	275,000	August 2004
Equateur	165,000		August 2004
Kinshasa	45,000 (includes +/- 3,000 expellees from Angola)		August 2003 for the IDPs and June 2004 for the expellees.
Bandundu			
Bas Congo			
East and West Kasai	95,000 (includes +/- 40,000 expellees from Angola)		August 2004
TOTAL	2,329,000	725,000	August 2004
*These figures are estimations representing a consolidation of data furnished by provincial commissions on Population Movements as well as reports of various evaluation missions			

(UN OCHA 31 August 2004)

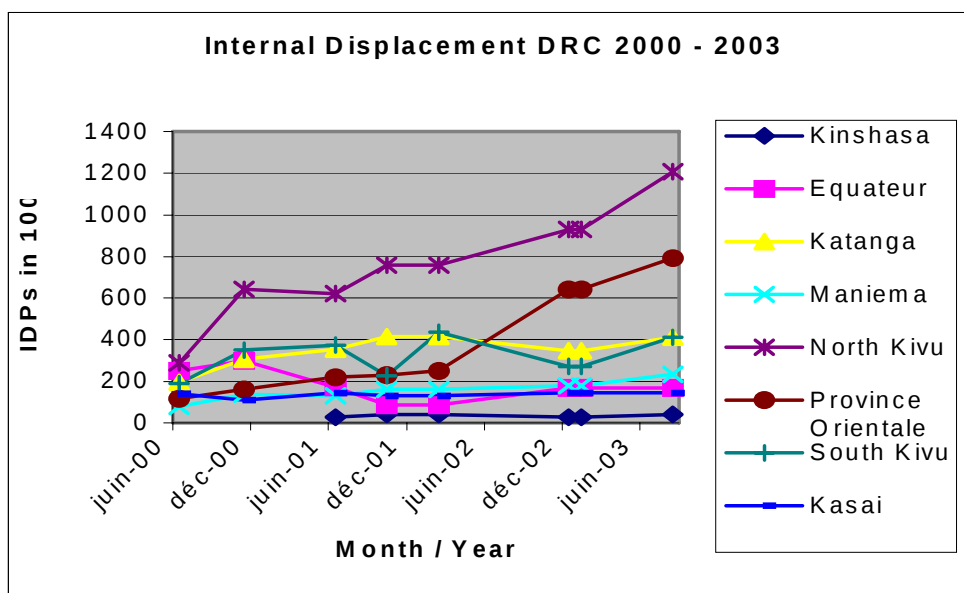
Approximately 3.4 million people displaced in DRC as of end 2003

- The majority of the displaced are in the East, but the figure is a rough estimate at best

“A fifth year of uninterrupted war in large parts of the DRC further eroded coping mechanisms, and pushed entire populations to near exhaustion. This was reflected in the startling increase in IDP numbers from 2.7 million in January 2003 to 3.4 million in August 2003.” (UN OCHA 18 Nov 03)

Major increase mainly due to the crisis in Ituri:

“Some 8,000 civilians lost their lives as a result of deliberate killing or indiscriminate use of force from January 2002 to December 2003. More than 600,000 have been forced to flee from their homes.” (UN SC 16 July 2004, para.40)



(UN OCHA 18 Nov 03, p18)

Over 2.7 million IDPs, mainly in eastern DRC (December 2002)

- 500,000 additional IDPs since the beginning of 2002, mainly in Ituri and South Kivu
- 400,000 IDPs are now in South Kivu, compared to 235,000 in Aug 02
- More than 2.7 million IDPs at the end of 2002, according to UN figures

Country	IDPs		Refugees		Total affected population		Changes % (In figures)
	July 2002	Dec 2002	July 2002	Dec 2002	July 2002	Dec 2002	
DRC	2,275,000	2,706,993	346,540	331,241	2,621,540	3,038,234	+15.90% (+416,694)

[Click here](#) for map, 'Democratic Republic of Congo: Affected Populations by Province, Internally Displaced (UN OCHA, January 2003)

"The recent aggravation of violence in rebel-held areas (mainly in Ituri region, South Kivu, Kindu, Shabunda and northern Katanga) increased the number of displaced persons by at least 500,000 since the beginning of the year, putting considerable pressure on the humanitarian community's response capacity. The continuous eruption of cholera epidemics in many provinces (Kasais, Katanga, Orientale and Kivus) is an indication of the exhaustion of the population's survival strategies after years of protracted crisis and the need to reinforce the existing emergency response and coordination mechanisms." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p27)

"The Humanitarian Coordinator described the situation in the border region of Uvira, the Hauts Plateaux and Fizi- Baraka as a "creeping disaster", with over 100 villages deserted and 20,000 newly displaced families, bringing the total number of internally displaced people in South Kivu to an estimated 400,000." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.60)

Other vulnerable groups include about 200,000 people who live hidden and are totally destitute (Feb 2002)

OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS IN THE DRC

Estimated child soldiers 6,000

Widows 15,000

Handicapped including war wounded 25,000

Urban vulnerable +/- 3,500,000

Hidden population/ total destitution 200,000

Food insecure 16,000,000

Host families (estimate) 87,500 (households) x 5 (individuals) = 437,500

TOTAL 20,987,500*

***It is recognised that several of these groups will, naturally, overlap, possibly rendering this figure slightly exaggerated.**

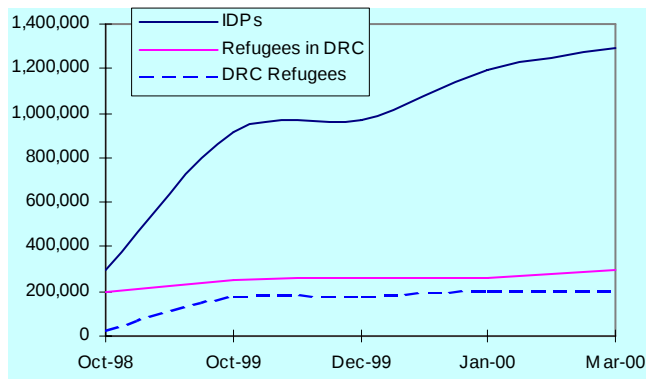
(UN OCHA 28 Feb 02, p.14)

Over 2 million IDPs in DRC by end of September 2001

According to UN estimates, there were about 2,045,000 IDPs in DRC as of the end of September 2001 (UN OCHA 30 September 2001).

There were about 2,002,500 IDPs in DRC by the end of December 2000. (OCHA 31 December 2000, p.3) This represents a significant increase during the last of part 2000, since there were 1,4 million IDPs by June 2000 and 1,8 million by September 2000. (UN November 2000, p.15). This is despite the fact that an estimated 810,000 former IDPs have returned to their habitual place of residence. (OCHA 31 December 2000, p.6).

IDP growth since 1998



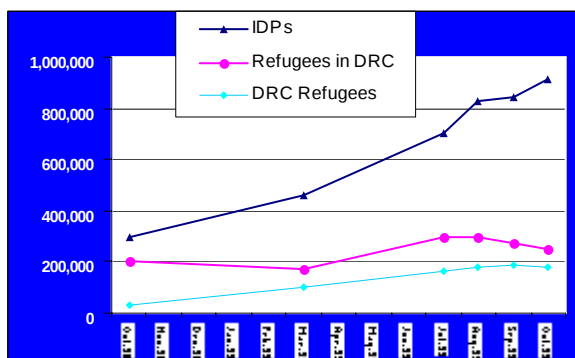
(OCHA 17 April 2000)

According to the United Nations, "The vast majority of the 2 million people displaced by war are children and women." (United Nations 7 June 2001)

960,000 IDPs in DRC by end of 1999

"[By January 2000 there were] some 960,000 internally displaced persons in eight of the 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and over 300,000 refugees from six of its nine neighbouring countries. Recent humanitarian Assessments reveal that over 2.1 million people (internally displaced persons, refugees, urban vulnerable) or 4.3 per cent of the population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo face critical food insecurity. Another 8.4 million (mostly urban populations and farmers in the proximity of the front line), or 17 Per cent of the population, face moderate but rapidly growing food insecurity." (UN SC 17 January 2000, para. 24)

"The reporting period [1 October - 15 November 1999] saw new population displacements (Kibali-Ituri, Orientale; Walikale, North Kivu, and Mongala, Equateur) but also return of entire communities in South Kivu. Nevertheless, the overall number of IDPs grew from 830,000 to 916,000 (increase by 75,000), as illustrated on the accompanying graph. This considerable increment is attributable to continued hostilities between Hema and Lemu ethnicites and volatile security in Haut Uele districts of Orientale province." (UN OCHA 15 November 1999, "Humanitarian Action")



500,000 IDPs in DRC by end of 1998

"The number of IDPs is believed to have almost tripled since the outbreak of hostilities in the DRC and is estimated to have reached the level of 500,000 persons scattered in North and South Kivu, Orientale, Maniema, Kasai, Equateur and Katanga provinces. In rebel-held areas, the current conflict is marked by patterns some of which are similar to those that affected humanitarian action during the 1996-1997 war in former Zaire, i.e. all communities of Northern and Southern Kivu are considered - and consider themselves as - collective targets for military attacks. Massive, durable displacements are expected to have been amplified during the last three months. The situation is usually different in other parts of the DRC, where the populations are only afraid of looting and side-effects of military confrontations. Thus, they only leave their houses for as long as fighting, looting or take-over of a town will last at local level." (UN December 1998, p.14)

It should be noted that USCR apparently subscribed to a more careful estimate of IDPs by the end of 1998:

"The outbreak of renewed war in Congo-Kinshasa in August uprooted hundreds of thousands of people, some for a few days, others for the rest of the year. At year's end, displacement persisted primarily in the eastern one-third of the country.

Although an estimated 300,000 persons were internally displaced at year's end and some 130,000 were refugees in neighboring countries, some aid workers estimated that 80 percent of the population in some eastern regions<a million or more people<might have fled their homes temporarily for several days at different times during the year. Such estimates were impossible to confirm because much of the country remained inaccessible to local and international aid workers." (USCR 1999, p.59)

100,000 believed to be displaced by the end of 1997

- After the main civil war ended (May 1997), eruptions of violence in eastern Congo/Zaire pushed additional tens of thousands from their homes
- About 40,000 Congolese fled early in 1997 hundreds of kilometres westward with Rwandan refugees to the city of Kisangani

"The number of residents who became internally displaced during the civil war remains uncertain. More than 100,000 were already uprooted in eastern Zaire prior to the civil war due to ethnic conflicts. Poor roads, impenetrable forests, and pockets of insecurity impeded full assessments of humanitarian needs in the country's vast isolated areas throughout 1997.

A UN funding appeal in March estimated that nearly a half-million Congolese/Zairians were displaced. U.S. aid officials estimated in August that some 230,000 probably were uprooted within the country. A UN human rights official reported in mid-year that 250,000 to 400,000 were displaced. An international NGO put the number at 190,000. All sources agreed that the most pervasive displacement was in the chronically unstable Masisi zone of eastern Congo/Zaire, near the town of Goma.

USCR site visits to eastern Congo/Zaire during 1997 concluded that up to half the population in some areas of the east were at least temporarily displaced during the war. Many were able to return home after several weeks, but thousands of families endured long-term displacement caused by lingering insecurity in their home areas. USCR estimated that up to 150,000 people remained internally displaced at mid-year, but a majority were "invisible to outsiders because they are dispersed," USCR's report noted.

About 40,000 Congolese fled hundreds of kilometers westward with Rwandan refugees to the city of Kisangani early in the year. More than 70,000 fled to Tanzania. Smaller numbers entered Uganda, Burundi, Sudan, Zambia, and other countries as refugees. As many as 10,000 former Zairian soldiers and their families reportedly fled to Central African Republic.

[...]

In the second half of 1997, after the main civil war ended, eruptions of violence in eastern Congo/Zaire pushed additional tens of thousands from their homes. Some 8,000 people converged on the town of Goma in late April. At least 15,000 fled to Rwanda. Entire areas of Masisi zone, in the east, lay deserted, with 15,000 homes burned and 1,000 people dead." (USCR 1998, pp. 60-61)

400,000 believed to be displaced by the end of 1996

"Uprooted Zairians were the virtually forgotten victims of their country's widening civil war [after October 1996].

An estimated three million Zairians lived in the conflict zones. An estimated 400,000 became internally displaced, and approximately 50,000 others became new refugees in Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. An additional 1,000 or more Zairian or Rwandan Tutsi fled to neighboring Congo to escape anti-Tutsi violence in the Zairian capital, Kinshasa.

In addition to the new Zairian refugees created during 1996, tens of thousands of Zairians remained refugees from previous years." (USCR 1997, p.107)

Disaggregated figures

Distribution of IDPs by province (July 99-mid 2004)

- Decrease of IDP figures in all Provinces (mid-2004)
- Great increase of IDPs in Orientale due to crisis in Ituri (mid-2003)
- The majority of displaced persons were found in the eastern provinces of North Kivu, Katanga, Orientale and South Kivu, (Aug 2002)The majority of displaced persons were found in the eastern provinces of North Kivu, Katanga, Orientale and South Kivu, (Aug 2002)
- about 1 million IDPs in the Kivus as of Aug 2002
- The number of IDPs in Equateur decreased greatly from Dec 2000 to Sept 2001
- The number of IDPs in Orientale increased greatly from Dec 2000 to Sept 2001 and then increased again in Feb 2002
- The number of IDPs in Katanga increased by 100,000 IDPs between Dec 00 and Sept 01

November 2003

LOCATION	ORIGIN	Nov 03	Aug 04
Equateur	DRC	168,000	165,000
Katanga	DRC	412,000	365,000
Maniema	DRC	234,000	165,000
North Kivu	DRC	1,209,000	785,000
Orientale	DRC	791,000	455,000
South Kivu	DRC	413,700	254,000
East and West Kasai	DRC	145,000	95,000
			(includes +/- 40,000

Kinshasa	DRC	41,000	expellees from Angola) 45,000 (includes +/- 3,000 expellees from Angola)
TOTAL IDPs		3.4 million	2,329,000

(based on numbers provided by UN OCHA, 18 Nov 03, p19; UN OCHA 31 August 2004)

Area	July 1999	June 2000	Dec 2000	Sept 2001	Feb 2002	August 2002
Equateur	100,000	250,000	300,000	85,000	85,000	85,000
Orientale	70,000	215,000	160,000	230,000	250,000	250,000
North Kivu	160,000	287,000	640,000	760,000	760,000	760,000
South Kivu	195,000	220,000	350,500	225,000	435,111	435,000
Katanga	150,000	250,000	305,000	415,000	415,000	415,000
Maniema	20,000	110,000	137,000	160,000	160,000	160,000
Eastern Kasai & Western Kasai	60,000	30,000 and 140,000	30,000 and 80,000	130,000	130,000	130,000
Kinshasa	N/A	N/A	N/A	40,000	40,000	40,000
Total	775,000	1,502,000	2,002,500	2,045,000	2,275,111	2,275,000

Source: UN OCHA 15 July 1999, 11 July 2000, 31 December 2000 (p.11), 30 September 2001; 28 February 2002, p.13; August 2002; 31 July 2002

New survey of IDPs in camps in Kalemie, North Katanga (Jan 04)

According to survey on internal displacement in 4 IDP camps in Kalemie:

Effectifs globaux pour l'ensemble des sites d'hébergement de Kalemie

« La détermination du nombre exact des déplacés des guerres hébergés dans les différents sites de la ville de Kalémie a été un des objectifs principaux de l'opération de recensement la fin du mois de décembre 2003. Il en ressort que plus de 7.000 familles séjournent dans les quatre sites déjà cités, quelques uns depuis le début de l'année 2003, à la lumière de la distribution qu'offre le tableau suivant.

Tableau n°.1 : Répartition des effectifs des familles des déplacés de guerre par site

Sites	Fréquences absolues	Fréquences relatives
Kabutonga	477	6.7%
Lukwangulo	1052	14.7%
Lumbwe	3088	43.1%
Makala	2549	35.6%
Total	7166	100.0%

Lumbwe reste le site le plus peuplé avec 3088 familles recensées. Cet effectif est relativement inférieur à celui de plus de 3.900 déclaré par le comité du camp au terme de l'entretien que l'on a eu avec lui en début de l'opération. Il y aurait probablement eu tendance à la surestimation des effectifs pour en tirer certains avantages notamment d'ordre matériel. On aura donc réussi à élaguer au moins 800 familles fictives pour ce seul camp. C'est à Kabutonga qu'on aura réussi à élaguer le moins de faussaires possibles, soit à peine une vingtaine.

Il a été estimé nécessaire de mettre en évidence la répartition des effectifs des répondants au regard de leur sexe dans la mesure où la vulnérabilité des individus en grande partie en dépend. Ainsi donc comme en témoignent les éléments du tableau suivant plus de la moitié des répondants était des femmes. » (UN OCHA Jan 04, p10)

PATTERNS OF DISPLACEMENT

General

Night commuters in South Kivu (2005)

- 1,500 inhabitants of villages in South Kivu found refuge in town every night

“Throughout the east, militia groups continue to prey on civilians, stealing harvests and food stocks, burning houses, raping women and kidnapping people for ransom.

As a result, hundreds of people in South Kivu are commuting at night to sleep with families who live in more secure towns such as Walungu and Kaniola, 40 and 60 kilometres respectively from Bukavu.

According to the Kaniola administration, 15,000 displaced people are living in the centre of Kaniola with host families, and some 1,500 people come into the centre to sleep every night, with as many as ten families sleeping in one home.

These children who attend a school in the centre of Kaniola don't feel safe even there. Every afternoon they are joined by their teacher, the parish priest and local farmers who no longer feel safe sleeping at home, and they all make the two-hour walk into Walungu.

WFP provides food to both the internally displaced and the host families who have opened up their one-room homes to others.” (WFP 2 June 2005)

Multiple and long term displacement (2004)

“‘The conflict in DR Congo has been going on for quite some time, so you have massive displacement of women and children and whole families,’ says the head of UNICEF's office in eastern Congo, Johannes Wedenik. ‘You have people who have been displaced several times, so you have successive waves of displacement. Many children, many families have been in a dire situation for many years.’ (UNICEF 16 December 2004)

Batwa “Pygmy” population has been displaced and marginalized (2003-2004)

- Batwa have been evicted from their original homeland in forests without compensation
- Since the beginning of the conflict, Batwa have been accused of collaborating with the opposite side

“A group of Pygmies, the Batwa, face particular challenges. The Batwa, who live in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), number an estimated 70,000-87,000, according to Minority Rights Group International

Starting in the late 1960s, with the establishment of the Kahuzi-Biega Forest in South Kivu, DRC, and still continuing today, international conservation groups have joined with national governments to forcibly expel Pygmies from newly declared game parks and forest preserves. They are evicted from their

homelands and offered neither compensation nor recourse. Homeless, they take up a marginalized status on the periphery of local communities. [...]

It is a social taboo to share food, occupy the same bench and socialize with Batwa in public spaces. While other citizens are issued birth certificates and identity cards free of charge, Batwa must undergo an involved bureaucratic process. Without these cards, it is difficult to enroll in schools and receive government-funded health care, which are otherwise guaranteed to other vulnerable people in the country. [...]

[...] [I]n the DRC, where many more Batwa are able to maintain their lives in the forests than in any other country in the Great Lakes region. However, these forests are popular among rebel groups and are often the battleground for the conflicts raging there today. The Batwa have been accused of exchanging information, becoming spies, or joining an opposing side, and so often become victims of violence. Amnesty International recently reported cannibalistic incidents of armed groups killing the Batwa and forcing prisoners to eat the flesh. While some Batwa do join with rebel and government forces that can provide subsistence, many more are innocent victims of armed conflict.” (RI 12 Aug 03)

“Civil wars, poorly planned conservation parks, lack of access to education, healthcare and land, ethnic discrimination, economic hardships, and inequalities threaten to destroy Batwa cultural heritage. In August 2003 Refugees International released a report entitled, "Forgotten People: The Batwa 'Pygmy' of the Great Lakes Region of Africa" documenting these threats. They remain the challenges confronted by the 70,000-87,000 Batwa living in Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Rwanda and Burundi. One year later and still forgotten, the Batwa are vulnerable.” (RI 20 August 2004)

Forced displacement from areas rich in mineral wealth in the Kivus and in Maniema (2001-2002)

- In the Kivus, reports that activities of the Rwanda Army and of soldiers of the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie have led to the displacement of villages as the armies have moved into areas in order to 'secure' a mining site
- In Maniema, reports that the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe have forcibly moved people out of rural areas where they want to be involved in mining and exploiting other resources

According to a report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Great Lakes Region and Genocide Prevention:

"It was also reported that the activities of RPA and RCD soldiers have led to the displacement of villages as the armies have moved into areas in order to 'secure' a mining site. Numerous cases were mentioned by local sources in North and South Kivu. There are also reports from Masisi, Walikale and Maniema that the Mai-Mai and the Interahamwe have forcibly moved people out of rural areas where they want to be involved in mining and exploiting other resources. For example, it was reported that the Mai-Mai took control of the gold and coltan area of Kampene (Maniema) in May 2002. As they have taken control of villages near to mining sites, the population has fled which in turn has sometimes attracted the RPA and RCD to try to take the villages themselves. Displacement has led to population movement into other villages, towns and forests, which has increased malnutrition and food insecurity and exerted pressure on depleted health and education services." (APPG Nov 2002, p29)

According to Amnesty International:

"Large-scale population displacement is particularly prevalent in areas rich in mineral wealth. In the Masisi territory of North-Kivu, on 29 June 2000, the RCD-Goma and RPA reportedly fired continuously into the air for an hour-and-a-half, terrorizing the local population and forcing thousands of people to flee, leaving the area empty and easy accessible to troops. In another case, 34,000 were displaced during the months of July and August 2000, and a further 27,000 in September and October 2000, due to fighting around the town of Shabunda, a rich coltan mining area. [...] Most of these Internally Displaced People are receiving no humanitarian assistance." (AI 19 June 2001)

Changed frontline and strategy by armed groups in South Kivu make the displaced flee greater distances (2000-2001)

- Previously IDPs used to make efforts to stay near their villages and fields
- Anticipation of an all-out war, affected communities flee on far greater distances
- New strategy of uncontrolled armed groups to destroy villages forces IDPs constantly on the move from village to village in search for protection from attacks by the numerous armed factions
- In some instances, people in South Kivu are displaced five or more times, in various directions, as fighting breaks out in their places of refuge

"For much of 1999 humanitarian agencies were able to trace and reach most of IDP communities, since their movement was generally stable once away from insecure areas, i.e. IDPs were on the move for some time and making efforts to stay near their villages and fields. The displacement patterns of South Kivu noticeably changed starting from November-December 99, but especially in January 2000 when the frontline stretched from western parts of Maniema province down to Shabunda and even Kalonge. The dramatic shift of the frontline that has also led to significant changes - the Mayi-Mayi activity is now perceived by the civilian population, especially in towns, as a resistance movement, with which it overwhelmingly sympathises. Thus a qualitative change in the patterns of displacement- in search of security and in anticipation of an all-out war, affected communities flee on far greater distances. If the current levels of tension were to be sustained for another month, the majority of rural areas of South Kivu might be deserted and a significant rise in refugee numbers in Tanzania might occur." (OCHA 15 February 2000)

" The fact that uncontrolled armed groups in the Kivus are much better armed and co-ordinated than previously results in focused fighting of longer duration. On a number of occasions during the reporting period the uncontrolled-armed groups (UAGs) have gained the upper hand over RCD forces. A distinct change in the modus operandi of these groups has been observed: it would appear they no longer fight, loot and withdraw. In many instances they fight for control of villages or territories and remain there as an occupying force. This was notably reported by recent IDPs from Masisi in North Kivu.

[...]

The most important pattern of displacement in South Kivu during the reporting period has been the change in strategies of attacks on populations and thus the change in displacement practices. Those dwelling in forests habitually displaced from settlements to camps further into the forest in order to be out of the way of whatever insecurity arising. This would be sufficient to keep them protected until their villages were safe and they could return. This method of self-preservation is no longer adequate. It would appear that there are previously unknown UAGs operating who are clearing entire areas with the express purpose that people do not return to their villages. As a result, waves of people who had been living rough in forests are now being swept before UAGs, constantly on the move." (OCHA 17 April 2000)

"The continued fighting in North and South Kivu provinces in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has displaced nearly half a million people in recent months. Congolese have fled from village to village in an illusory search for protection from attacks by the numerous armed factions in the region. Host

communities up to this point have welcomed internally displaced people (IDPs). Individual households have swollen to twenty or more people in some areas. However, African hospitality and limited international resources are reaching their limits." (RI 5 May 2000)

"This province [of South Kivu] has seen the development of a pattern of displacement in which civilians, whose villages are raided for food and livestock, have to flee either to neighbouring villages, or to large towns such as Bukavu. In some instances, people are displaced five or more times, in various directions, as fighting breaks out in their places of refuge. In other cases, people have returned to their home villages once security returned, only to be displaced by fresh fighting. For the most part, they flee without belongings and many of those who return discover that their villages and farms are burned or otherwise destroyed by armed belligerents." (ACT 13 July 2001)

PHYSICAL SECURITY & FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

General

Serious protection concerns for IDPs and other civilians despite transition government (2004-2005)

- Widespread human rights violations by armed groups continue with almost total impunity (2005)
- Civilians in the Kivus and in Maniema are particularly at threat according to OCHA (2004)
- HRW denounced pattern of deteriorating security and massive violations of international human rights and humanitarian law (2004)
- IDPs in Manon Territory, Katanga Province, said they witnessed cannibalism, murders and forced recruitment of children by Mai Mai groups (April 2004)

“While some provinces, such as Equateur, have been relatively calm over the last three years, much of the eastern part of the country remains volatile and insecure, with sporadic clashes amongst armed groups and civilians continuing to bear the brunt. Widespread human rights violations by armed groups continue with almost total impunity, including killings, rape, sexual exploitation, abductions, forcible conscription of children, looting, plundering of crops, illegal taxation and general harassment of civilian populations. Unpaid Government troops (FARDC) are responsible for many of the crimes. Lack of salaries for these troops is a major problem.

Ethnic clashes, the presence of foreign troops, illegal exploitation of natural resources (gold, coltan and diamonds), and smuggling of goods and weapons all add to the violence. There is no functioning judicial system in much of the eastern DRC. A recent survey showed that it would cost a woman US\$ 300 to succeed in having a rape case brought to court.” (OCHA 8 June 2005)

“The protection of civilians remains a serious concern throughout DRC, particularly for populations living in the Kivus and Maniema who are under threat of FDLR movements and clashes between insurgent groups and government troops, not to mention the possibility of foreign intervention. Further north in the Mahagi Territory, Ituri District, the FNI and FAPC forces continue to wreak havoc for civilian populations in this region. [...]

In flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and human rights principles, war crimes continue to be carried out by both renegade armed groups and the national army throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo. Violations of the right to life, physical integrity, freedom of movement and property continue to be systematically violated by those in positions of power while impunity reigns unchecked.” (UN OCHA 31 Aug 04)

“The recent fighting in Bukavu is only the latest event in a pattern of deteriorating security and massive violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. For millions of Congolese citizens who live in the highly populated eastern region and face daily struggles for survival, there is no peace.

Rebellious factions of former rebel groups plus other armed groups that have not joined the transitional process use violence to oppose integration into the new DRC army and to challenge the authority of the fragile DRC transitional government. Leaders of the former rebel groups have apparently encouraged or tolerated these challenges even while taking part in the transitional government, perhaps seeking to keep all options open should the peace process not bring the desired dividends. The Kinshasa transitional authorities have been unable to meet the political challenges and have failed to stop the violence.

Human Rights Watch researchers have documented war crimes and other human rights abuses including summary executions, of which some were committed on an ethnic basis, rape, and looting by all the fighting groups since May 26, 2004 as well as in the previous months.

The violence against civilians in Bukavu, the capital of South Kivu province, followed the May 26 clash between soldiers loyal to Colonel Jules Mutebutsi, a commander from the Rally for Congolese Democracy – Goma (RCD-G) who had been suspended from the integrated national army in late February 2004, and pro-government forces of the newly created Tenth Military Region under the command of General Mbuza Mabe. At least one soldier from Mabe's forces was killed in the fighting. Over the following two days other soldiers from Mabe's forces killed civilians of the minority Banyamulenge ethnic group in apparent reprisal for the killing of their fellow soldier. Some Banyamulenge were apparently targeted because they were of the same ethnicity as Mutebutsi.

The Banyamulenge are Congolese people whose ancestors migrated from Rwanda and Burundi generations ago to the high plateau area in South Kivu and are often referred to as Congolese Tutsi. Relations between the Banyamulenge and other Congolese groups have been strained and are frequently manipulated by politicians in both Rwanda and the DRC. The past six years of war have contributed to hostility against them as they are increasingly identified as "Rwandan" by other Congolese. Rwanda has often justified its presence in DRC in part as an effort to protect the Banyamulenge people, though this was challenged in 2002 when they attacked the Banyamulenge homelands killing scores of Banyamulenge civilians, shooting some of them from Rwandan helicopters.

Brigadier General Laurent Nkunda, another RCD-G commander based in North Kivu, moved some one thousand of his forces south to support Mutebutsi in taking control of Bukavu on June 2. Nkunda claimed he "wanted to protect his people." There had been some killings of Banyamulenge people, as well as of other civilians, but the claim that the military operation was motivated solely by this concern seems unlikely. In the ongoing struggle for power in eastern DRC, ethnicity frequently serves to cover other motives for action.

Public news reports in Rwanda exaggerated the threat against the Banyamulenge claiming that massacres were taking place and that "genocide" was planned. Some members of the Banyamulenge community may have welcomed action by Nkunda and Mutebutsi, but others denounced the actions of the two renegade commanders, saying in a press statement that they have "no need of these criminals for their defense."

Serious Human Rights Crimes

Human Rights Watch researchers have documented continued widespread human rights abuses in significant pockets of eastern DRC, including war crimes carried out by pro-government soldiers under the command of General Mabe and those carried out by forces under General Nkunda and Colonel Mutebutsi in Bukavu over the last two weeks." (HRW 12 June 2004)

« Les populations du territoire de Manono, dans la province du Katanga sont terrorisées par des Mayi-Mayi. Une mission de la MONUC rapporte des témoignages d'actes de cannibalisme, de meurtres et de recrutement forcé des enfants dans des groupes armés. Suivant ces témoignages, ces actes s'inscrivent dans le cadre des objectifs ultimes du commandant Mayi-Mayi Gédéon de procéder au renforcement de ses effectifs et d'élargir son rayon d'action. Ces témoignages ont été recueillis le mercredi 07 avril 2004 à Manono auprès des populations déplacées en provenance des villages de Kahongo, Samba, Kipoki, Kabusonji, Konde, Muyela... Selon la section des Affaires Humanitaires de la MONUC, les familles déplacées sont hébergées provisoirement dans des écoles. Les malnutris sont gardés à l'hôpital général où ils constituent la majorité des malades internés. » (UN OCHA 16 April 2004)

Some Congolese troops guarding IDP camps are reported to extort IDP belongings (2005)

- According to OCHA, IDPs in Tch  are worried about actions of Congolese Army and envisage to return to Bunia

“According to a high ranking official of the FARDC [Congolese army] in Ituri, ‘Troops are successfully redeploying deeper and deeper inside Ituri. No single armed group has tried or successfully opposed our deployment within the district.’

As a positive consequence of this redeployment, there is a growing sense of security among the civilian population who feel, according to sentiments expressed by most of them, much safer with the FARDC troops than their own tribal militias.[...]

At the same time, there are emerging reports indicating that some FARDC soldiers deployed at Kafe and Tche are already engaging in extortion of IDPs in these locations. The credibility of the FARDC will depend on the TNG’s [Transitional National Government] ability to provide for the upkeep of its military on the ground, at least (in the short term) providing them with food. The news of some FARDC elements loosening up their ethics is worrying and everything possible must be done to stop this before it negatively affects the peace process. The spoilers are watching and waiting for such opportunity to unravel the gains made.[...]

The DRC government should ensure that the many FARDC troops and the police force in the process of being deployed in Ituri are adequately paid to avoid creating an official militia group in replacement of those that have been in existence for the last five years or so.” (Africa Initiative Programme 1 April 2005)

“Les d plac s de Tch  ont affirm  vouloir se rendre   Bunia si la MONUC se retirait d finitivement de Tch . Les populations de ces camps craignent des tracasseries et d’autres exactions de la part des FARDC. Des vols de biens appartenant aux d plac s par les militaires gouvernementaux ont d j   t  rapport s.” (OCHA 1 April 2005)

Rwandan Hutu rebel groups based in DRC committed massive human rights abuses in South Kivu (2005)

“Rwandan Hutu rebels based in eastern Congo are responsible for hundreds of summary executions, rapes, beatings and hostage-taking of Congolese civilians in the territory of Walungu, South Kivu Province, the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, MONUC, said on Wednesday in a report documenting the human rights violations.

“The 1,724 accusations of abuse are essentially against two groups of Rwandan combatants,” Fernando Castanon, the head of the MONUC section of human rights, said.

He said one group is the Rwandais forces democratiques pour la liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) while the other one, known as the Rastas, consists of Rwandan Hutus and some Congolese.

The report is based on 405 confidential interviews taken from 12 to 29 April by a multidisciplinary team from MONUC. The alleged abuses took place from June 2004 to April 2005.” (IRIN 19 May 2005)

Returnees in South Kivu find their property looted by armed groups (July 2004)

- ACF says that rebels and government forces looted or destroyed cattle, kitchen utensils, fields and hospitals in June 2004 and during the following months in Bukavu

« En juin 2004, après la prise de Bukavu (Est du Congo) par les forces rebelles du colonel Mutebusi, près de 80 000 personnes ont fui la région située entre Bweyera et Kamanyola, dans le Sud Kivu. Pendant plusieurs mois, les combattants -forces rebelles et armée gouvernementale- ont pillé les villages de manière systématique, dérobant et détruisant tout ce qui pouvait assurer la survie alimentaire des habitants : animaux d'élevage, ustensiles de cuisine, moissons non récoltées. Des hôpitaux ainsi que des centres nutritionnels thérapeutiques d'Action contre la Faim ont également été pillés.

Si le retour au calme permet aujourd'hui aux réfugiés de rentrer chez eux, c'est avec le plus grand désarroi qu'ils retrouvent leurs habitations détruites et plus de la moitié de leurs récoltes disparue. Selon les responsables d'Action contre la Faim, ces populations doivent aujourd'hui faire face à une grande précarité alimentaire : « Les mouvements de populations, les pillages, l'insécurité alimentaire et la progression d'une épidémie de choléra sont des indicateurs nous font craindre une détérioration de la situation médicale et nutritionnelle dans cette région, dans les mois à venir », déclare Samuel Cadassou, volontaire d'Action contre la Faim. La plupart des habitants ont réduit leur consommation à un seul repas par jour. Le prix de la farine est cinq fois plus élevé qu'avant la récente insurrection. » (ACF 28 July 2004)

MONUC reported massive human rights violations in territories of South Kivu (May 2005)

- Hutu militias kidnap and ransom civilians to create terror among the population and finance their armed operations
- MONUC reinforced its presence, which led to the return of 2,000 IDPs

“Durant trois semaines, du 12 au 29 avril 2005, une équipe de l'unité d'enquête spéciale de la division des droits de l'Homme de la MONUC a enquêté sur les nombreuses allégations de violations des droits de l'Homme perpétrées par les groupes armés entre juin 2004 et avril 2005, dans ce territoire de collines entouré de forêts denses, situé à l'ouest de Bukavu. Elle en a visité les groupements les plus affectés: Kanyola, Mushinga, Ikoma, Mulamba, Burhinyi et Tubimbi, où elle a eu l'occasion de s'entretenir avec des centaines de victimes.

Le 18 mai 2005, lors du point de presse hebdomadaire de la MONUC, le Directeur de la division des droits de l'Homme, Fernando Castanon, a livré les premières conclusions de l'enquête. Celles-ci sont accablantes. Au cours de son séjour à Walungu, l'équipe a mené pas moins de 405 entrevues confidentielles. 2 129 cas de violations des droits de l'Homme ont été répertoriés, dont 177 exécutions sommaires, 320 viols, 465 enlèvements, et 748 cas de mauvais traitements, traitements cruels, inhumains et dégradants et 14 cas de disparitions forcées. Pour le seul groupement de Kanyola, au cours de la période considérée, quelque 25 365 dollars ont dû être rassemblés par la population en échange de la libération des otages enlevés par ces groupes armés.

Dans son rapport préliminaire, l'équipe d'enquête spéciale souligne qu'à Walungu les enlèvements de civils assortis de demandes de rançon sont devenus un moyen de terroriser la population et de financer les groupes Hutu disséminés dans les forêts du territoire. Les auteurs présumés de ces violations des droits de l'Homme sont en majorité des Hutu armés appartenant aux groupes FDLR et Rasta, et dans une moindre mesure des militaires des FARDC.

Les FDLR ont démenti leur alliance avec le groupe dit des Rasta. Parmi celui-ci, la population et les victimes ont identifié des civils congolais appartenant à l'ethnie Mushi et des déserteurs des ex-composantes militaires congolaises. Le directeur de la division des droits de l'Homme a indiqué à ce propos qu'en l'absence de preuves suffisantes, la MONUC n'est pas en mesure de donner des chiffres précis sur les effectifs ni de dégager une typologie claire des liens, des allégeances ou des dissidences au sein des groupes Hutu.

Malgré la persistance des attaques, la population de Walungu est un peu plus soulagée: A la fin du mois de mars les Casques bleus de la MONUC et les FARDC ont mis en place un dispositif renforcé de sécurisation du territoire et ont lancé, en étroite collaboration avec la population, des patrouilles nocturnes dans les zones les plus sensibles du territoire. Depuis la mise en place de ce dispositif, plus de 2000 déplacés qui s'étaient réfugiés dans le stade de la petite cité de Walungu, sont rentrés chez eux." (MONUC 31 May 2005)

MONUC reported massive human rights violations against IDPs and others in Ituri in 2002-2003 (July 2004)

- The UN estimated that 8,000 were civilians killed, countless rapes of women and 600,000 IDPs
- Abuses committed with total impunity by all Ituri armed groups, as well as groups now part of the transition government, Rwanda and Uganda
-

"The Ituri district, located in the Orientale Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, currently has one of the world's worst - and for a long time largely ignored - human rights records. Based on the investigations carried out by MONUC and other human rights entities, it is estimated that 8.000 civilians, probably more, were deliberately killed or were the victims of indiscriminate use of force from January 2002 to December 2003. The exact number of female victims of rape or sexual slavery is impossible to estimate at this time. Countless women were abducted and became "war wives", while others were raped or sexually abused before being released. More than 600.000 civilians have been forced to flee their homes. Thousands of children aged from 7 to 17 were drawn forcibly or voluntarily into armed groups, placing their very lives at risk and depriving them of a childhood. In addition, entire villages ~ belonging to all the different ethnic groups - were destroyed, including health and education facilities, housing and other infrastructure.

These abuses have been carried out with total impunity by all Ituri armed groups and several non-Ituri groups (MLC, RCD, RCD-MI., RCD-N). In addition, the pre-transition Government in Kinshasa and the Governments of Rwanda and Uganda all contributed to the massive abuses by arming, training and advising local armed groups at different times." (UN SG 16 July 2004)

Worsening climate for Banyamulenge community (2004)

"Since 1989, the Banyamulenge had gradually become more accepted by the other communities, but the political manoeuvring in Kinshasa and the events in Bukavu were seized upon by a small group of extremists to renew the propagation of xenophobic ideas. A clandestine radio station, Radio Patriot, has recently resumed broadcasting since being silenced in 1997. This radio station is again disseminating messages inciting hatred among the different groups. And, although it is fairly successful in avoiding the direct mentioning of ethnic groups, the station's discourse leaves no doubt that it is referring to the Tutsis, Banyamulenge and Rwandans. Although it is not clear to exactly what extent, it is obvious that some of the politicians in Kinshasa as well as a number of Church and civil society leaders support these extremist ideas." (ISS 7 May 2004)

UN OCHA reported arbitrary arrests of IDPs in Kalemie, Katanga (March 2004)

- Violations of freedom of movement: Difficulty for IDPs to go out of camps
- Arbitrary arrest: 18 IDPs arrested for obscure reasons according to humanitarian organizations
- Arrests by authorities coincide with times of food distribution in camps

« A Kalemie, le pouvoir judiciaire ne cesse de commettre les exactions auprès des déplacés. Les arrestations arbitraires sont devenues monnaie courante dans les camps des déplacés de Makala et menacent actuellement la sécurité et la quiétude des tous les déplacés installés autour de Kalemie. Pour le moment les déplacés du camp de Makala ont du mal à se mouvoir en dehors de leur camp d'hébergement au risque d'être arrêtés. Cette situation malheureuse remonte depuis les événements du vendredi 05/03/02 qui seraient marqués par l'arrestation des 18 déplacés dans le camp de Makala sur instruction du Procureur de la République. Parmi ces 18, 12 déplacés étaient transférés à Kalemie et 6 autres libérés le même jour. Le lendemain, 10 des ces 12 étaient libérés. Jusqu'à ces jours deux étaient encore détenus pour des raisons non jusque là élucidées. Selon le pouvoir judiciaire, ces derniers seraient impliqués dans le dossier «coups et blessures ». La communauté humanitaire qualifie cela d'une accusation fortuite au vu des manœuvres qui se sont constamment développées dans le camp des déplacés à chaque fois que les opérations des distributions des vivres s'y déroulent. Cette semaine un autre, le troisième, vient d'être arrêté toujours par le pouvoir judiciaire dans le même camp et cela sans motif valable. Ceci constitue d'ores et déjà un frein au bon déroulement du processus de retour des déplacés dans leurs milieux de provenance. » (UN OCHA 19 March 2004)

UN reports cannibalism, systematic killing and rape (2003-2004)

- Two United Nations reports on human rights violations occurring in 2002-2003 in DRC point to instances of cannibalism, systematic killing, rape and looting
- Reports of cannibalism continued in 2004 in Katanga Province

“Two United Nations reports on human rights violations occurring late last year and earlier this year in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) point to instances of cannibalism, systematic killing, rape and looting, and unprecedented violence arising from the proliferation of rival factions.

One of the reports, both of which were transmitted to the Security Council by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, was compiled by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) after an investigation team visited Mambasa [Ituri] in the eastern Congo and heard testimony indicating a pattern of looting, killing and violence against women by the armed factions during fighting last October and December.

The team noted acts of cannibalism, and tactics to force family members to eat parts of their loved ones, that could be considered part of a policy of psychological torture, mainly conducted against the Nande and Pygmy populations.

In all the team interviewed 368 people -- victims and witnesses alike. One witness reported that soldiers killed his brother and four other people, including a three-year-old child, then took the heart of one of the victims and sucked the blood from it.

Another said soldiers killed his father, cut his chest open, removed the heart, cooked it and ate it in front of him. In yet another reported case, soldiers under the command of a woman executed six people out of a group of 13, pulled out their hearts and forced the other prisoners to taste the human flesh.

The second report, by the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC), on the violence in the Drodro area in Ituri province in April, concludes that the proliferation of rival factions and militias that are manipulated by warlords and some neighbouring countries explains the unprecedented violence that has swept Ituri for a number of months." (UN News Service 31 July 03)

"With all of the negative press that Gedeon has been getting for his flesh eating and violent killing, the territory of Manono [Katanga Province], which seemed to be moving at a swift pace towards peace and pacification with at least four groups of Mai Mai having handed over their arms and waiting to integrate into the national army, is moving again towards violence.

Reports of massacres and cannibalism have been reaching the ears of the population and state authorities of Katanga since December 2003. The accused perpetrator: Colonel Gedeon, head of a group of Mai Mai originally from the Kahongo area in the Manono territory of Katanga Province.

In Manono, the local administrator as well as the 661-battalion commander, are saying that the reports of cannibalism are true. The Mai Mai lead by Emmanuel Moise who were chased from Kahongo to Manono by Gedeon in early January, say they are true. But actual witness accounts are missing. The Moise Mai Mai group have several soldiers who say their brothers or uncles were killed and eaten, and later they saw the bones. They say the Gedeon group wear amulets of hands and fingers, and when they are fighting they nibble pieces of flesh to intimidate their enemy. They say that Gedeon is so fierce, he has renamed himself "Wafwa Kuta," or "Already Dead." (MONUC 14 April 2004)

See also International Alert, Réseau des Femmes pour un Développement Associatif, Réseau des Femmes pour la Défense des Droits et la Paix, Women's Bodies as a Battleground: Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls During the War in the Democratic Republic of Congo South Kivu (1996-2003), 2005 [Link below]

In July 2003, MSF denounced in a report the lack of protection and assistance in Ituri. See MSF, 25 July 2003, *Ituri: Unkept Promises? A Pretense of Protection and Inadequate Assistance*, [Link below]

In July 2003, Human Rights Watch (HRW) described the ethnically targeted violence in northeastern DRC. See HRW, 8 July 03, *Ituri: "Covered in blood" – Ethnically targeted violence in northeastern DR Congo*, [Link below]

Landmines are difficult to locate but present danger for civilian population and humanitarian workers (2002-2004)

- Kisangani, Ikela, as well as the Uvira region are thought to be heavily mined
- According to a Swiss Landmine-clearance organization, the extent of landmines in DRC is unknown, but the worse areas appeared to be in Ituri, North and South Kivu (Apr 04)
- Danish Church Aid reported landmines in Katanga Province (July 04)

"There is little information on the presence of mines in the DRC. Information gathering seems very difficult, but it is certain that most of the belligerents and their alliances have laid landmines more or less extensively, essentially along the frontlines. The presence of these mines is a risk for humanitarian workers and the civilian population." (UN 19 Nov 02, p62)

"While less of a hazard than in other mission areas, mines and unexploded ordnance are still present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Most mines were planted in 1999 and 2000. In particular, the areas of Kisangani and Ikela are heavily mined. Reportedly, FAC, RCD, UPDF and RPA frequently used mines in the Mbuji-Mayi, Kabinda, Kabalo, Pweto, Beni, Buta and Tshopo areas. As a consequence of the conflict in Burundi, landmines were planted in Kivu in the Uvira region, close to the Burundi border. It is believed

that Uvira, Baraka, Makobolo and the Ruzizi Valley are mined. Reportedly, UPC has also used mines in the recent fighting around Bunia." (UN SC 18 Oct 02, para.64)

According to a Swiss landmine-clearance organisation, Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD), "the extent of landmine and UXO pollution in the DRC was unknown, but that the Mine Action Centre had catalogued 300 "dangerous area reports". These were mostly based on accident reports, he added. The areas most heavily polluted, he said, appeared to be in Ituri District, North and South Kivu provinces and in the former combat zones." (IRIN 14 April 2004)

"Now that the District of Tanganyika is at peace, a quiet little legacy of the war lays in wait for the civilian population: antipersonnel mines and UXO. Both blindly kill innocents in the fields, or hunting, or while walking.

Danish Church Aid (DCA), an NGO specialized in demining, with experience ranging from Albania, to Sudan and Iraq, shared the results of its interim investigation report on the presence of mines and UXO in the District of Tanganyika, and in the territory of Pweto, Province of Katanga, in the Southeast of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Based on a map created by UNMACC with potentially-mined zones identified, DCA teams have gathered information for three months from such sources as village chiefs, mine victims and IDPs before verifying the information on the ground themselves. If one can add information associated with armed groups, it helps identify the infected zones. Apame Saidi of DCA explains, "If armed soldiers prevented a population from going to a certain area, for example, it can be a very revelatory indicator."

110 zones are suspected to be mined

Almost 110 zones have been declared suspect by the NGO. The territory of Nyunzu, seemingly the heaviest mined, has 38 suspected zones, followed by Kalemie (21 suspected zones) and finally Moba (19 zones).

According to the NGO's report, one area in particular seems to be especially contaminated. This would be the triangle running from Nyunzu to Manono and to Kongolo." (UN OCHA 16 July 2004)

All parties to the conflict carried out gross human rights abuses with impunity (2002-2003)

- MONUC confirms serious human rights abuses by MLC and RCD-N troops in Mambasa territory between Oct-Dec 2002 - including executions, mutilation, cannibalization and forced displacement of Pygmie communities from the forest
- Massive human rights violations are continuing especially in rebel-held eastern areas of the country (controlled or contested by RCD-Goma, MLC and UPC)
- Impunity of perpetrators of gross human rights violations, especially high-ranking military officers, is major obstacle to promotion of human rights and peace
- According to the UN HCHR, some violations constitute crimes that could be brought before the International Criminal Court, among others
- Rights of women and children are particularly violated in rebel-held areas, where sexual violence is used as a tool of warfare
- Humanitarian access is difficult to populations in need, many of whom have been forcibly displaced and are seeking refuge in forests in the east

- Plundering of natural resources underpins gross violations of human rights
- Militia in Ituri orders the population home, otherwise they will be treated like enemies (May 03)
- UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in DRC says that the crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity may have been committed in Ituri (Sept 03)

“MONUC Investigation Mission's preliminary report confirms human rights abuses by MLC and RCD-N troops at Mambasa and in the villages on the Mambasa/Mangina main road.

On 31 December 2002, MONUC deployed a multidisciplinary Investigation team to Mambasa, Mangina, Beni, in North-Kivu and Ituri - consisting of members from the Human Rights, Child Protection, Civilian Police sections as well as two members from the Public Information Office - following the serious allegations of human rights abuses perpetrated by MLC and RCD-N troops during their occupation of Mambasa territory on 12th -29 October 2002, since their return to the territory on 29 November, and during their advance towards Beni.

The investigation team interviewed 368 peoples - victims and witnesses alike- during the two weeks spent in Mangina and Oicha villages where tens of thousands of displaced people found refuge.

The investigation mission received testimonies corroborating ‘systematic looting and rape as well as summary executions and abductions, as war weapons, practiced by MLC and RCD-N military forces (including 19 UPC elements during the period from 12-24 October), in an operation which the aggressors termed ‘erasing the blackboard’ presented to the population as ‘a vaccination operation’, aimed at looting every house and raping every woman’. The summary executions particularly targeted the Nande community in Mambasa and the Pygmies as well as the populations in the villages located on Mambasa-Beni main road.

The report also confirms that among the people executed, mutilated and cannibalized, there were members of the Pygmies' community forced to leave the forest.” (MONUC, 15 January 2003)

“3. The human rights situation remains grave throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Despite having committed themselves to political and judicial reform for the promotion of human rights, all parties to the conflict continue to carry out gross violations of human rights with impunity. There has been a widespread failure to provide minimum guarantees to the particular needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable people: women, children, the internally displaced and those affected by HIV/AIDS.

4. MONUC, OHCHR, and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have continued to document massive violations of human rights continuing in the country, especially in areas controlled by the rebels of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie, Goma (RCD-G), the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC) and the Union des patriotes congolais (UPC). In Government-controlled territory, concerns continue over the administration of justice because of the weakness of the judicial system. In the territories controlled by the rebels, reports continue to be received of massive human rights violations, especially in the east of the country. The Special Rapporteur is scheduled to undertake a mission from 28 February to 10 March 2003 and she will report on her findings to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-ninth session in late March.

5. It is in this context that I visited the country to make a first-hand assessment of the human rights situation in the light of the signing of the Pretoria Agreement of 16 December 2002. During my stay, I held consultations with a wide section of actors in Kinshasa and Kisangani, including President Kabila and members of his Government, leaders of RCD-Goma, former President Masire (the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue), the international diplomatic community, MONUC, humanitarian groups and civil society representatives.

6. My overall assessment is that the prevailing human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is alarming and a threat to the fragile peace process. Despite the conclusion of the Pretoria and other peace agreements, the ongoing war in eastern Congo is causing massive violations of human rights and terrible suffering to thousands of civilians. The fighting in the Uvira area, clashes in the Ituri District and atrocities committed in the Beni-Mambasa area have led to the displacement of thousands of people.

7. Both the Government and rebel leaders have acknowledged that there are violations of human rights. However, the impunity of perpetrators of gross human rights violations, especially high-ranking military officials, is a major obstacle to the promotion of human rights and genuine peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some of these violations constitute international crimes that could be brought before various courts, including the International Criminal Court. The Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the Rome Statute on 30 March 2002.

[...]

10. The rights of children and women are violated all over the country, but especially in the rebel-controlled areas, where sexual violence against women and girls is a tool of warfare. Much emphasis was also put on the discrimination against women under Congolese law and the need to remedy this. I was informed that the recruitment of child soldiers as well as the use of women and children as forced labour continue in spite of efforts to put an end to these practices.

11. The already worrying humanitarian situation is deteriorating in view of the difficulties humanitarian groups face in reaching populations in need, many of whom have been forcibly displaced from their homes and are seeking refuge in the inhospitable forests of the eastern region. These are rebel-controlled areas. The belligerents prevent the humanitarian workers from crossing their respective zones of control. Ensuring safe access for humanitarian workers is especially crucial given the large number of internally displaced persons.

12. The continued plundering of natural resources and State revenues remains a destabilizing factor and underpins gross violations of human rights. The rapidly deteriorating state of the economy, exacerbated by the continuing conflict, is also a cause for concern. The dramatic reduction of household incomes has led to extortion by magistrates, soldiers, policemen, teachers, school administrators, doctors and nurses, thus rendering the entire public administration ineffective." (UN SC, 24 February 2003)

"Military authorities of the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) ordered the population in Bunia and the displaced people who found refuge at Monuc headquarters to return home, otherwise, they will be treated like enemies." (MONUC 28 May 2003)

"The UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iulia Motoc, said on Sunday that there were indications that genocide may have occurred in the eastern district of Ituri.

"The crimes of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity that may have been committed in Ituri must be answered for," she said at a news conference in Bunia, the main town in the embattled Ituri District." (IRIN 1 Sept 03)

Several IDP groups subjected to forced labour (2000-2003)

- IDPs forced by armed groups to undertake agricultural activities, services and transportation
- HRW reported in 2002 that women and girls are abducted by combatants and have to provide sexual services and domestic labor
- Deportation of civilians into "labor camps" in Ituri (Aug 03)

"Various field observations conclude that several IDP groups are being systematically subjected to non-remunerated activities, or basically forced labour. The most unfortunate ones find themselves in the hands of military, various militia groups and warlords, held as prisoners or hostage and employed for agricultural activities, services and transportation. Most strikingly, this category is not a rare sociological phenomenon, but a common arrangement practised in many parts of the country along the roads of exile. There are other categories of displaced that are being regularly exploited, however this kind of subservient labour arrangement is of economic origin and is not coercive: extremely impoverished urban displaced, for instance, migrate into the country side in search of food for labour arrangements. Typically, displaced in this category remain in villages and are used as subservient labour force." (UN November 2000, p.15)

"Combatants abducted women and girls and held them for periods up to a year and a half, forcing them during that time to provide both sexual services and gender-specific work. In addition to being raped, women and girls were obliged to do domestic labor, such as finding and transport firewood and water, gathering and preparing food, and doing laundry for the men who held them captive. [...]

When combatants moved camp, they forced the women and girls under their control to transport their belongings. When they raided to seize goods, they obliged the women and girls to carry their loot to their bases.[...]

The captors ordinarily held the women and girls at places distant from their homes and often in areas that were unfamiliar to them, making it difficult for them to try to escape. In some cases, women and girls were kept under armed guard.

Women and girls held in the forest ordinarily lived in conditions of misery in temporary shelters constructed of leaves, wood, and sheets of plastic. In one case captors deprived the women of sleeping mats and forced them to sleep on the ground. In some cases, women and girls had no shelter and were exposed to drenching rains whenever the weather was bad. Often short of water and with no soap, women found it difficult to stay clean." (HRW June 2002, pp61-62)

"Some 100 civilians of the Hema people are reported to have been deported to "labour camps" organised by Lendu militias near Fataki, about 80 km north of Bunia, in the troubled Ituri District of northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Missionary Service News Agency (MISNA) reported on Tuesday.

It reported that the prisoners were abducted during fighting that took place between the end of July and the beginning of August, during which an estimated 80 civilians were killed on or about 20 July.

"Women and young people are being held in slavery," one witness told MISNA.

Others talked of the existence of "labour camps" in an area between 10 and 20 km from Fataki, where prisoners are forced to do agricultural work at gunpoint." (IRIN 27 Aug 03)

Women and children

Displaced children need protection from recruitment by armed groups (2001-2005)

- Displaced children are particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment - as soldiers, domestic servants or sex slaves
- They are often sent to the frontlines and forced to commit human rights abuses, says Amnesty International (Sept 03)
- In Ituri, militias used children to terrorize the town of Bunia(June 03)
- According UNICEF, Although the total number of children associated with the armed forces and groups is unknown, estimates vary from 20-40,000 (May 2004)
- According to Save the Children, 12,500 of them are girls (2005)
- According to UNICEF, at least 3,000 more children were still in the hands of armed groups in Ituri and an even greater number remained in armed groups in the rest of the country (April 2005)

"War and poverty have also led to the displacement of many children. Some are orphaned or unaccompanied and forced to live on the streets. Such children are at particular risk of recruitment into the armed forces. An independent observer told Amnesty International that all over the Kivus 'children have become cannon fodder and slaves: they are recruited to become soldiers. Girls and sometimes boys are forced to become domestic servants or wives of combatants, and sometimes they are also used for child labour and exploited without payment to work in the mines. [...]"

The break-down of the political, social and economic infrastructures (schools, communities, household, health facilities), as well as displacement, weaken or destroy children's immediate source of care and protection, making them an easy target for recruitment. Unable to adequately provide for their children's needs, some parents in the region believe that recruitment into the armed forces will offer their children the food, education and security they need, and encourage separated from their families, displaced or have limited access to education." (AI 19 June 2001)

"The armies and militias are made up mostly of young men, often with very little education or who are completely illiterate. Some were forcibly conscripted, whilst others took up arms by choice in a socioeconomic situation marked by extreme poverty and an absence of alternative employment opportunities for young men in the whole of the sub-region. For these young men without work, the rifle becomes a means of getting an income, and of gaining social promotion and power. [...]"

The young militia recruits are initiated at the outset into violence and drug-taking through a ritual designed to strengthen their character and toughen them up. In Shabunda, for example, they are ordered to kill a member of their own family, generally their father or mother. They are also forced to take drugs." (International Alert & AI. 2005, p46)

"In the DRC, there are up to 12,500 girls currently in armed groups. (Save the Children Alliance 25 April 2005)

"UNICEF estimated that in Ituri alone, at least 3,000 more children were still in the hands of armed groups and that an even greater number remained in armed groups in the rest of the country." (IRIN 5 April 2005)

According to the UN Secretary General:

"15. Since the establishment of the Transitional Government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Forces armées congolaises (FAC, the armed forces of the former Government), the Mouvement de libération du Congo (MLC), the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma), the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani/Mouvement de libération (RCD-K/ML), the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-National (RCD-N) and the main Mai-Mai groups represented at the inter-Congolese dialogue are being integrated into the new national army, the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC). While this is a positive step, the various military units have yet to be fully integrated; in many cases the units are only nominally FARDC, and some of them continued

to use children. The slow progress in this restructuring has resulted in continued insecurity in many areas and has been one of the obstacles to ending armed conflict, thereby contributing as well to ongoing risks of recruitment and use of children.

16. In early 2004, the Transitional Government adopted a national policy and procedural framework for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of children in FARDC and all other armed groups. Reflecting constitutional and legislative provisions that had come into force over the past year, this framework reinforced the commitment that no persons under 18 years of age should be recruited into or present in any armed group or force. The Commission nationale de désarmement, démobilisation et réinsertion, the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration body established in March 2004, has been actively planning the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme with the Structure militaire d'intégration, MONUC, the United Nations country team and NGOs. A certificate formalizing the release of children came into effect in May 2004. During the reporting period, MONUC, UNICEF and child protection partners have been collaborating with the Commission nationale in the ongoing separation of children from armed forces and groups, as well as in other child related aspects of the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. They have also continued dialogue with military officials to advocate and plan the separation of children. This dialogue has involved direct contact with field-level commanders, the Ministry of Defence and the FARDC leadership. Since the designation of FARDC regional military commanders in October 2003, some 5,000 children, a small number of them girls, have been released from armed forces and groups. The planning of reintegration projects has also continued.[...]

Parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC)

2. Laurent Nkunda and Jules Mutebutsi, dissident elements of FARDC

This party has also been responsible for rape and other grave sexual violence against children and attacks on schools and hospitals in the reporting period.

3. Force démocratique de libération du Rwanda (FDLR)

This party has also been responsible for killing, maiming and committing rape and other grave sexual violence against children in the reporting period.

4. Forces armées populaires congolaises (FAPC)

This party has also been responsible for the killing and maiming of children in the reporting period.

5. Front nationaliste et intégrationniste (FNI)

This party has also been responsible for the killing and maiming of children in the reporting period.

6. Mai-Mai in the Kivus, Maniema and Katanga

This party has also been responsible for the killing and maiming of children in the reporting period.

7. Mudundu-40

8. Parti pour l'unité et la sauvegarde du Congo (PUSIC)

9. Union des patriotes congolais (UPC)-Thomas Lubanga and Floribert Kisembo

Factions." (UNGA & UNSC 9 February 2005)

"Since Bunia, in war-torn Ituri district of eastern Congo, plunged into violence and chaos about a month ago, it is difficult to escape the impression that the town has been taken over by children. Groups of heavily armed children -- some in their pre-teens -- now dominate the town and terrorise its residents. Atrocities of an enormous scale have been committed, including random killings, rape, looting and arson.

Children have been the immediate authors of many of these crimes. But, the gun-toting children are themselves being controlled by adults. Bunia highlights an appalling trend: the increased use of children in armed conflict. There are a number of reasons why these children need to be seen as victims of war.

First, warlords are increasingly aware that under international humanitarian law, they may have to answer tomorrow for crimes committed today. The use of children conveniently distances them from these acts. Second, the ethnic dimension of many conflicts (including Ituri's) further eases the involvement of children, who need to understand no more than which tribe is "good" or "bad". Third, where abject poverty is the

norm many children -- and their parents -- find it difficult to see alternatives. The deeper the poverty, the more susceptible children and families become to "patriotic" appeals for recruitment into armed groups." (SCF-UK 9 June 03)

"Children have been abducted in the streets or taken from classrooms, refugee camps or camps for the internally displaced. Many others have also been taken from their homes at gunpoint, as their distraught parents looked on helplessly. Others have reported being picked up while playing in their neighbourhood or walking along the road. Some children are known to have voluntarily joined the army or militia forces on being separated from their families and in conditions of poverty and the collapse of basic social services such as educational and health centres.

Once recruited, children are usually sent to training camps along with adult conscripts for military training and indoctrination. Here, they are subjected to violent treatment and in some camps, children have died from deplorable conditions. After a few weeks of training, the children are deployed to the frontlines for combat to be used as cannon fodder. Frontline missions include serving as decoys, detectors of enemy positions, bodyguards for commandants, or sex slaves. Most girl soldiers have reported being sexually exploited or raped by their commanders or other soldiers. Boys and girls are also often used as porters for ammunition, water and food, or as cooks.

Once on the frontlines, children are repeatedly forced to commit abuses, including rape and murder, against enemy soldiers and civilians. Some have been made to kill their own family members, while others have been forced to engage in cannibalistic or sexual acts with the corpses of enemies killed in battle. Children are often given drugs and alcohol to steel their emotions as they carry out these crimes. " (AI 9 Sept 03)

"All armed groups in Congo are known to have recruited children, boys and girls, for a variety of purposes ranging from combatant to porter to sexual slave. Relatively few have been released and recruitment continues to this day in certain areas. Although it is widely agreed that children should not have to wait for the national programme for adults to be released from armed groups, relatively few children have been released to date. As the development of the national programme for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) progresses, the likelihood of much larger numbers of children being released is now a real possibility.

Although the total number of children associated with the armed forces and groups is unknown, estimates vary from 20-40,000. Since 1999, over 1,500 children are known to have left armed groups in DRC and have received transit care and support to their community reintegration from UNICEF." (UNICEF 7 May 2004)

According to IRIN, "More than a quarter of the combatants in Ituri are children." (IRIN 2 Sept 04)

"All of the armed groups have recruited and trained children to turn them into combatants. According to some estimates, 40 per cent of each militia force could be composed of children under **18** years of age. Given the uncertain figures for the total strength of the armed groups, it is impossible to give accurate figures for children. Current estimates suggest 6,000 children in armed groups, with several thousand others possibly involved in local defence groups. Children have been used as combatants but also as labour in the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Girls have been forced into domestic labour and sexual slavery. Throughout the Ituri conflict, there have been a number of allegations that Uganda and Rwanda have been involved in aiding and abetting Ituri armed groups to recruit and train children." (UN SC 16 July 2004, para.39)

"Girls who became child soldiers in the ethnic conflict in the northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) face rejection when they come home, a UN official warns.

"The boys won't have too many problems, but the girls, who are no longer virgins, who even have children, are not marriageable," Christine Peduto, a UN expert on child protection here, adding: "And their parents won't get a dowry. Their families won't want them."

Nor will the fighters who got them pregnant. "Very few have managed to form relationships," Peduto said.

About 6,000 former child soldiers are awaiting UN help to rejoin civilian life in the troubled Ituri region, where two rival tribes, the Hemas and the Lendus, continued to fight each other even after wider national peace pacts were signed for the DRC in 2002." (AFP 13 April 2004)

"[C]hildren are often directly involved in the fighting. They make up around 30 – 50 per cent of fighting forces in eastern Congo." (UNICEF 16 December 2004)

For further information on the recruitment of children as soldiers in DRC, see Child Soldiers Global Report 2004, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, 17 November 2004 [reference below]

Rape of hundreds of thousands of girls and women by all forces in eastern DRC (2000-2005)

- Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have both reported extensively on sexual violence as a weapon of war (2001 & 2003)
- Rape is a form of reprisal, but superstition of fighters plays a part too (Nov 03)
- Many women are abducted and kept as slaves in the forces' camps to provide sexual, domestic and agricultural services (2005)
- Women who have been raped are also rejected and socially stigmatized (May 2004)
- In its Oct 01 report, the UN Secretary General said that internally displaced women are often preyed upon by armed elements and have been the victims of torture, sexual and other abuses and ethnically motivated killings
- Lack of response of de-facto authorities to protect women and girls
- Rape and abduction of women and girls continued as of end 2003, with the report of sexual mutilation and even cannibalism
- UN Emergency Relief Coordinator called on DRC government to make greater efforts to end sexual violence against women and children during his visit to the country in November 2003
- MSF pointed out in April 2004 that after years of neglect, there was an increase in efforts to confront sexual violence in Eastern DRC
- MSF reported in March 2005 that each week 40 raped girls and women sought MSF's help in Bunia

"Nothing better defines the de-humanization process that has developed over a decade of turmoil in eastern DRC than the culture of rape of women and girls by armed groups." (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, p.34)

"Sexual violence has been used as a weapon of war by most of the forces involved in this conflict.." (HRW June 2002, p23)

According to Amnesty International, "Rape of girls and women of all ages has been extensively used by all forces. 'Many women have been subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence by members of the security forces,' the Amnesty report said. However, rape is seriously under-reported because of the social stigma that victims must endure." (IRIN-CEA 27 June 2001)

"The conflict has also been marked by the deliberate and widespread use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a weapon of war. The victims are believed to number tens of thousands. In many cases rape was followed by the deliberate wounding or killing of the victims. On occasion armed political groups have

committed rapes deliberately to humiliate civilian populations accused of collaborating with enemy forces. Thousands of women and girls have been abducted from their homes and forced to remain with armed groups as sexual slaves. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among combatants has added considerably to the trauma faced by these women. Victims also suffer social stigma and fear of being ostracized by their community and abandoned by their families. Medical and psychological treatment appropriate to the needs of the victims is uniformly absent throughout the DRC. Few of those responsible for these extraordinarily brutal crimes have been brought to justice.” (AI 27 Nov 03)

“Most of the time, rape is a form of reprisal: when a group takes a village, they punish the women they suspect of having collaborated with the group there before. [...] Superstition also plays a part: sex with young girls supposedly adds to a fighter’s invulnerability.” (AFP 13 Nov 03)

“In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where hundreds of thousands of women are thought to have been raped since 1998, sexual mutilation and even cannibalism were reported in 2003, with armed groups particularly targeting Pygmy women for cannibalism and genocide,” according to a UNIFEM fact sheet.” (UN News Service 4 Nov 03)

“[P]erpetrators of sexual violence are members of virtually all the armed forces and armed groups that operate in eastern Congo. Such crimes were committed by the former Congolese Rally for Democracy-Goma (RCD-Goma), a Rwandan-supported armed group that controlled large parts of eastern Congo during the war. The RCD-Goma and its Rwandan allies had a number of adversaries – Mai Mai rebels, and Burundian and Rwandan Hutu armed groups – who also committed widespread acts of sexual violence. Further to the northeast, other armed groups fought for control over territory, and also carried out frequent acts of sexual violence. Among those were the Congolese Rally for Democracy – Kisangani – Liberation Movement (RCD-ML), the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC), and the Union of Congolese Peoples (UPC) and the Front for National Integration (FNI) in the Ituri region. Members of the former government army, the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC), and of the new national army known as the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC) are also guilty of sexual abuses.[...]

In a number of cases men and boys were also raped or sexually assaulted.[...]

There were several patterns of sexual abuse against civilians. Soldiers and rebel fighters engaged in acts of sexual violence in the context of military confrontations, to scare the civilian population into submission, punish them for allegedly supporting enemy forces or to provide gratification for the fighters, sometimes after a defeat. In Ituri where armed groups of different ethnicity have fought each other for years, combatants often used sexual violence to target persons of ethnic groups seen as the enemy.” (HRW 7 March 2005)

“Rape has been used deliberately and strategically to attack the fundamental values of the community, to terrorize and humiliate those suspected of supporting an enemy group and to impose the supremacy of one group over another.” (AI 26 October 2004, p1)

“The combatants utilise the women’s productive and reproductive capacities as a means of ensuring their own day-to-day survival. Women are abducted and kept as slaves in the forces’ camps to provide sexual, domestic and agricultural services. As well as providing sex, they have to cook, wash and mend the men’s clothes, cultivate small patches of land in the forest, gather firewood, fetch water and carry weapons and ammunition or other items. Often, the combatants take the women’s clothes away from them so that they cannot run away. This happened to 10% of the women interviewed. Women can be confined in the camps for several months or even several years. Rape is a means of obtaining access both to produce intended for the market and to the harvest, which is mainly controlled by the women, most of whom are farmers.” (International Alert & Al., 2005, p46)

"Dr. Rowan Gillies, Medecins Sans Frontieres' International President, has recently returned from Bunia, the capital of Ituri District in northeastern DR Congo, where he worked as a surgeon treating war victims, general and accident trauma, and obstetric emergencies. He is shocked by the relentless abuse.

"Rape and gross violations against civilians continue unabated, and today we find ourselves unable to reach them because of the extreme levels of violence in the area," said Dr Gillies. "Each week 40 raped girls and women seek MSF's help in Bunia. Many, many more never reach us." (MSF 3 March 2005)

"One might expect, with the conflict dying down in the DRC, sexual assault cases, too, would drop. However, the institutionalized fusing of sex, power and masculinity means that rape has become the terrifying norm. Aid groups report that sexual violence tripled in some provinces in 2003; a year after the conflict supposedly ended." (PAC 13 December 2004, p18)

"In general, refugee and internally displaced women are often preyed upon by armed elements and have been the victims of torture, sexual and other abuses and ethnically motivated killings. Rape has been used as a weapon of war. The situation is particularly dire in the eastern provinces. The recruitment of able-bodied males into armed forces and factions have left households headed by women and girls to fend for themselves in a country whose economy and infrastructure has been decimated by years of war." (UN SC 16 Oct 2001)

"Women who have been raped are also rejected and socially stigmatised". When asked if they had reported the rape to the police or other authorities all the women interviewed shook their heads. When asked why they hadn't most simply looked away and remained silent, others said; "When it happens you think this is an accident that has happened to me. You have to try and get on with your life." "Who do I tell? Where do I report this? There is no one. Nothing would happen, but people would know I'd been raped. It is better if I say nothing." "I'm not married...if people knew, if I complained no one would want to marry me." " (Oxfam May 2004)

"After years of neglect, there has in the last couple of years been an increase in efforts to confront sexual violence in Eastern DRC. Sexual violence against civilians is now acknowledged as a problem and it is recognised that more should be done to assist the victims and to address the impunity with which it has been occurring to date. Whilst extremely welcome, current efforts still fall short of what needs to be done to help prevent these atrocities from happening again." (MSF 1 April 2004)

"The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland during his visit to the country in November 2003, called on the DRC government to make greater efforts to end the massive human rights violations reported in the eastern regions of the country, particularly the sexual violence perpetrated against women and children." (UN OCHA 15 March 2004)

"While there are no precise figures on this abuse, the Joint Initiative on the Fight Against Sexual Violence Towards Women and Children (Initiative conjointe de la lutte contre les violences sexuelles faites à la femme et à l'enfant) has tried to assemble some statistics. Created after the DRC's five-year war, the group includes representatives from the UN, NGOs and the Congolese government.

"There were 25,000 cases of sexual violence record in South Kivu [Province], 11,350 cases in Maniema [Province], 1,625 cases in Goma [capital of North Kivu Province], and some 3,250 cases in Kalemie [a town in southeastern DRC]" since war first erupted in August 1998, Flora Tshirwisa, a member of the Joint Initiative and director of the health and reproduction programme and the World Health Organization (WHO), told IRIN.

She added that this phenomenon could also be found in areas that were not directly affected by the war, such as in the capital, Kinshasa, with 1,162 cases of rape of women and children recorded since August 1998." (IRIN 8 March 2004)

Reports of sexual abuses against children and women in Ituri (2004)

« 1.600 femmes victimes des violences sexuelles à Bunia et dans les environs (district de l'Ituri) entre le mois de janvier 2002 et avril 2004, selon la Protection de l'Enfance de la MONUC. Il s'agit d'un rapport fait le 19 mai lors de la réunion de la Sous-commission juridique de la Commission Violences Sexuelles. La même source rapporte que 450 femmes ont été violées à Kpadroma et Rethy par des miliciens. » (UN OCHA 21 May 2004)

"Lendu combatants engaged in inhumane acts such as mutilation and cannibalism, often under the effect of drugs prepared by their traditional healers. They abducted children and women for forced labour and sexual slavery. According to two eyewitnesses who were released, Lendu combatants told them that they were not killing Hema children but giving drugs to "transform them into Lendu". Hundreds of Hema women were sexually abused and forced into working for the combatants. Many children and women of Hema origin were never released." (UN SC 16 July 2004, para.36)

Rapes of displaced women in South Kivu and in Katanga (2002-2004)

- Local NGOs report over 200 rapes of Congolese Tutsi women from Kalehe, South Kivu (July 04)
- InterAgency Committee Against Violence Against Women found that 70 % of the women interviewed in IDP camps and in Kalemie had been victim of rape, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, kidnapping, or other human rights violations (July 04)

South Kivu

"Security and the protection of IDPs in the territory of Kalehe were of real concern. Reports of massacres of Banyamulenge and Bahutu communities in Kalehe could not be confirmed by MONUC/Human Rights teams, however. Most, if not all, civilians of these ethnic groups were thought to have fled west towards the high plains region or north of Kalehe to seek protection from Nkunda's troops. 221 women had reported being raped in the Kalehe zone, according to local sources." (UN OCHA 31 July 2004)

" There were reports that Interahamwe militia in South Kivu Province often raped women. [...]

Rwandan troops and RCD rebels also reportedly engaged in the rape of women in public and often in the presence of their families and in-laws. A woman raped in this manner generally is forced out of the village, leaving her husband and children behind. According to a number of credible human rights organizations, marauding bands of armed men in the occupied territories often put victims of rape through further abuse by inserting rocks, sharp sticks, and hot peppers into their vaginas." (US DOS 4 March 2002)

In Katanga

"After months of interviews, the InterAgency Committee Against Violence Against Women found that 70 % of the women they interviewed in the IDP camps and in the town of Kalemie had been victim of either rape, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, kidnapping, or other human rights violations.

Most of the women are widows or have been rejected by their husbands. These women have kept locked away inside themselves the trauma of these ignoble experiences, and have tried to survive first the war, and now society's indifference." (UN OCHA 16 July 2004)

Investigation of sexual abuses allegedly committed by UN peacekeepers (2004-2005)

- UN is investigated 72 cases of sexual abuses allegedly committed by MONUC personnel
- The UN Office of Internal Oversight Services found out a pattern of sexual exploitation by uniformed personnel involving women and girls

- The Internal Oversight Office requested the concerned troop-contributing countries to take swift disciplinary action
- In a report to the UN SC, the UN SG noted that the reputation of MONUC had been severely damaged by acts of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by some peacekeepers against the local population

On 5 January [2005], the Office of Internal Oversight Services released the results of its four-month investigation into misconduct by peacekeepers serving in Bunia (A/59/661). As preliminarily indicated in my last report on MONUC to the Security Council, dated 31 December 2004 (S/2004/1034), of the 72 allegations originally reported to MONUC, eight were fully substantiated. Upon receiving the Office of Internal Oversight Services reports on individual cases, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations transmitted them to the troop-contributing countries concerned, requesting them to take swift disciplinary action. The Department has since followed up with those Member States, requesting information on the status of these cases.

The observation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services that there was a pattern of sexual exploitation by uniformed personnel involving women and girls is a source of major concern, which is now being addressed in a comprehensive manner by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and MONUC. During the first week of January, at the request of the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Assistant Secretary-General Angela Kane was deployed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to head a special investigative team, the first elements of which had been deployed in late December. The team was augmented in February by five highly skilled investigators and will be further strengthened to meet the medium-term investigation requirements. Given the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse received by MONUC in recent months, the special investigation team focused its attention on the review of those allegations and on the conduct of as many investigations as possible.

The reputation of MONUC has been severely damaged by acts of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by some peacekeepers against the local population.” (UNSC 22 March 2005, para.64-65, 85)

For the full report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, see:

United Nations General Assembly, 5 Jan 2005, Investigation by the OIOS into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [[External link](#)]

See also Oxfam’s special page on DRC- Rape, Destiny, Stigma and Impunity [[Internet](#)]

SUBSISTENCE NEEDS

General

Urgent humanitarian needs of new IDPs in South Kivu (June 2005)

“An estimated 7,400 civilians who fled violence in May in the Democratic Republic of Congo's South Kivu Province are in urgent need of relief aid, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) reported on Friday.

'The humanitarian situation is urgent [with] mass displacement in the area amid increasing tension and threats of new attacks,' IRC said in a statement.

The displaced, from the village of Nindja, have sought refuge in and around the town of Walungu after Rwandan Hutu rebels attacked their homes on 23 May, killing 19 civilians, mutilating others and taking 50 others hostage.

IRC said there have been reports of subsequent ambushes in the region, including one on a truck carrying people who were trying to flee. The head of IRC's rapid response team, Gang Karume, said the attackers cut off hands and feet of several villagers.

Karume's team brought with them a supply of emergency items, including blankets, plastic sheeting and containers for water, and have since supplemented the initial delivery with soap, emergency food rations and materials to build latrines,' IRC said.

IRC added it would bring in additional supplies and was closely monitoring the water supply and sanitation situation to prevent possible outbreaks of disease.” (IRIN 6 June 2005)

Overview of humanitarian needs in South Kivu (November 2004)

- Few roads have been rehabilitated or rebuilt
- Great needs in the sectors of health, nutrition, food security, water and sanitation, shelter and education

“Un territoire dévasté par la guerre

Le Sud Kivu traverse en effet depuis les événements de Bukavu en juin 2004, des crises successives qui ne cessent d'accroître les nécessités d'assistance en poussant les capacités de réponse humanitaire à leurs limites. La situation est d'autant plus grave que les séquelles des guerres de 1996 et de 1998 dans ce territoire sont encore présentes. Les combats ont ainsi poussé cette partie de la RDC dans une extrême pauvreté en raison des pillages et des destructions massives des biens.

Un accès physique et géographique recouvré

L'accès des humanitaires à cette zone est cependant aujourd'hui possible grâce au plaidoyer engagé par OCHA. La forte présence d'hommes en armes ne semble plus être un obstacle à des interventions humanitaires, la mission ayant pu évoluer normalement. Des cas de tracasseries militaires à l'encontre des populations civiles continuent toutefois d'entraver la sécurité alimentaire et la relance économique. Les difficultés et les lenteurs de la réunification de l'armée conduisent en effet les militaires à vivre sur le dos de la population.

L'accès géographique a été également amélioré. Bien qu'il n'existe qu'une route reliant Uvira à Fizi, ACTED a réhabilité ou reconstruit 30 des 48 ponts entre Uvira et Baraka. A l'exception de cette voie toutefois, les autres routes et dessertes agricoles demeurent dans un état de délabrement.

De large besoins humanitaires non couverts

Du point de vue humanitaire, des besoins immenses nécessitant l'implication de partenaires supplémentaires ont été constatés dans les secteurs de la santé et de la nutrition, de la sécurité alimentaire, de l'eau et de l'assainissement, des abris et de l'éducation.

La situation sanitaire est déplorable sur l'ensemble du territoire, a rapporté la mission d'évaluation. La zone de Fizi ne compte qu'un hôpital de référence, délabré, sans médecin et sans équipement adéquat. La paupérisation de la population la prive d'accès aux soins ce qui l'oblige à recourir à la médecine traditionnelle. Des ONG comme MSF et AMI interviennent dans ce domaine mais leur champ d'action ne couvre que 35 % de la superficie du territoire.

Le territoire de Fizi n'est plus le grenier de la province du Sud Kivu. Nombres de terres arables sont en jachères. Les guerres et les pillages ont eu raison des outils aratoires, des semences, du petit élevage alors que la pêche traditionnelle ne permet pas une couverture de tous les besoins. Les faibles récoltes actuelles sont souvent pillées par les militaires.

Malgré les interventions en la matière, de l'Organisation pour l'Agriculture et l'Alimentation (FAO), du Comité International de la Croix Rouge (CICR) et d'Action Contre la Faim (ACF), seule une petite partie des besoins est couverte. Cette situation risque de surcroît de s'aggraver avec le rapatriement massif des réfugiés.

L'eau et l'assainissement sont également des problèmes majeurs dans ce territoire. 29 sources aménagées existaient avant la guerre, il n'en reste que 5 aujourd'hui. Les maladies hydriques augmentent en raison de la consommation de l'eau du lac Tanganyika ou des rivières.

Les importantes réalisations par l'ONG Tear Fund dans le domaine de l'eau et de l'assainissement (notamment dans les écoles où le manque de latrines est patent) ne suffisent cependant pas à satisfaire tous les besoins.

Une intervention conséquente est aussi nécessaire dans le secteur de l'éducation. 95% des bâtiments scolaires sont délabrés et le matériel didactique fait cruellement défaut. Les élèves étudient à même le sol, sans équipement ni matériel, a rapporté la mission. Là aussi, seul l'UNICEF intervient dans le cadre de la scolarisation des filles.

Enfin, les problèmes immobiliers risquent de poser des difficultés sont précédents compte tenu de la destruction importante de l'habitat durant les affrontements et du retour massif prévisible des réfugiés et des déplacés en vue des élections. Malgré les progrès enregistrés grâce au programme de reconstruction de maisons conduit par Tear Fund, la demande reste importante. » (OCHA 15 November 2004)

In newly accessible region of Ituri, 90,000 IDPs need urgent assistance (October 2004)

- In Aru, Ituri, 90,000 IDPs and people expelled from Uganda need urgent assistance in food and non-food items
- IDPs also lack potable water and medication, and have suffered human rights violations

“Bien que certains d'entre eux soient hébergés dans des familles d'accueil plusieurs centaines sont sans domicile. Selon l'ONG Agro Action Allemande (AAA), plus de 5.000 ménages auraient ainsi besoin d'une

assistance en vivres et en non vivres. Des distributions de nourriture sont organisées par cette ONG, mais les stocks viennent à manquer.

La rencontre avec les acteurs civils et politiques locaux a également permis de souligner les problèmes liés au manque d'eau potable sur l'ensemble du territoire. L'ONG locale CIDRI intervient certes dans l'aménagement de sources mais rien n'est entrepris à l'heure actuelle dans le traitement de l'eau.

La sécurité alimentaire demeure quant à elle précaire. Les productions vivrières sont en effet minimales. La principale culture concerne celle du tabac et s'étend sur toute l'année avant d'être vendue. Les carences alimentaires sont par conséquent élevées et touchent majoritairement les enfants. Aucun partenaire n'intervient en ce domaine.

Les intervenants en matière de santé ont souligné le manque d'organisation et la multiplication des marchands illégaux de produits pharmaceutiques.

L'absence de politique de sensibilisation au VIH/Sida engendre des taux de prévalence vertigineux et suscitent de sérieuses inquiétudes.

Des violations graves des Droits l'Homme ont, par ailleurs, été rapportées aux membres de la mission. Des exécutions sommaires ont notamment été rapportées, dans un territoire dépourvu de l'autorité étatique.

Le diagnostic provisoire de cette mission n'a concerné que la ville de Aru. Le déploiement récent de la brigade onusienne n'a pas permis de disposer des moyens logistiques pour parcourir d'autres endroits stratégiques du territoire. Une situation humanitaire semblable, voire pire, risque cependant de se révéler lorsque l'accès sera possible." (UN OCHA 9 October 2004)

22,000 IDPs in Maniema have urgent needs of assistance (Sept 04)

« 22.000 personnes déplacées dans la collectivité des Babuyu, territoire de Kabambare, province du Maniema, ont besoin d'assistance. D'après les sources locales ainsi que la collectivité de Babuyu, ces personnes sont des déplacés de juin 2003 à la suite des conflits tribaux entre Babuyu et Bembe. Depuis, ils vivent dans les villages de Sombe, Nyembo et Kiyanga, dans un rayon de 60 Km autour du chef-lieu du territoire. Ces déplacés n'ont pas reçu d'assistance. Ils lancent un appel pour une assistance d'urgence en vivres, médicaments, sheeting, semences et outils aratoires. Ces déplacés ne sauraient retourner dans leur village dans un proche avenir pour raison d'insécurité. » (UN OCHA 23 September 2004)

IDPs from Kalehe, South Kivu lack clothes, shelter and cooking utensils (August 2004)

- Most of the IDPs are in school buildings, sleeping on the floor without any blanket. Food is lacking and IDPs have no cooking utensils
- New arrivals of IDPs threatens food security of host community

« Près de 1.200 familles déplacées sur des Hauts Plateaux à l'Est de la République Démocratique du Congo (RDC) bénéficieront d'une assistance humanitaire hélicoptérée. Au total, 90 tonnes de vivres et de non vivres seront ainsi acheminées du 18 au 21 août 2004.

La voix des airs était en effet le seul moyen de venir en aide à ces populations réfugiées à Numbi et à Shanje, au sud-ouest de Minova dans la province du Sud Kivu. Elles avaient fui des exactions perpétrées

par des militaires et des groupes armés dans les environs de Kalehe (60 km au nord de Bukavu) au courant du mois de juillet.

Parties sans rien avoir emmené, ces familles vivaient dans le dénuement le plus total lorsqu'elles n'avaient pas eu la chance d'être hébergées dans des familles d'accueil comme à Numbi. La majorité des déplacés de Shanje occupent eux, des bâtiments scolaires. Ils dorment à même le sol, sans couvertures. Les vêtements manquent. Ils n'ont rien pour cuisiner, avait rapporté Patrick Lavand'Homme, chef du Bureau OCHA à Goma à la suite d'une mission conjointe d'évaluation effectuée le 24 juillet dernier.

La pression démographique engendrée par ces nouvelles arrivées menace par ailleurs une sécurité alimentaire déjà précaire. Le nombre d'habitants à Shanje avait en effet augmenté de la moitié, celui de Numbi du quart. Selon World Relief qui s'était rendu sur les lieux du 6 au 8 août, une intervention devenait urgente en la matière, les stocks de nourriture des familles hôtes ayant été entièrement consommés. » (UN OCHA 24 August 2004)

36,000 IDPs in Mahagi Territory, Ituri lack food (July 2004)

- Increased risks of malnutrition among pregnant women
- Lack of water exposes the displaced and the host community to diseases such as cholera
- Four of the health centers in the area have been looted

« Les récoltes de haricots et de maïs du mois de juillet sont faibles du fait de la sécheresse. La population est de surcroît de plus en plus empêchée, par des éléments armés, de se rendre la journée au champ pour chercher des vivres... quand elle n'est pas brutalisée à la machette, a indiqué le rapport mission sur Draju. Les risques de malnutrition augmentent, notamment chez les femmes enceintes. Les déplacés se contentent d'un repas par jour alors que les prix des denrées de base ne cessent d'augmenter sur les marchés.

L'insuffisance de l'eau par rapport à une population en expansion expose par ailleurs l'ensemble des habitants des zones concernées à des maladies hydriques et crée des conditions hygiéniques dangereuses. Des cas de choléra avaient été signalés dans la zone de santé de Rethy, un endroit de surcroît connu pour ces épidémies de peste. Même si ces maladies ont pu être contenues, elles continuent de menacer, telle une épée de Damoclès, la population si rien n'est entrepris pour améliorer l'approvisionnement en eau, l'hygiène et l'assainissement.

Une action qui devra également être relayée par une assistance médicale. A l'exception de la prise en charge gratuite des patients par l'ONG Maltezer à Mahagi ville, les quatre centres de santé de la zone de santé de Rethy ont été fermés après leur pillage. Le personnel médical a lui quitté les lieux en raison de l'insécurité.

» (UN OCHA 26 July 2004)

Widespread needs for the displaced and local population in Lubero, North Kivu (July 2004)

- Malnutrition among children while harvests have been lost due to the looting of fields by armed groups

- Increase of prices on the market, lack of health centres and education opportunities

“An assessment mission including NGOs, Agencies of the United Nations System and OCHA permitted to draw a partial table of humanitarian needs existing in this area. Of the four villages visited on July 12-14, (Lubero, Musasa, at 60 Km on the western axis; Kasugho, 45 Km from Lubero; Kagheri, 30 Km), an analogy emerges from the illnesses affecting the populations which foresees a generalization of the problems for the whole territory.

The looting of harvests and cattle by the different armed groups is recurrent in the three targeted sites. There are multiple consequences. First, hunger which touches children. A number of poorly-fed children were counted. The sole town of Lubero counts 706 of them of whom only 131 are followed by NGOs. This population might be more important because vulnerable children are taken to infirmaries only when their situation becomes serious.

Besides the generalized lack of food, the population being content with the leftovers of looting, the game of supply and demand has brought an increase in prices on the market when the purchasing power has correlatively decreased. In Kagheri, for example, prices have practically doubled let alone tripled for some commodities.

The lack of medicines in health centers aggravates the health of these populations racked by diarrhea, worms, tuberculosis, "filariosis" to name but a few illnesses. Only one third of the necessary quantity of medicines is supplied to Kasugho for the time.

The quasi systematic looting of schools leaves a bad educational system. Besides the lack of teaching aids, the pauperization of families due to thefts makes it impossible for parents to pay school fees. Only 20%-30% of children are therefore schooled in Kasugho.

To close this non-exhaustive litany of difficulties faced by the population of this territory, there remains the crucial problem of water, drainage work and road infrastructure.” (UN OCHA 20 July 2004)

Difficult access to basic services for people living in South of Bunia compared to the northern neighbourhoods (Nov 2003)

“Bunia can be divided into two political zones. A red line cuts across the city – a separation characterised by a predominantly Northern Hema (equally known as ‘Gegere’) and allied groups and pro-UPC population in the northern neighbourhoods and a predominantly Lendu (and allied groups) population in the south. As a result of this division, the population encounters great difficulties in crossing from one side to the other.[...]

Disparities are apparent between the north and the south in relation to access to social infrastructure and services. Traditionally, schools, health centres, hospitals, and charity institutions (such as churches) have been concentrated in the northern neighbourhoods. In the past, the population in the south could easily access these services. Today, however, although reduced since July/August 2003, the ethnic component of the conflict is an obstacle, preventing households in the south from using services in the north. The south also has greater difficulties acquiring clean water due to a lack of water collection points and often draws its water from unsafe sources such as rivers.” (SCF-UK Nov 03, pp16-17)

Health

Cholera epidemic in IDP camps of Ituri (April 2005)

- Epidemics reported in Tch  and Kaf  camps

“Aid workers are unable to reach camps for thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where cholera has broken out, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has said.

“The situation is likely to worsen in the Tch  camp, where the lives of about 25,000 people is at risk,” OCHA said in a statement issued on Tuesday.

It said that since the outbreak of the disease on 26 March, some 1,420 people had been affected by the epidemic, which has killed 29 people.

Aid workers are unable to reach Tch , 62 km northeast of Bunia - the main town in the district of Ituri - where various militias are operating.

OCHA said UN peacekeepers and troops of the newly integrated national Congolese army have forcibly disarmed thousands of Ituri militiamen, but in and around Tch , the militias are “still wreaking havoc on innocent civilians”. (IRIN 22 April 2005)

“Le chol ra s vit dans le camp de d plac s   Kaf , en Ituri, et risque de contaminer d’autres camps. Pr s d’une centaine de cas ont  t  signal s entre le 29 mars et le 2 avril. Le mouvement des d plac s vers d’autres sites risque de propager le chol ra   plusieurs localit s notamment dans d’autres camps de d plac s.” (OCHA 1 April 2005)

3.8 million people are estimated to have died as a result of DRC war, according to IRC (December 2004)

- DRC's mortality rate is higher than UN reports for any country in the world
- More than 31,000 people die every month as a result of the conflict
- Health conditions are far worse in the east of the country than in the west
- Majority of deaths are due to easily preventable and treatable diseases
- In spite of positive trends, mortality rates in DR Congo have not improved significantly since 2002

“Over the past four years the International Rescue Committee (IRC) has documented the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis in DR Congo through a series of four mortality surveys. The first three surveys, conducted between 2000 and 2002, demonstrated that an estimated 3.3 million people had died as a result of the conflict. The fourth and latest study, covering the period from January 2003 to April 2004, is among the largest ever conducted in a conflict zone. Investigators used a three-stage cluster sampling technique to survey 19,500 households in total, visiting every province in the country, and measuring mortality among nearly 58 million people (over 90% of the Congolese population). An estimated five million people were inaccessible due to security problems. The key findings and conclusions are:

1. The humanitarian crisis in DR Congo remains the world's deadliest: More than 31,000 people die every month as a result of the conflict. Eighteen months after the signing of a formal peace agreement, people in DR Congo continue to die at a rate that is one third higher than the average rate for sub-Saharan Africa. The national crude mortality rate (CMR) of 2.0 deaths per 1,000 per month is 67% higher than that reported for DR Congo prior to the war (1.2). Between January 2003 and April 2004 almost 500,000 deaths occurred beyond what would normally be expected during this period. This is equivalent to over 31,000 lives lost every month and more than 1,000 people dying every day as a result of the conflict. Nearly half of them are children under five years of age. When analyzed in conjunction with the IRC's previous mortality surveys, the findings indicate that from the beginning of the war in August 1998 to the end of April 2004, approximately 3.8 million people have died as a result of the crisis. The survey demonstrates that the Congolese conflict is by far the deadliest war in the world since World War II and the deadliest in Africa ever recorded.

2. Death rates are highest in the unstable eastern provinces. The CMR in the eastern regions of DR Congo (CMR = 2.3) are more than one third higher than those for the West (1.7). The five eastern provinces, where the conflict has been most intense and protracted, have a CMR of 2.7, which is 80% higher than the average rate for sub-Saharan Africa (1.5). The mortality rate for children under five years of age (U5MR) in these provinces is 70% higher than the regional norm. The eastern provinces account for 77% of the excess mortality documented in DR Congo, with 27% of eastern health zones experiencing a CMR that is higher than the accepted emergency threshold of 1 death per 10,000 per day for the entire 16-month recall period. These rates do not include the period since April 2004, during which there have been several violent incidents in the East.

3. The majority of deaths are due to easily preventable and treatable diseases. While security problems continue in the eastern provinces, less than two percent of deaths over the past 16 months have been due to war-related violence. The most devastating byproducts of the conflict have been the disruption of the country's health services and food supplies. As a result, the vast majority of deaths have been among civilians and have been due to easily preventable and treatable illnesses such as fever and malaria, diarrhea, respiratory infections, and malnutrition. Children under five years old are at particular risk from these diseases. They account for 45.4% of the 500,000 deaths documented in this last survey period, even though they represent less than 20% of the total population.

4. Lack of security has a direct effect on the number of deaths from both violent and non-violent causes. Deaths from non-violent causes, such as infectious diseases, are highest in the most conflict-prone regions where security problems continue to impede access to health care and humanitarian assistance. In health zones where violent deaths were reported, CMRs are 75% higher than those of health zones where no violent deaths were reported. If the effects of insecurity and violence in the eastern provinces were removed entirely, it is estimated that mortality rates would reduce to almost normal levels (from 2.7 to 1.6 deaths per 1,000 per month). In the health zone of Kisangani-Ville, for example, fighting stopped in 2002 allowing health, water, and sanitation services to be rehabilitated. Since then, the CMR has declined by 79% and excess mortality has been eliminated.

5. In spite of positive trends, mortality rates in DR Congo have not improved significantly since 2002. During the period of this survey, January 2003 to April 2004, there was a gradual decrease in the total number of deaths in eastern provinces, largely due to improvements in security that allowed for increased humanitarian access. The national CMR has reduced from 2.4 to 2.0 since 2002, but this change was not statistically significant because of overlapping confidence intervals with the previous survey. Similarly, the CMRs for both eastern and western DR Congo have declined, but -- for the same reason - are not significantly different from the survey of 2002." (IRC 8 December 2004)

Overcrowding and poor sanitation kills IDPs in Ituri (March 2005)

“Overcrowding and poor sanitation kills some 25 people die every day in Gina just one of eastern Congo's camps for displaced people, a senior U.N. aid worker said Wednesday.

Diarrhoea alone kills four children on a daily basis in the nearby Tche camp for people fleeing the latest violence in the Ituri district, where an array of tribal militias hold sway despite the presence of more than 4,000 U.N. peacekeepers.

"There are enormous amounts of people who are displaced and many of these are dying," Jahal de Meritens, the head of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Democratic Republic of Congo, told reporters.

The two camps he singled out north of Ituri's main city of Bunia, are each home to some 20,000 people out of the 100,000 civilians who have fled violence in mineral-rich Ituri in the last three months.” (Reuters 23 March 2005)

Cholera epidemic in Walikale, and hundreds of cases in Goma, North Kivu (July-Aug 04)

- Lack of medical personal and treatment in Walikale
- Increase of cholera cases due to lack of drinkable water and new displacement movements in Goma

“Les analyses menées à Goma [...] ont confirmé l'existence de l'épidémie à Walikale. Sur les trois échantillons prélevés, deux ont révélé la présence du *Vibrien Cholerae*. L'OMS a notifié 158 cas dont 38 décès à la 31^{ème} semaine. Sur ces cas notifiés à la 31^{ème} semaine ; 92 cas dont 35 décès proviennent de l'aire de santé de Biruwe. Cette épidémie aurait débuté à la 26^{ème} semaine et aurait fait jusqu'à la 31^{ème} semaine un total de 429 malades dont 49 décès soit un taux de létalité de 11% (6 fois plus que la norme établie par l'OMS soit 2%). Ce taux élevé de létalité dénote d'une mauvaise prise en charge des cas ; soit par manque des intrants de lutte ou par l'insuffisance du personnel qualifié. Comme riposte à cette épidémie, une réunion des partenaires s'est tenue autour de l'inspection provinciale de la santé et a permis de dégager la disponibilité des intrants de lutte contre le choléra, qui seront acheminés à Walikale d'ici mardi de la semaine prochaine. Il faudra aussi noter que MSF/Hollande s'est engagé à soutenir une formation du personnel de santé sur la prise en charge du choléra. OCHA fait le plaidoyer pour l'acheminement à Walikale, des intrants contre le choléra. » (UN OCHA 13 August 2004)

« **198 de cas de choléra signalés à Goma, dans la province du Nord-Kivu.** La cellule épidémiologique de la province composée de l'Inspection de la Santé, de l'OMS, de l'UNICEF et de certains partenaires ont en effet déclaré 198 cas de choléra à Goma dont 115 dans l'aire de santé de Karisimbi et 83 dans l'aire de santé de Goma pendant la période du 14 juin au 1^{er} juillet. Cette recrudescence des cas de choléra est due au manque d'eau potable et aux derniers déplacements des populations dans ces aires de santé. Un système de réponse est déjà mis sur place pour une prise en charge des cas et une sensibilisation de la population sur les mesures d'hygiène. Cependant, l'autorité provinciale n'a pas encore déclaré officiellement l'épidémie de choléra dans la ville de Goma. » (UN OCHA 2 July 2004)

Spreading of plague in Mahagi territory, Ituri, due to fighting and displacement (July 04)

“Health officials in the Democratic Republic of the Congo said on Thursday 58 people, suspected to have caught the plague, had died so far this year in the northeastern district of Ituri.

They were among the 1,042 suspected plague cases recorded since January, according to a joint Ministry of Health and World Health Organization mission sent to the area from 18 to 26 July.

"Ituri remains the area in the DRC most affected by plague because of incessant population displacements caused by the continued fighting between rebel groups," Dr Vital Mondonge Makuma, deputy director of the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit at the Ministry of Health, said.

The mission reported that most of the cases occurred in Mahagi Territory, 140 km north east of Bunia, within Ituri District.” (IRIN 29 July 2004)

Conflict causes degradation of the health care system (2001-2005)

- Deterioration of health system has resulted in spread of cholera, HIV/AIDS and malaria
- In 2005, the main health problems in DRC were malaria, tuberculosis and diarrhea (including cholera)
- Health care systems paralysed in many provinces as qualified staff have fled war-affected regions
- At least 37 per cent of the population don't have access to any formal health care
- Situation in rebel-held areas is even worse due to war damage
- Health personnel run the risk of being taken hostage or prisoner

"Malaria is the number one cause of mortality for the population of nearly 20 million in the east. There are big problems of security, logistics and infrastructure, low access to health services, no preventative activities and a real lack of standardization of approach to surveillance and treatment. [...]

Health care in DRC must be redirected from the current facility-based curative care to a public health approach focused on the main killer conditions if humanitarian interventions are to address the unacceptable mortality and morbidity evident in the country. This was the key message of a joint WHO-UNICEF mission which spent late July in DRC.

The mission found that, despite good intentions, up to 70% of the population is now excluded from accessing basic health services, while all forms of preventative public activities are severely curtailed, not least because salaries of health service workers are linked to curative care. This observation led to the mission's second key recommendation: that "health worker remuneration must be separated from payment by patients... and linked to performance of a package which directly targets the main killers, both in the health centre and at household level." (WHO 9 August 2001)

“More than four million new cases of malaria were registered in Democratic Republic of Congo last year, a sharp rise from 2.5 million cases in 2002, the head of the national anti-malaria programme (PNLP) said Tuesday.” (AFP 27 April 2004)

"A recent study by the IRC indicated even a maternal mortality rate of 3,000 per 100,000 live births in the rebel-controlled areas. The very high levels of maternal mortality are associated with early sexuality and motherhood (the teenagers of less than 20 years contribute for 20% to the total fertility), too many pregnancies and births (the total is estimated at seven children per woman), unspaced pregnancies (the average period between two births is less than two years), motherhood at a late age, and induced clandestine abortions associated with unwanted pregnancies that affect 30% of the teenagers. All of this

occurs in the context of rising On top of that are the high HIV/AIDS infection rates (see HIV/AIDS paragraph).” (UN, 16 January 2003, p41)

"A dearth of recent statistical data from across the country makes a full assessment of the population's access to health services difficult.[1] However, conservative estimates of the coverage of health facilities show that at least 37 per cent of the population, or approximately 18.5 million people, have no access to any form of formal health care.[2]

In government-held areas, the share of central government expenditure allocated to the health sector is less than one per cent – and has been barely more than this since Independence in 1960. As a result, the health system has always been run as a 'private' service, with patients required to pay. In areas under RCD control, there is no budget for health services. Additional support to the 307 Health Zones into which the country is divided comes mainly from churches and other organisations. However, in 2000, 100 Health Zones received no external assistance, either from the government or from outside agencies. In addition, there is a severe lack of human resources. In 1998 there were only 2056 doctors for a population of 50 million people, and of these, 930 were in Kinshasa.[3] [...]

In rebel-held areas the situation is even worse, because a large number of the medical facilities in areas which were already under-resourced have also suffered war damage. In Masisi (North Kivu), 40 per cent of all health infrastructure has been destroyed, including the hospital in Mweso which was gutted and used by soldiers. In the Djugu territory in Ituri, many health centres were completely destroyed as the inter-ethnic war raged through its towns. All that now remains is rubble, medical staff having fled or been killed. In rebel-held parts of Kabinda Health Zone (Kasai Oriental), the disengagement of warring parties in March has allowed medical staff from health outposts to reach the town for the first time in more than a year. They reported that in 12 areas only one of the health centres has any medicine, and the rest are not functioning at all. Many have been looted, and have little or no essential equipment."

[Notes:

[1] Access is defined as both geographical and economic, ie being within a reasonable walking distance of a functioning health service and being able to afford to pay for the consultation and treatment.

[2] Figure published in the 8th Report of the Secretary General on the UN Organisation Mission in DRC (S/2001/572), 8th June 2001. However, OCHA estimates that the percentage could be as high as 75%, meaning that over 37 million people would be denied access to health care.

[3] Etat des Lieux du Secteur de la Santé, Avril-Juin 1998, Ministère de la Santé Publique] (Oxfam August 2001, pp.15-17)

“Dans les 18 zones de santé du Maniema, environ 80% des structures sont à réhabiliter, environ 90% ont besoin de médicaments essentiels et équipement.” (OCHA 2 Jan 04, p4)

“In May [2005], the World Health Organisation (WHO) supported a health needs assessment [...]. According to the study, the main health problems in DRC are malaria, tuberculosis and diarrhea (including cholera). Malaria causes 45% of the infant mortality rate, Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI), diarrhoea, and measles are the other major causes of infant morbidity and mortality. The mortality rate in several areas in the east of the country is above the threshold of more than 1 death per 10,000 people per day, indicating unacceptable ongoing levels of emergency. Infant mortality rate is double that of the sub-Saharan average, underscoring the severity of the humanitarian crisis in the east. The rate of maternal mortality in the east is estimated to be greater than 1,800 per 100,000 live births; this rate is also double the sub-Saharan average.” (OCHA 21 March 2005)

IDPs are more exposed to HIV/AIDS infection as a result of the conflict (2001-2003)

- IDPs have no means to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS infection nor access to information about its transmission
- 800,000-1 million children are orphaned because of AIDS
- Eastern provinces have the highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection, with 20-22 percent of population affected
- Coordination of actions against HIV/AIDS in the eastern DRC is not operational and inaccessibility to different HIV/AIDS services is still a major problem in regions outside government control

"Multiple troop movements and population displacements in the DRC, and to and from neighbouring countries with high HIV prevalence rates, have left the DRC well set for "an explosion of HIV/AIDS", according to WHO focal point Dr Tshioko Kweteminga, cited in an agency situation report late last week. [...]

National statistics collected through the health information system suggested that there were just under 10,000 new HIV cases last year but public health authorities have estimated – based on information from five regional sites – that there were in the region of 173,000 new HIV cases each year in the DRC, and almost 1.3 million adults and children living with HIV." (IRIN-CEA 15 August 2001)

"In both government- and rebel-controlled areas, the population has suffered greater exposure to infection as a result of the conflict. People who are internally displaced, or who have lost all means of earning a livelihood, do not have the resources to protect themselves from infection, nor access to information about HIV/AIDS transmission. Health structures have limited capacity to test patients for HIV or to screen blood used in transfusions. Women living close to military camps, with no source of income, have turned to prostitution, despite the risks involved, in order to support themselves and their families.

Human rights organisations have also registered many cases of soldiers raping women. In addition to mental and physical injury and the risk of pregnancy, rape victims are particularly vulnerable to contracting HIV because body tissues are more likely to be torn. There are six foreign armies fighting on Congolese soil, and on average, soldiers' rates of infection can be up to four times higher than those of civilians.[1] [...]

Unlike most other diseases, AIDS affects adults of child-bearing age particularly, leaving the very young with no one to care for them.

[Note: [1] "No Excuses", Christian Aid, 2001" (Oxfam 6 August 2001, p.28)

"The eastern provinces have the highest rates, with the number of people infected having increased fivefold (from 4 to 22 per cent) over the past two years in towns such as Goma, Bukavu and Beni." (UN SC 8 June 2001)

"The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) may have reached 20 percent in certain regions of the country, according to Dr Francois Lepira, director of the national programme against AIDS (Programme national de lutte contre le sida).

The announcement came on Monday as the country's Ministry of Health presented its new multi-sector plan to fight HIV/AIDS in what it says are some of the hardest-hit regions of the country, namely the provinces of Kasai Oriental in central Congo, Katanga in the southeast, South Kivu in the east, and Orientale in the northeast." (IRIN 5 Nov 03)

"Surveys among blood donors in eastern DRC show HIV/AIDS prevalence rates around 20%, four times higher than the National AIDS Control Programme figures." (UNICEF 11 Feb 2002)

According to the UN:

"1.The coordination of actions against HIV/AIDS in the eastern DRC is not operational, as the Central coordination Offices do not have the means for action.

2.The inaccessibility to different HIV/AIDS services is still a major problem, especially in the regions outside government control. Condoms, tested blood, voluntary tests and advice, treatment of STI, treatment of secondary infections, prevention of mother to child transmission are not available to over 20% of the population." (UN OCHA 19 Nov 2002, p63)

Civil war inflicts unbearable hardship on women and children (2000-2005)

- Violence perpetrated against women a feature of the war
- Number of women dying as a result of pregnancy is three to five times higher than the African average
- Significant number of women and girls are infected with STD through rape, the most deadly being HIV/AIDS and do not seek medical treatment
- UNICEF/DRC government study shows high level of malnutrition, insufficient vaccination of children, very limited access to prenatal care; rising infant and childhood mortality and significant decrease of number of children attending school (Oct 02)
- According to UNICEF, 1.9 million children suffer from acute malnutrition throughout DRC (May 2004)

"The number of women dying as a result of pregnancy is three to five times higher than the African average. Under-nourishment, forced and economic prostitution, overwork for insufficient compensation, untreated ailments and the psychological strain of maintaining large families are exacting a terrible toll. Out of the 2.5 million babies born in an average year, 20% will not reach their first birthday. Infant mortality is 50% higher than the African average." (UN 26 Nov 2001, p.42)

"A significant number of women and girls are infected with sexually transmitted diseases through rape and for any or all of the above reasons [such as stigma of rape] do not seek treatment unless it is absolutely necessary. The large majority of rape victims interviewed had never received any medical treatment after the rape, and often did not even tell doctors about the rape when they gave birth. Social workers and medical staff confirmed that only a small minority of victims ever get any treatment. Thus, many relatively easily treatable sexually transmitted diseases remain untreated, some causing considerable pain and inconvenience to the woman, and some causing irreversible consequences. The most deadly disease that can be contracted through rape is HIV/AIDS. Not only are the lives of HIV-positive women and girls shortened and their livelihood possibilities seriously impaired, but being HIV-positive or even being suspected of being positive adds to the stigma of rape to make for a double stigmatization of these women and girls. One woman who had been raped said that her husband rejected her, saying he was afraid that she had contracted HIV and would "contaminate" him. ¹⁷⁷ The scarcity and high cost of HIV testing makes it more difficult for women who are not infected to demonstrate this to their husbands and families." (HRW June 2002, p69)

UNICEF study on women and children:

"A new study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has shown that the condition of women and children in the has not improved since the last such study was carried out in 1995.

According to the latest "Enquete Nationale sur la Situation des Enfants et des Femmes", released on Monday, malnutrition of children and their mothers remains high, vaccination of children is still insufficient, access to prenatal care remains very limited, infant and childhood mortality are continuing to rise, and the number of children attending school has decreased significantly.

In a statement, UNICEF said that the myriad of problems documented by this latest study "date back many years, and their solution was to be found in a radical change of development policy and greater awareness-raising of communities".

The information for the 'Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2' was gathered by a team of 355 people from April to October 2001 in all provinces of the country, in an effort to evaluate progress made since the 1990 World Summit for Children. 10,305 households were visited for the study, which received the technical and financial support of UNICEF and the US Agency for International Development. "" (IRIN 16 Oct 02)

For more information, see the study:

UNICEF/Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the DR Congo July 2002, Enquête nationale sur la situation des enfants et des femmes MICS2/2001, Rapport d'analyse, Kinshasa, [reference below]

"According to various nutritional surveys, it is estimated that over 1.9 million children suffer from acute malnutrition throughout the territory. A major effort is underway not only to establish identification and referral systems and nutritional surveillance but also to set up traditional and 'non-traditional' nutritional centres to receive and meet the immediate needs of children in these newly accessible areas." (UNICEF 7 May 2004)

"In the first four months of this year [2005] 59,000 children have died as a direct and indirect result of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo....]

The vast majority are dying from easily preventable and curable causes such as diarrhoea, malnutrition and malaria." (Save the Children Alliance 27 April 2005)

Nutrition and food

Militia attacks and crop destruction have left IDPs and others dependent on food aid in Ituri (April 2005)

"On the surface, Ituri - a district in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) twice the size of Rwanda - is as green and fertile as ever. The rainy season has just begun and huge rain clouds that build up early in the afternoon are followed by heavy downpours, thunder and lightning.

Normally, the arrival of the rains is greeted with joyous activity in and around villages - farmers and their families prepare plots, sow maize, and plant cassava, sweet potatoes and other vegetables.

But this year, many villages - or what is left of them - are deserted. Plots are overgrown with weeds and elephant grass, and an eerie silence hangs over the landscape, where busy people should be going about their daily work. [...]

Agricultural production has plummeted, with serious consequences for the long-term food security of hundreds of thousands of people.

Agricultural NGOs and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) are calculating how much more food aid needs to be shipped into Ituri to prevent theoretically wealthy farmers from starving in the coming months. 'In the first three months of 2005, we distributed as much food aid as was planned for half a year. In a few months we will have run out of supplies and there will be a big problem towards the end of the year,' Rudi Sterz, project coordinator at German Agro Action (AAA), told IRIN in March.

'There was no way we could have planned for such a development,' he added. [...]

Since the tempo of fighting between Lendu and Hema militias increased in December 2004, the number of people fleeing to IDP camps has dramatically increased in Djugu Territory. More than 88,000 Hema fled the attacks of Lendu militias and are now cramped into five camps.[...]

During their attacks, Lendu militias burnt down homes, looted food and animals, and even destroyed crops that were growing in the fields.

‘Their aim was to chase the people away and keep them in the camps,’ Louis-Marie Bouaka of the UN Mission in the DRC, known as MONUC, told IRIN in Bunia.[...]

‘The militias made sure that when the IDPs return they have nothing left to eat, so they will not go back to their villages and start anew,’ said Aime Boyemba, an agricultural expert of AAA, based on eyewitness accounts.

‘Now that many farmers live in the camps and cannot plant, the production crunch will also hit towns like Bunia,, Boyemba said, predicting that the situation would become worse in the next six months.’”(IRIN 4 April 2005)

Malnutrition as a result of massive displacement in eastern DRC (2001-2004)

- Improvement of the security situation seems to have played a role in the amelioration of the nutrition status in some areas (May 04)
- Nearly two-thirds of the population suffers from food shortages (June 03)
- Many populations have exhausted their coping mechanisms, and are unable to meet their basic nutritional needs
- As a result of massive displacement, between 10 and 30 percent of population in some areas in Katanga, Orientale, North and South Kivu suffer from acute malnutrition (Nov 02)
- In 2001, 16 million people (33 % of population) were estimated to have critical food needs as a result of prolonged displacement and other factors

“The improvement of the security situation since mid-2003 seems to have played a part in the amelioration of the food security and nutrition status in some areas [...], whilst others remain at risk [...].” (UNSCN 31 May 2004)

“Murder and rape are increasing in the war-ravaged eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and children are slowly dying of starvation, with nearly two-thirds of the population estimated to suffer from food shortages, United Nations officials reported today even as the Security Council was being briefed on the latest peacekeeping efforts.” (UN News Service 18 June 03)

“During 2002, the general acute malnutrition remained unchanged. Areas that were previously inaccessible, such as North Katanga, experienced an improvement in the rate of malnutrition. However, areas such as South Kivu and Ituri saw an increase in armed conflict lead to increased rates of acute malnutrition.

A June 2001 study by WHO and UNICEF reported that the majority of the Congolese live on US\$ 0.20 a day, and consume less than two thirds of the calories required to meet their basic needs and remain healthy. With the continuation of the war in certain areas and the continued economic instability, many populations will remain vulnerable as they cannot meet their basic nutritional needs. Without intervention, these families will not possess the coping mechanisms needed to react and adjust to crisis. This coupled with limited access to basic social services and limited access by humanitarians to the most vulnerable places millions of Congolese in a precarious state. Overall, the coping mechanisms that enabled most of the

population to survive crises are by now totally exhausted. Insecurity and bad infrastructure make it difficult to gain access to the most vulnerable population, and this holds for punctual and sustainable humanitarian interventions.” (UN, 16 January 2003, p43)

"Between 10 percent and 30 percent of the population are suffering from acute malnutrition in many areas of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), says the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Those most affected are women and children.

The hardest-hit areas are Kiambi, Nyunzu, Manono, Pweto, Pepa, Kalemie and Malemba-Nkulu in Katanga Province; Bunia, Mahagi, Mambasa and surrounding villages in Orientale Province; Shabunda, Walungu, Ngweshe, Bunyakiri and the plain of Ruzizi in South Kivu; and Beni, Butembo, Rutshuru and Masisi in North Kivu Province.

The high rates of malnutrition were attributable to massive displacement resulting from ongoing fighting in the region, Ad Spijkers, the FAO's representative in the DRC, told IRIN. Forced to flee at a moment's notice, people had been unable to carry away food, seeds or tools with them. Moreover, the displaced people had also become a huge burden on the areas to which they had fled.

"Under these conditions, everyone - that is the displaced populations and the families in the areas they flee to - loses the capacity to feed themselves," he said.

General insecurity in the region was uprooting people repeatedly as soldiers, rebels and militia groups looted villages and emptied homes of food, drugs, stocks of seeds, electric household appliances, tools, and clothing, he said.

Malnutrition in eastern DRC, an area with enormous agricultural potential, was a new phenomenon, except for parts of South Kivu where the density of the population was significant and the soil not very fertile, said Spijkers." (IRIN 6 Nov 02)

"Some 16 million people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are estimated to have critical food needs as a result of prolonged displacement, the rupture of traditional sources of supply due to war and the alarming increase in prices." (UN SC 8 June 2001, para.57)

Nutritional surveys:

ACF Rapport de l'enquête nutritionnelle Zone de santé Lubutu, Province du Maniema, December 2004
[Link below]

ACF, Enquêtes Nutritionnelles Anthropométriques Zones de Santé de Malemba et le Lwamba République Démocratique du Congo Province du Katanga, July 2004 [Link below]

Despite transition government, armed groups continue to loot harvests which contributes to malnutrition (March 04)

- In Kirothse Health zone, close to Goma, North Kivu, the global malnutrition rate was 7.9 percent
- Malnutrition is due to continued insecurity caused by armed groups despite end of the war
- Fleeing populations in search of calmer locations also share already limited food resources with local resident populations

"Elevated levels of malnutrition prevail in eastern and northern regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), according to a number of recent studies conducted by a variety of UN agencies and NGOs.

In the Kirothse Health Zone, 30 km southwest of Goma, in the eastern province of North Kivu, the global malnutrition rate was found to be 7.9 percent of the zone's approximately 500,000 residents,[...]

According to Dr Alpha-Jean Asani Akilimani, chief medical officer of the zone, malnutrition in this otherwise lush and fertile region is due to continued insecurity caused by armed groups which, despite the end of war, continue to impose their own laws and prevent the population from freely cultivating their lands.

"Once populations displaced by fighting return to their lands and resume cultivation, armed groups wait until harvest time to pillage everything that has grown," Asani told IRIN.

Furthermore, he added, fleeing populations in search of calmer locations must share already limited food resources with local resident populations.

"The rate of severe malnutrition is 3.4 percent in this zone, while the global malnutrition rate is 7.9 percent," Lucien Matata, a nutritionist in the zone, said.

He attributed the malnutrition to a lack of protein-rich meats in people's diets, as most livestock is brought to large towns to be sold.

"Parents believe they are meeting their families' needs with the money they make, while malnutrition slowly takes hold," Matata said." (IRIN 18 March 2004)

In Fizi, South Kivu, food insecurity is closely linked to insecurity for IDPs and returnees (Oct 03)

"A recent humanitarian needs assessment mission conducted jointly by several UN agencies has found widespread humanitarian needs in the region from Uvira to Fizi in South Kivu Province of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Priorities for humanitarian action are protection/security, water, health and food security, according to the mission, conducted from 16 to 20 October by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, The United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization.

The population of the region visited was estimated to be about 375,000 people, including 76,500 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 44,500 internal returnees and 5,000 returnees from neighbouring Tanzania - many of whom had been refugees for five to seven years. "Hundreds if not thousands" of Rwandan refugees who wished to remain in the DRC were also reported.

The mission reported that although a greater sense of security seemed to have returned among the population, residents remained apprehensive about the possible eruption of renewed hostilities, given the presence of a wide range of armed elements in the region.

Serious concerns about the safety of civilians in the region persist. The mission said that a "considerable number of people remained displaced in inaccessible areas, with no intention of returning to their homes until their security could be guaranteed by all military actors". The mission also cited one local NGO as having reported that from August to mid-October 2003, 452 women and seven men had been raped along the Makobola-Baraka-Katanga axis.

Food insecurity was found to be closely linked to continued insecurity: despite being a very fertile region, many residents had refused to resume cultivation of their fields, the systematic pillage of crops having become common practice among armed groups. On top of this, the steady return of IDPs and refugees had placed a considerable burden on already food-insecure populations. The mission reported that malnutrition "was clearly visible" among populations to which they had access." (UN OCHA 31 Oct 03)

Alarming high malnutrition rates among displaced and other children (2001-2004)

- In rebel-held areas, global malnutrition rates among children under five have reached 41 % and severe malnutrition rates up to 25.79% (SCF-UK & Nueva Frontiera surveys)
- In certain parts of government-held areas, global malnutrition rates among children have reached 42% (SCF-UK survey)
- In remote areas of Equateur Province, majority of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition and child mortality rates are reportedly unacceptably high (Dec 01 & Feb 02)
- World Vision found a 13.9% rate of serious malnutrition among children under 5 in Rwanguba health zone (North Kivu)
- In Kindu (Maniema Province), IDP and resident children show alarming signs of malnutrition (June 2002)
- Malnutrition of small children in Baraka, South Kivu (Feb 2002)
- In Gemena (Equateur Province), over one-third of children under five experience stunted growth, while nearly one child in eight was suffering from acute malnutrition and 3 percent from severe malnutrition (March 04)

"In rebel-held areas, the rates of global malnutrition among children under five reported in the past year have reached 41 per cent,[1] with severe malnutrition rates of up to 25.79 per cent.[2] These figures were recorded at the point at which the humanitarian community gained access to previously isolated communities. Consequently, it is reasonable to expect that in areas of the east which continue to be too insecure to allow any form of assistance to be delivered, the situation is at least as bad, and possibly worse. Displaced populations inaccessible in the forests are in a particularly bad nutritional state, as illustrated by WFP's figures for South Kivu, which show that 75 per cent of malnourished children currently registered in feeding centres belong to families which have just emerged from the forests. When Manono and Kiambi (northern Katanga) became accessible in January 2001, Nuova Frontiera conducted a nutritional survey which found a global malnutrition rate among under fives of 32.07 per cent and a severe malnutrition rate of 25.79 per cent" (Oxfam August 2001, p. 26)

In the Kivus, "Children, as usual, are being disproportionately impacted by the displacement. Therapeutic and supplementary feeding centers remain full. However, a shortage of therapeutic dry milk is being felt, and many local centers which care for hundreds of children are scrambling to supply this life-giving commodity. " (RI 14 September 2000)

"In Mbandaka, Gbadolite and more especially in the more remote areas of Equateur Province, MONUC has observed that the majority of children under 5 suffer from malnutrition, that child mortality rates are reportedly unacceptably high and that the expanded vaccination programme in Gbadolite has been interrupted since mid-2000." (UN SC 15 Feb 2002, para.74)

"An assessment of the health, nutrition and food security of people living in Rwanguba health zone, a war-affected area northeast of Goma in North Kivu province, has found a 13.9% rate of serious malnutrition among children under 5. World Vision has been addressing malnutrition among war-affected children in North and South Kivu provinces since 1998." (WVI 19 Mar 2002)

"41,684 displaced persons are now living in Kindu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and among this population 2,933 children between the ages of 0 and 5 are showing signs of malnutrition, according to a recent emergency assessment facilitated by OCHA and FAO Kindu [...]. [...]"

To make matters worse, Kindu's 131,000 residents, who's number of malnourished children have registered even higher than the displaced children [...], may themselves be facing a humanitarian crisis if the security situation doesn't change soon." (UN OCHA 25 June 2002)

In Baraka, "Families more recently displaced from the interior of Fizi are sheltering in some of them. In December there were estimated to be over 15,000 displaced people in the vicinity of Baraka, and there are additional smaller concentrations northwards along the lakeshore. There have been repeated outbreaks of cholera in recent months. The latest ones in Baraka have been somewhat stemmed by dispatch of serum from Uvira by ACF, but a new major outbreak has just been reported in and around Kazimia. With the rains in progress there is evidence of new planting of manioc and other food crops which is in some measure due to seed deliveries sent down, again by ACF, to local organisations that they worked with when they were here several years ago. There is no other evidence of any humanitarian supplies reaching Baraka or anywhere else in Fizi over the past couple of years. Malnutrition is evident particularly in small children. The most urgent needs are for nutrition and basic medicines, followed by non-food items, farming tools and, on the Plateau, veterinary supplies and seeds, particularly beans, maize and new banana stocks (there seems to be some sort of blight affecting the bananas). After that it is a question of rehabilitating schools and health posts, and supplying roofing sheets." (IA Feb 2002)

"[I]n Gemena, in the north of Equateur Province in northwestern DRC, a recent study conducted by the humanitarian affairs section of the UN Mission in DRC (MONUC) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) found that 44.9 percent of families only ate one meal per day, while 4.6 percent of households consumed less than one meal per day in the localities of Bosobolo and Yakoma, and in the Abuzi sector.

The malnutrition has had particular impact on children.

"Among children aged under five years, a little more than one-third were found to be experiencing stunted growth, while nearly one child in eight was suffering from acute malnutrition and 3 percent from severe malnutrition," the report stated.

The study found that underlying causes of this malnutrition included excessive deforestation, conflict for land due to demographic growth, and decreasing soil fertility owing to intensification of cultivation.

Having fled from insecurity, 12,892 internally displaced persons have been registered in the towns of Gbadolite, Yakoma, Abuzi and Wapinda, all located in Nord Ubangi District, while 14,058 others have been registered in the towns of Bumba, Itimbiri and Monzaboli, all in Mongala District.

"8,230 displaced persons cannot return to their villages because of a lack of housing and clothing," the report stated. "There are some 6,000 persons displaced from Abuzi who are living in camps in the forest who have expressed their strong desire to leave the woods." " (IRIN 18 March 04)

Shelter

Over 10,000 IDPs look for shelter in forest in Walikale, North Kivu (Aug 04)

« Plus de 10.000 personnes seraient toujours à la recherche d'un abri dans les forêts en dehors de Walikale centre, dans la province du Nord-Kivu, à la suite des affrontements au début du mois de juin dernier. Malgré le retour d'un calme relatif dans la cité, la population tarde à retourner. La forte présence militaire (ex-ANC) ne rassure pas. La population se retrouve dispersée sur différents axes. Avant le 4 juin 2004, Walikale comptait quelque 16.000 habitants. Aujourd'hui, il n'en reste que 2.400. Les acteurs humanitaires tournent au ralenti. » (UN OCHA 20 August 2004)

Close to 15,000 IDPs living in the forest in Equateur Province need urgent assistance (June 2004)

« Les 6.500 déplacés de la forêt de ABUZI et les 8230 déplacés du secteur d'Itimbiri, dans le territoire de Yakoma appellent à l'assistance humanitaire et manifestent vivement le désir de quitter la forêt. Ces déplacés vivent dans des campements qui sont éloignés des centres et agglomérations d'environ 20 Km à 40 Km. Ces déplacés très vulnérables vivent dans des conditions inhumaines et humiliantes. » (UN OCHA 18 June 2004)

Majority of IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities (1999-2000)

- In rural communities IDPs are often absorbed by host villages, accommodated and fed for the initial stages
- In urban areas, people move in with family and friends or squat wherever they can in the towns

"A characteristic feature of displacement in eastern DRC is the fact that IDPs are not housed in camps but have merged into host communities. Their conditions remain precarious due to lack of farming land, vital services and general insecurity. Remaining in proximity to their places of origin, the displaced are prone to be subjected to the same hazards and abuses that caused them to flee in the first place. On a number of occasions during 1998-99, the displaced and local communities were stranded in combat areas and were removed by military authorities in a bid to create security zones." (UN July 1999, p.8)

"The great majority of displaced persons are relatively well received by foster communities thanks to the family or tribal ties. In urban areas, IDPs are sheltered and fed by their foster families thus becoming an additional burden on the already poverty-stricken urban households. It is not uncommon that the continued stay of IDPs creates discontent that eventually bursts into a conflict with the subsequent expulsion of the displaced. In rural communities on the other hand, IDPs are often absorbed by host villages, accommodated and fed for the initial stages. With the approval of traditional chiefs, the displaced subsequently receive land plots and in due course overcome their dependence on the local community. Eventually, the relations between the displaced and their hosts improve, as the former start contributing to the general well-being of the community." (UN November 2000, p.18)

IDPs seeking shelter in the forest constitute be the most vulnerable IDP group (2000)

- Forest dwellers lack access to health care and subsistence on wild foods
- This IDP category estimated at 200,000

"Tragically, it is estimated that less than half the displaced communities and families are receiving humanitarian assistance. Those vulnerable and displaced populations left without assistance are hiding in the forests, inaccessible as a result of insecurity and some who emerged for their hiding places in August [2000] were disturbingly described as 'living in animal-like-conditions.'" (OCHA 31 December 2000)

"This group of displaced is legitimately believed to be the most vulnerable among all IDP communities. Most commonly, these people have been displaced several times, having left their home communities seeking security in remote and barely accessible areas. Communities then cleanse a portion of forest and start cultivating. This category of displaced has practically no access to health care and is reduced to consuming wild berries and "non-human" and raw food. Ashamed of their physical appearance and nudity, precarious health conditions (infections, dermatosis, parasitosis, etc.), "forest dwellers" avoid any contacts with the outside world and seek to further distance and alienate themselves from the neighbouring communities. The previous (1996-1998) experience with similar groups of displaced suggested that practically every family loses on average one child under five. Because of its survival tactics, this group is the hardest to access and assist. The largest concentrations of people in the forest were observed in Shabunda (South Kivu) and Bokungu-Ikela (Equateur). The number of people in this category is estimated at 200,000." (UN November 2000, p.15)

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

General

Conflict has had terrible impact on already failing education system (2001-2005)

- UN says that absolute majority of IDP children have been deprived of formal and informal schooling since 1998
- 400,000 displaced children of primary school age have no access to basic education (2001)
- UNICEF estimated in 2005 that , 4.6 million children in DRC do not receive any formal education; 2.5 million are estimated to be girls
- Situation is the worse in eastern part of DRC where IFRC estimates that 70% of children do not go to school at all
- 47% of children in North Kivu and 42% in South Kivu have never attended school, according to UNICEF 2002 study
- A higher percentage of girls have never attended school
- Parents lack the financial means to pay school fees and schools refuse students which have not paid the fees
- In eastern Katanga, parents pay double school fee to enable displaced children to also attend school

"The absolute majority of IDP children have been deprived of proper or any schooling since 1998. In urban areas, there is a marked increase in the number of dropouts with primary school attendance declining, as many families are unable to afford exorbitant education fees. For the first time since the beginning of the war, the CHAP 2001 will attempt to revive the importance and value of the education sector, through launching a series of primary education campaigns in areas of population displacement." (UN OCHA 26 Nov 2001, pp.47-48)

"The education system has suffered from the devastating effects of the war as well as from bad governance over the past decades. The national budget spent on education has dropped to 0.3%. It is estimated that only 30% of children attend and finish primary school and just 12% actually finish secondary education. Some children are unable to attend school either for economic reasons or the lack of any educational services and infrastructures in their region, or they have been obliged to quit school due to the war (displacement, insecurity problems, etc). This puts the future of the country in a precarious situation." (UN, 16 January 2003, p44)

"Displaced children in particular have little or no chance to continue with their education. Of the two million displaced people, approximately 400,000 are thought to be children of primary school age. These children have no access to any form of basic education, prejudicing their opportunities later in life, and increasing their risk of enlistment into armed forces in search of a better situation." (Oxfam August 2001, p.29-30)

"The conflict in the DRC has had a terrible impact on an education system that was already failing. In 1998, the Ministry of Education reported that 40 per cent of children of primary school age were not attending school. The situation for girls was even worse. Nationally, half of all girls were not in school; in North Kivu, the figure was 69 per cent. The investment that was made in the Congolese education system in the

1970s and 1980s has been squandered. School enrolment rates plummeted from 94 per cent in 1978 to an estimated 60 per cent in 2001. Adult literacy rates fell from 74 per cent in 1992 to 58.9 per cent in 1998.[...]

In eastern DRC, insecurity, poverty and the frequent closure or destruction of schools will have reduced attendance to a fraction of the 1998 figures. Many parents can no longer afford to send their children to school." (Oxfam 6 August 2001, p.29-30)

«Après des années de guerre et de recul économique, la situation de l'éducation est mauvaise en République démocratique du Congo (RDC) : il y a 4,6 millions d'enfants non scolarisés, dont 2,5 millions de filles. » (UNICEF 11 April 2005)

[In Malemba-Nkulu, Katanga] "Le secteur éducatif bien que bénéficiant du soutien de l'Unicef, est à l'image de toute la zone, sinistré. Bâtiments brûlés et pillés dans de nombreux villages, fuite des élèves, carence d'enseignants et non-paiement des salaires, non-paiement du minerval, absence de matériel d'enseignement (craies, bancs, tableaux), fournitures scolaires rares et trop onéreuses." (OCHA Oct 02, p9)

"Close to 70% of the children in the occupied territories have not been able to go to school at all, and the educational system is in an acute crisis. Most schools have no books, and teachers are paid a few dollars a month taken from contributions from parents." (IFRC 17 July 2002)

La proportion d'enfants n'ayant jamais fréquenté l'école primaire est élevée en RDC (31%). Elle est plus importante en milieu rural où elle atteint 39%, contre 14% en milieu urbain. Entre les provinces, les disparités sont importantes, notamment entre Kinshasa où 9% d'enfants n'ont jamais fréquenté l'école, et certaines autres provinces dont le Sud-Kivu (42%), l'Equateur (44%) et surtout le Nord-Kivu (47%).

Les filles sont plus nombreuses (35%) que les garçons (28%) à n'avoir jamais fréquenté l'école. Cette disparité entre les sexes existe également en milieu rural (44% de filles contre 34% de garçons) et dans la plupart des provinces. [...]

Deux faits complémentaires peuvent expliquer cette situation : le manque réel de moyens financiers permettant aux parents de payer les frais de scolarité, et la pratique actuelle qui consiste à ne pas admettre les enfants non en règle de paiement de minerval avec l'école. Dans certains cas, les élèves sont expulsés pour un ou quelques jours seulement de retard de paiement. Cette pratique résulte, selon les chefs d'établissements, de la nécessité d'avoir les moyens nécessaires pour faire fonctionner l'école, y compris le paiement de la « prime » due aux enseignants. Ceci pose le problème de la responsabilité de l'Etat congolais vis-à-vis du financement de la scolarisation des enfants. Sa démission et le fait de faire endosser cette charge aux parents conduisent à la non-fréquentation, momentanée ou prolongée, d'une bonne moitié des enfants congolais.

Plusieurs autres causes sont citées pour expliquer la non-fréquentation scolaire. Il y a d'abord un ensemble de causes dites « autres », que les mères n'ont pas voulu ou pu déclarer au moment de l'enquête. Il peut s'agir des causes pour lesquelles elles se sentent coupables, car il semble invraisemblable qu'un parent ne sache pas pourquoi son enfant ne fréquente pas. Il faudrait approfondir les analyses sur cette question. L'éloignement des écoles par rapport aux domiciles des enfants est une autre cause de non-fréquentation de 9% d'enfants : 11% en milieu rural et 2% en milieu urbain.[...]

Dans certains milieux ruraux, les enfants doivent franchir des kilomètres pour effectuer les va-et-vient entre leurs villages et leurs écoles. La situation serait particulièrement dramatique dans la province Orientale, au Kasai Oriental et au Bandundu. Il se pose là un problème de la carte scolaire, c'est-à-dire de la distribution de l'offre éducative en fonction de la demande sociale de chaque milieu.

Les maladies prolongées constituent également une cause de non-fréquentation scolaire ; elles gênent indistinctement les enfants en milieu urbain et en milieu rural.

Les changements de résidence provoquent aussi la non-fréquentation scolaire, principalement dans les milieux urbains, sans doute parce qu'ils exigent de faire réinscrire les enfants dans les écoles des nouveaux lieux de résidence. Or l'inscription d'un enfant dans une école, notamment en ville, au cours d'une année scolaire n'est pas aisée." (UNICEF/Ministry of Planning and Reconstruction of the DR Congo July 02, pp75-79)

"In Eastern Katanga province, parents are actually paying double school fee to enable displaced children to also attend school, and health clinics are desperately trying to cater for the IDPs." (WV 30 July 2001)

"Only 40 per cent of children in the region are enrolled in school. In some areas, such as in North Kivu, only a third of girls go to school." (UNICEF 16 December 2004)

ISSUES OF SELF-RELIANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

General

Agencies conduct household economy studies, livelihood analysis in eastern and northeastern DRC (July 2004)

- In Masisi, North Kivu, the displacement of many of the large livestock owners made it possible for some people to extend their area of cultivation in 1999 into abandoned pastures
- In Goma, the fall in household incomes following the volcano eruption in 2002 hit IDPs and non-displaced equally
- Around Bunia, Ituri, surveys found that local administrators have expropriated land from the largely Lendu population in the south to sell to wealthier Hema cattle owners from the North

Eastern Masisi, North Kivu, DRC (1999–2003)

Assessments conducted

Household economy studies were carried out by SC-UK in 1999 and 2002. WVI and Asrames carried out assessments in 2001 and 2003 respectively. SC-UK also commissioned a livelihood study focusing on land. One agency made an impact assessment of a road building project. Several nutrition surveys were carried out by SC-UK, WVI and MSF-H (in September 2001, May 2002, October 2002, and April, May and October 2003).

Livelihoods analysis

The system of land control means that the ‘poor’ (40–50% of the population) cultivated just one quarter to half a hectare, supplementing their crops by selling labour. In addition, insecurity of tenure meant that there was no investment in soil conservation and soil fertility. Yields were therefore low, exacerbated by the new cassava mosaic virus. The displacement of many of the large livestock owners made it possible for some people to extend their area of cultivation in 1999 into abandoned pastures. Middle-income households (30–35% of the population in 1999) hired labour to work their fields (usually around two hectares), and engaged in trade. In 2000, the rapid rise in price of the mineral coltan attracted many young people to work in mining, where they remained despite the price fall the following year. With relative recovery between 1999 and 2002, the number of livestock increased, reaching around 10% of pre-1993 levels by 2003. The middle economic group replaced the poor as the majority by 2002, the poor were able to grow more of their own food (up from 60% to 70%) and work for food became rare. On top of the constraints to livelihood security [...], one study also identified the importation of food aid by donors as a factor depressing farm-gate prices.

In 2002, the cash income of the poor remained at the 1999 level of \$160 per household per year. They had few sources of income locally apart from selling labour or selling parts of their harvest at low prices. They resorted to charcoalmaking, seasonal migration to towns, migration to mines, and reducing their spending on health and education. With the introduction of school fees payable in cash (rather than in beer, as previously), fewer poor households sent children to school. Nutrition surveys found under-five malnutrition rates between 3% and 9% for moderate and severe (marasmus) malnutrition combined, but rates of kwashiorkor were unusually high (3–11%).

Goma town, DRC (February–July 2002)

Assessments conducted

The provincial authorities carried out a needs assessment though this was not used by agencies – they requested quantities of food that would have been enough to feed the entire population of 400,000 for 18 months. A needs assessment of the displaced was carried out. SCUK made a household economy assessment within a month of the eruption (SC-UK 2002), which widened attention from a focus on destroyed infrastructure and housing to the overall economic situation. Monitoring and impact assessments were carried out by SC-UK and by the DEC (DEC 2002, 2003).

Livelihoods analysis

Before the crisis, poor households (15–5% of the population) frequently depended on the income from just one person – the smallest-scale trade or women’s daily labour. The whole household would only earn \$25–50 a month, half of which went on food. Capital enabled people to earn significantly more by expanding trade: with capital of \$50–100 (35–40% of the population) and two people working, a household could earn \$50–90 a month, the same as a teacher or a male labourer’s household. With over \$150 (15–25%) a household could earn \$100–150 a month, similar to a skilled artisan. The fall in household incomes following the eruption hit the displaced and non-displaced equally. The urban economy proved to be more resilient than rural ones, with a wider range of economic options, and quicker returns on work.

Bunia suburbs, Ituri District, DRC (2003)

Assessments conducted

A rapid assessment was conducted in July 2003, followed by a household economy study in October 2003. This study excluded the population in the camp by the MONUC barracks as they were receiving much more humanitarian support. OCHA made a survey of the number of displaced in 2003.

Livelihoods analysis

By October 2003, insecurity still restricted access to fields in the southern peri-urban areas; instead, people cultivated small plots of 0.1–0.2ha around their houses in town. Local administrators have expropriated land from the (largely Lendu) population in the south to sell to wealthier (Hema) cattle owners from the north. These two factors meant many people were almost totally dependent on the market for food, at least until garden crops were ready in early 2004. Finding employment was more difficult for those living in the south (who could not easily reach the commercial centre in the north). Daily contract workers (30–35% of the population) could make \$30–90/month, and artisans and small traders (45–65%) \$60–120. These latter would have around \$100–200 working capital invested. Most households spent just over half of their net income on food. Spending on services and household items was very small, because of humanitarian aid and deliberate economy. (HPG July 2004, pp.24-25)

People displaced in camps around Beni, North Kivu, are cheap labor for local population (July 2004)

- Displaced from Ituri do not have the right to cultivate land but are cheap daily laborers or domestics
- Sexual harassment by local population and armed groups
- International NGOs work to improve the living conditions of the displaced

« Ces personnes se sont déplacées par vagues successives notamment à la suite des combats en Ituri en août 2002 et des affrontements de mai / juin 2003, dans le même district. Selon des sources humanitaires, plus de 80.000 personnes de l'Ituri se sont réfugiées dans 93 sites autour de Beni.

Depuis décembre 2003 cependant, des retours spontanés des alentours de Beni vers les milieux d'origines en Ituri ont été constatés. Ils se justifiaient surtout par l'amélioration de la situation sécuritaire à Bunia,

chef-lieu de district de l'Ituri, et dans la région en général. Le pourcentage de retour des déplacés reste faible cependant, selon l'ONG Solidarités qui l'estime entre 10 et 15 % de la population concernée. [...]

Ces déplacés de longue durée ont, en marge de l'assistance humanitaire perçue, mis en place des mécanismes de survie qui tournent parfois à l'asservissement.

Conditions de vie difficiles dans les camps

L'accès aux terres leur est interdit par la population locale. Celle-ci utilise en revanche cette main d'œuvre bon marché pour des travaux agricoles ou domestiques, en la sous-payant.

Le commerce sexuel se développe également à Tenambo, Oïcha, Mbimbi et Kasindi ; La population locale recourant à l'harcèlement sexuel à l'encontre des déplacés à la recherche d'un travail.

Les violences sexuelles à l'égard des populations vulnérables commises par des groupes armés ou des civils deviennent elles aussi monnaie courante dans un système où l'impunité règne.

Des actions humanitaires tentent néanmoins d'améliorer leurs conditions de vie.

L'ONG Solidarités, à titre exemple, travaille ainsi avec la REGIDESO dans le but d'augmenter la quantité d'eau à 10 litres par personne et par jour dans la ville de Béni. Le problème de l'approvisionnement en eau est cyclique à chaque saison sèche dans cette ville et dans sa périphérie mais aussi à Oïcha et Mbimbi. Dans les camps de Tenambo et d'Oïcha la quantité d'eau est de 3,62 litres par jour et par personne alors que le standard minimum acceptable en cas d'urgence est de 15 litres selon les critères Sphère.

Des latrines auraient dues être construites par Oxfam dans le camp de Eringeti. La nature marécageuse de la zone n'a cependant pas permis ces travaux. Des risques de maladies existent donc pour les 13.617 personnes présentes dans le site.

D'autres initiatives existent. Le bureau de OCHA / Béni organisera toutefois une rencontre au mois d'août avec les organisations humanitaires dans le but d'envisager d'autres alternatives en vue d'aider ces populations. » (UN OCHA 24 July 2004)

Vulnerable IDPs who lost all possessions during volcano eruption did not receive any assistance (2002-2005)

- Eruption of Mount Nyiragongo near Goma in Jan 2002
- As a result of the disaster, assessments indicate that around 15 per cent of Goma town has been destroyed, 120,000 people have been made homeless and 147 have died
- With their property destroyed and their livelihoods wiped away, the entire Goma population has been affected

"Perhaps among the most unlucky are those who fled violence only to be forced to flee again from Goma as the Nyiragongo erupted: chased away one more time but by natural disaster. [...]"

The eruption of Mount Nyiragongo near Goma, on January 17 [2002], has caused a severe natural disaster in an area that has already suffered from years of conflict and distress. The lava flowed into the city and nearby Lake Kivu, causing fires, devastating the area, and generated an estimated 350.000 people to flee towards neighboring Rwanda. The vast majority of those who fled the town on January 17 returned home as early as Sunday 20 January and decided to stay in Goma despite fear due to a number of heavy earthquakes, continued eruptions, opening of fissures by earth tremors and serious risks of lethal gasses emission.

As a result of the disaster, assessments indicate that around 15 per cent of Goma town has been destroyed, 120,000 people have been made homeless and 147 have died.

With their property destroyed and their livelihoods wiped away, the entire Goma population is affected. Relief agencies and local authorities continue to debate options for the support of affected families. Possible options include moving to sites near Goma, resettling in neighboring towns, or returning previously displaced people to their areas of origin. The Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie (RCD), which controls the area, has banned any reconstruction on top of the recent lava flows and has announced that two sites outside of Goma (Lac Vert and Mugunga) would be available for resettlement. However, a survey of homeless Goma residents by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) revealed strong resistance to settling in the outside of Goma or in other towns.

The specificity of this natural disaster is that it has happened in a stateless area, ravaged by war and this situation has further complicated the response by the humanitarian actors. For example, the extent of the distrust between the two populations has been a factor leading to a much earlier return of the population to Goma and the suspicion of "hidden motives" about declaration and advice from RCD have also created a specific dynamic to the crisis. " (UN OCHA 28 Feb 02, pp.4 & 14)

"However, those who are dirt poor by Goma's standards - arguably those who should have received particular attention - have proven to be those who have suffered the most. They needed a long-term solution that never came. This is the case of the community of Virunga-Majengo, a stone's throw away from the runway of Goma's airport, and one of the fourteen villages that were completely destroyed in the eruption.

Virunga-Majengo is today littered with rows and rows of small, black wooden homes that each reassembles a child's version of a one-dimensional house. But instead of the standard-fare green blades of grass, each box springs forth from charcoal-coloured lava. There are no garages, no chimneys, no gardens, or even trees nearby. Certainly there are no roads, electricity poles, water pipes or tanks.

The families with multiple children who live in these houses are known as les sinistrés: French for "the disaster-stricken." These destitute - and largely unemployed people - are only now, three years later, starting to grow new roots in the lava.

The very fact that they have attempted to rebuild at all is an initiative lauded by provincial governor Eugene Serufuli, who on the occasion of the third anniversary of the volcano's most recent eruption took the opportunity to commend their collective spirit of determination and resolve.

Governor Serufuli didn't however promise any new financial assistance, nor make any promises of connecting these sinistrés to the city's energy supply, water utilities, or roadways. Not that anyone expected he would, three years after the international event, and at a time when the country has moved on. Concurrently - apart from the work of scattered NGOs on the ground - news agencies, politicians and the philanthropists remain united in their resolve to adequately address today's global crises." (MONUC 27 January 2005)

Loss of livelihoods and assets due to conflict and displacement in Bunia, Ituri (Nov 03)

- Before 2003, most of the population depended on fields outside of Bunia.
- Bunia town also depended heavily on trade with villages in Ituri and civil service were other important sources of income for Bunia town
- Impact of Ituri conflict has been catastrophic with regard to loss of livelihoods and assets
- More economic options in northern than in southern neighborhoods, which have suffer more internal displacement as well

“Before the 2003 attacks, the majority of the population was made up of small to large merchants/traders, artisans, daily workers and a smaller percentage of state employees. Most of the population also depended on fields outside of Bunia – either in the periphery areas or farther in the rural interior. Often those who depended primarily on trade either farmed early in the day and managed their commerce for the remainder of the day or would hire farm help. Agriculture was an important source of food for household consumption and, to a lesser extent, for income. Bunia Town also depended heavily on trade with villages and production centres in the rural interior for cash. In addition, important market exchange took place with larger towns such as Kisangani, Goma, Beni, Butembo, and Kampala in Uganda. Mineral exploitation cannot be neglected as an important source of income and in particular gold extraction. However, this activity benefited an elite minority and has been heavily taxed by combatant forces since the onset of the war in 1999.

The civil service was also an important source of livelihood for a considerable number of households. State employees were more or less present all over Bunia. Most public jobs were in Mudzi Pela where there is a concentration of schools and health facilities (also location of main hospital). Bankoko neighbourhood was the home of retired Mobutu military. The neighbourhood of Lumumba, the commercial heart of Bunia, also contained a number of administrative bodies as well as larger scale private enterprises and the UN and NGO community – good sources of salaried employment. Overall, the southern suburban neighbourhoods were typified by a more monolivelihood culture – leaning towards agriculture (commerce and artisanal activities existed on a smaller scale) –, while the northern and eastern suburbs were of a more multi-livelihoods nature, carrying out agricultural, trade, artisanal, and livestock activities. Certain neighbourhoods in the suburbs were known for brick-making activities.[...]

Insecurity and Socio-Political Divisions Today

The Ituri conflict has had a semi-paralysing effect on Bunia Town. Most neighbourhoods were systematically pillaged and militia destroyed (burnt) some houses. In general, the impact of the conflict with regard to loss of livelihoods and assets was catastrophic. Sporadic shootings and killings still occur in Bunia. This has led to temporary displacements from some neighbourhoods (most often in the southern neighbourhoods) as the population flees to seek refuge in surrounding villages, only to return to homes that have been pillaged once again. Bunia can be divided into two political zones. A red line cuts across the city – a separation characterised by a predominantly Northern Hema (equally known as ‘Gegere’) and allied groups and pro-UPC population in the northern neighbourhoods and a predominantly Lendu (and allied groups) population in the south. As a result of this division, the population encounters great difficulties in crossing from one side to the other.[...]

Today, the population has limited access to its fields. Exchange networks, although having survived to some extent the crisis, have been greatly reduced. The lack of labour opportunities has significantly decreased the population’s purchasing power. Reduced access to land has meant that households depend heavily on the market to meet their food needs. The unavailability of cash has created a vicious cycle where lack of cash reduces labour and income-generating opportunities, in turn leading to a poor monetary circulation. Noteworthy, pessimism in the evolution of future events also prevents people from spending.

A greater diversity of economic options is present in the north than in the south. In the north, activities centre around medium and small trade and work contracts – gold digging in Shari, small- and medium-scale import and sale of food and non-food items, artisanal activities, daily work contracts, civil services (education and health sectors), contracts with church structures, etc. Due to the presence of the main central market in the north, households can also access more labour opportunities. The south depends principally on small trade, which revolves around the purchase and sale of staple food items and vegetables and the production and sale of local beer, and on daily work contracts. Medium- to large-scale commerce is rare. Artisanal activities exist but are limited when compared to the north. Jobs as civil servants are almost non-existent. The influx of the displaced population has put an economic strain on residents of certain neighbourhoods as well as on the limited land within the town itself. This is especially true for the northern neighbourhoods where mainly better-off households host two or more displaced persons.[...]

Livelihoods in Bunia centre on daily work contracts – e.g. construction, assistants of artisans, carriers, etc. – artisanal and technical activities – e.g. ironwork, carpentry, construction, etc. - and small trade – e.g. production and sale of local beer ('mandro' -made out of maize or 'Kaikpo' – made with cassava), purchase and resale of staple food items (especially cassava flour, beans, palm oil, vegetables, etc.), sale of diverse items (e.g. soap, salt, petrol, sugar, bread, coal, etc.) at home or in small stands, etc.

Most households have two or more members involved in income-generating activities. The woman in the household often manages a trade activity. However, profit from trade is usually insufficient to cover all household needs or sustain the business. Often the man or a second person in the household is involved in a secondary activity. This is often an activity characteristic of the two other groups – i.e. artisanal or daily work contracts. The same logic applies to the groups of artisans and daily contract workers. Artisanal activities are usually the main source of income for the artisans, followed by an equal or secondary activity of trade carried out by other members of the household. In most cases, daily contract workers do not have sufficient start-up funds or profit to increase the size of trade activities of the second member of the household. Trade in daily contract worker households is, therefore, on the lower end of the income ladder for the group of small traders. Very little to no income of all groups comes from the sale of harvests, which is mainly for household consumption needs. [...]

Coping Strategies

Households have developed the following range of coping strategies to deal with changes in accessibility to food and income:

- _ Diversification and intensification of economic activities within the household;
- _ Huge consumption of fruits such as mango, avocado, guava, and papaya during the months of June/July (one person could eat up to 20 mangoes a day);
- _ Sale of remaining assets – livestock, clothes, shoes, household equipment, production tools, etc. This is done during displacement or on return/arrival to Bunia. However, generally, the sale of assets brings in negligible quantities of income;
- _ Destruction of abandoned houses for use and sale of material;
- _ Reduction in investment costs – for businesses, for the rehabilitation and construction of houses, and for certain household equipment;
- _ Risky movements – attempts to cultivate in fields and many travel to production areas in the rural interior;
- _ Increased garden production;
- _ Increased consumption of vegetables;
- _ Cultivation of crops with short growing cycles (e.g. sweet potatoes and cassava varieties);
- _ Premature harvesting of crops (especially beans and maize).(SCF-UK Nov 03, Pp11-25)

Displacement means agricultural production is at all-time low (2003-2005)

- Many populations have abandoned their fields due to displacement or to look for other means of subsistence
- Former main agricultural areas - especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri - are now producing about 10 percent of their pre-war agricultural output
- In more stable areas, farmers are often reduced to survival cultivation, lacking the necessary inputs to resume their activities or increase production
- In the volatile eastern provinces, food insecurity stems primarily from unruly, unsalaried military personnel
- Rural farmers now request guinea pigs as livestock donations because they are more easily hidden from military thieves and are easily transported when families are forced to flee fighting (May 05)

“Situating on the Equator, the DRC has a wide climatic variety and immense agricultural resources. However, only ten percent of fertile land is being exploited. Due to four years of war, worsened by several natural disasters as the eruption of volcanoes, drought, etc., the agriculture sector has suffered immensely and the production has decreased as never before. The low population purchasing power and the lack of sufficient and balanced food have led to endemic malnutrition in the population.

Ever since the beginning of the war, the original trade circuits have been cut and roads and other infrastructure have further deteriorated. In addition, populations have abandoned their fields as a result of displacement or in order to look for other means of subsistence. Others turned to subsistence agriculture only.

The most affected zones, especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri, used to be the main agricultural production areas in the country. Presently, the agricultural production of these parts of the country is estimated at ten percent of the pre-war production.

In the relatively stable areas, weak purchasing power and the destruction of infrastructures has turned farmers back toward survival cultivation. They actually lack the most basic essential agricultural inputs (tools or seeds) to resume their activities or to increase production.” (UN, 16 January 2003, p42)

“In the volatile eastern provinces, food insecurity stems primarily from unruly, unsalaried military personnel. In the Walikale area of North Kivu, for example, mobile armed groups, including government soldiers, terrorise rural farmers, steal livestock and pillage local plantations. Local authorities follow in the wake of the armed attackers, picking over the remains and delivering leftovers to their families. As a result, all forms of small livestock (chickens, ducks, goats) have disappeared from rural communities. World Relief, an agency operating out of Goma, has reported that rural farmers now request guinea pigs as livestock donations because they are more easily hidden from military thieves and are easily transported when families are forced to flee fighting.” (ODI 25 May 2005)

For detailed studies of the economic and food security situation in areas of North Kivu, see:

Save the Children Fund (SCF), “Update of the Household Economy Analysis of the Rural Population of the Plateaux Zone, Masisi, North Kivu, DRC” – SCF report, 31 Jan 2003

SCF, “Household Economy Analysis of the Rural Population of South-Western Bwito, Rutshuru, North Kivu, DR Congo” – SCF report, 31 Jan 2003

FAO analyses coping mechanisms of IDPs and other vulnerable populations in eastern DRC (Aug 03)

« Est de la RDC : Les mécanismes de survie développés par la population sinistrée suite à la guerre. Les communautés qui ne s’adaptent pas en changeant de manière de vivre quand les conditions de leur environnement changent sont vouées à la disparition. Cela s’observe clairement dans la vie courante. La crise engendrée par les guerres, en anéantissant le tissu socio-économique, a frappé toute la population, incluant même les familles qui ont pu rester chez elles. Les déplacements massifs, l’enclavement de certaines provinces et grandes villes, l’absence de revenu et donc une baisse considérable du pouvoir d’achat, ont contraint les populations à développer des stratégies de survie suivantes. » (FAO 31 Aug 03)

Strategies described in the report include developing gardens and handicraft, reducing costs allocated to health, clothing and schooling, to ask religious associations for assistance, to become a daily laborer, etc.

The report also analyses mechanisms specific to certain provinces.

Deteriorating socio-economic situation due to the war (2001-2005)

- Rise in poverty level has dramatic impact on humanitarian situation
- Little health and education and road infrastructures existing before the two wars of 1996 and 1998 are in a state of collapse
- June 2001 WHO/UNICEF study reported that majority of Congolese live on 20 cents US a day, and consume less than two thirds of the calories required to meet basic needs
- Devaluation of currency and cost of imported goods (kerosene, salt) has eroded people's purchasing power
- Agricultural production has dropped and in mineral-rich areas, farmers have abandoned agriculture to dig for coltan, gold or diamond
- Deprived of state support, with little access to income, and without meaningful external aid, the resources and resilience of Congolese households have simply run out
- As a result of years of mismanagement, corruption and war, the DRC is one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita annual income of about \$98 in 2003
- Majority of the population survives on informal economic activities, mainly carried out by women (Feb 2002)

"Situated on the Equator, the DRC has a wide climatic variety and immense agricultural resources. However, only ten percent of fertile land is being exploited. Due to four years of war, worsened by several natural disasters as the eruption of volcanoes, drought, etc., the agriculture sector has suffered immensely and the production has decreased as never before. The low population purchasing power and the lack of sufficient and balanced food have led to endemic malnutrition in the population.

Ever since the beginning of the war, the original trade circuits have been cut and roads and other infrastructure have further deteriorated. In addition, populations have abandoned their fields as a result of displacement or in order to look for other means of subsistence. Others turned to subsistence agriculture only.

The most affected zones, especially the Kivus, northern Katanga and Ituri, used to be the main agricultural production areas in the country. Presently, the agricultural production of these parts of the country is estimated at ten percent of the pre-war production.

In the relatively stable areas the weak purchasing power and the destruction of infrastructures turn the farmers to survival cultivation. They actually lack the most basic essential agricultural inputs (tools or seeds) to resume their activities or to increase production." (UN 19 Nov 2002, p56)

"The little infrastructure that existed prior to the two wars of 1996 and 1998 has crumbled. Health and education systems are in a state of collapse, continuing to rely on support from the churches, local organisations, and international agencies to provide limited services to the population. The poor state of the roads all over the country, compounded by insecurity in the east, impedes trade and makes the delivery of humanitarian assistance difficult and costly. Of the 145,000km of roads, no more than 2,500km are asphalt. Many of the remaining roads are often impassable during the rainy season. The threat of armed attack leads many business people to abandon road traffic completely. River-transport connections along the Congo River and its tributaries, once the crucial highway of the DRC, have also been severed. In many places, access is only possible by air, putting many basic necessities, including medicines, beyond people's reach. The movement of food and other supplies from rural to urban centres has completely ceased, resulting in large food deficits in towns and reduced production in the rural hinterlands.

In eastern DRC, the war has reduced the poorest sections of the population, both displaced and host/local communities, to an extremely marginal existence. Conflict continues between the various armed groups and insecurity has worsened, particularly in rural areas. The devaluation of the currency and rise in the cost of imported goods such as kerosene and salt has eroded people's purchasing power. In isolated areas of rebel-held territories, such as Shabunda, Kindu, and East Kasai, which can only be reached by air, the cost of items such as salt, oil, soap, and even clothes has become even more prohibitive.

Agricultural production has dropped across the east of the country, meaning that some formerly surplus producing areas no longer grow enough to feed their populations. Insecurity, limited access to markets, cassava blight [1], and difficulties in making enough money from the sale of crops, all discourage people from cultivating. [...]

In mineral-rich areas such as Walikale, Punia, and Kalima, the short-term benefits of mining have also encouraged some farmers to abandon agriculture. Instead of working in their fields, they prefer to dig for coltan, gold, or diamond. This will have long-term implications for communities' access to food."

[1] Cassava is the staple for 70% of the Congolese population. Over the past 7 years, cassava crops across the country have suffered from viral and bacterial diseases that have totally wiped out production in some areas such as Bandundu. The war has hindered the application of measures to control the diseases and provide healthy disease-resistant varieties to farmers] (Oxfam August 2001, pp.9,24)

"International attention has focused on those areas and populations directly affected by the war but the reality is that the vast majority of Congo's 50 million people live on around 20 cents per person per day and eat less than two thirds of the calories a day needed to maintain health. Long deprived of state support, with dramatically reduced access to income, without meaningful external aid, the resources and resilience of Congolese households have simply run out." (WHO 29 June 2001)

"In the economic front, the situation throughout the country continues to deteriorate rapidly, poverty and unemployment having reached intolerable levels. The economic purchasing power of the population is extremely weak and the majority of the population survives on informal economic activities, mainly carried out by women." (UN OCHA 28 Feb 2002, pp.18-19)

"The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Country Profile 2004 stated 'Although the economic situation has improved considerably, it will take years before new investment has any impact on the quality of life of most Congolese, the majority of whom live in abject poverty. It has been calculated that the economy would have to grow by 5% in real terms for 70 years to return to the 1960 level of real income per head.'

[T]he D.R.C. is one of the poorest countries in the world, with per capita annual income of about \$98 in 2003. This is the result of years of mismanagement, corruption, and war." (UK Immigration and Nationality Directorate 20 April 2005)

Many displaced women have become the head of the household and pay an very heavy price (2001-2005)

- War had devastating effect on women's economic and social activities, and produced large number of widows and displaced women who became the head of the household
- In Maniema, at Kalonge, at Bunyakiri, at Shabunda, in northern Shaba, more than 60% of displaced families are headed by women
- Women, who often hold the household together, are paying an extraordinary price

"The war has had a devastating effect on women's economic and social activities. The already meagre resources and revenue of grassroots women's organisations, as well as their means of production, have been destroyed or looted. In addition to the volatile security situation, women also face basic structural problems that exacerbate their impoverishment. First of all, it is difficult for them to have access to land because of over-exploitation and overpopulation of fertile lands, and because of patriarchal traditions; on top of this, the economic infrastructure that would have enabled them to carry on productive activity has been destroyed, or did not exist anyway. Moreover, the heavy taxes imposed during the period of administration by the Rassemblement Démocratique Congolaise (RCD), especially on economic activities, have helped to erode women's incomes in particular.

The war has produced a large number of widows and displaced women who have become heads of household without their having had any preparation for this role. They live below the poverty line and depend largely on food aid (when it is available) for their survival. There are high rates of HIV/AIDS, partly owing to the widespread incidence of rape committed against women by forces fighting on the ground. War and poverty have also forced many women and girls into prostitution as a means of survival, and this makes them particularly vulnerable to sexual violence. This has been described as 'survival sex' and creates conditions "... in which abusive sexual relations are more widely accepted and where many men, both civilians and combatants, regard sex as a service that is easy to obtain by means of coercion". At the same time, domestic violence has increased, as a result of tension caused by the upsurge of unemployment among men, as well as fear and uncertainty regarding the country's political future." (International Alert & Al., 2005, pp.25-26)

"The heavy displacement of populations mostly lead to dislocation of various families. Separated, women become responsible for their children future and have the obligation to guarantee the survival of the family in such a chaotic situation. According to various sources, in Maniema, at Kalonge, at Buyakiri, at Shabunda, in northern Shaba, more than 60% of displaced populations are from families of which husbands have ran away or have been enrolled in the army or in armed militia. In Maniema, they are estimated to be 80%. The monoparental system as imposed on women is a source of permanent tension. Moreover, it is to be feared that this extended conflict will have side effects in establishing a culture of violence considered as normal lifestyle of which women are actually victims. [...]

[However] Far from being uniquely silent victims of the present conflict, women have progressively granted themselves a leadership role trying to ward off the consequences of the conflict on their families and attempting by all means to reduce the side effects of the war on their communities." (OCHA 6 March 2001)

"Women, who often hold the household together, are paying an extraordinary price. This year over 42,000 will die in childbirth alone. Under-nourishment, forced and economic prostitution, overwork for pathetic recompense, untreated ill health and the psychological strain of maintaining large families are exacting a terrible toll." (WHO 29 June 2001)

"The war has exhausted the reserves of the people of eastern Congo. The burden of trying to survive and assure that others in the family survive fall heavily on women. As the socio-economic situation worsens, more women and girls are resorting to trading sex for food, shelter, or money in order to provide for themselves and their families." (HRW June 2002, p21)

Orphaned and separated children, especially young girls, are exposed to neglect and abuse (December 2000)

- Poverty, war, HIV/AIDS, displacement, family separations and the breakdown of traditional coping mechanisms have forced growing numbers of children on to the streets

"There are large number of orphaned children in the DRC due to the high incidence of HIV/AIDS. Besides the trauma of being left without parental care, these children may be exposed to neglect, exploitation and abuse. They also lack access to education and vocational skills training and suffer immense psychological stress. [...]

Children on and of the street are criminalized and have become a soft target for round ups, recruitment and abuse by society at large; the high military presence in east and west of the country makes the situation even more acute. Issues that need to be addressed are the resettlement, care and protection of separated children, street children, child soldiers and children inappropriately placed in institutions.

Poverty, war, enlistment in the various armed forces, displacement, family separations and the breakdown of traditional coping mechanisms have forced growing numbers of children on to the streets or away from their original home environment in many foster families where they are often suffering from neglect and exploitation.

In North and South Kivu provinces, problems are concentrated in the cities and towns where a large group of vulnerable families have arrived as a result of general insecurity in the rural areas. [...] A much overlooked problem is the discrimination and abuse of women and young girls. Sexual violence against girls, adolescent pregnancies, abandoned child-mother, school drop-outs and girl sex workers are growing phenomena linked to the deterioration in work opportunities and a lack of family and community protection. " (SCF 31 December 2000)

Displacement adds pressure on host families' self-reliance (1999-2004)

- Many IDPs, host communities and urban residents are affected by chronic food shortages and too high prices due to civil war (1999)
- Most IDPs have found refuge with host families (2000)
- IDPs in Sange, South Kivu, have found refuge with families they did not know, and one house sometimes hosts up to 30 people (2004)
- Prices have gone up due to the massive increase of the population and insecurity, and local residents have registered as IDPs to get some assistance as well (2004)

"Two consecutive wars in 1996-1997 and in 1998 prompted a large number of people to flee their home communities. In most cases, the displaced have lost their belongings and survival means, such as agricultural tools and seeds. They are being hosted by other rural communities whose capacity for agricultural production is already extremely weak due to a continued economic crisis, severe shortages of agricultural inputs and ongoing hostilities. The whole agricultural production system is, therefore, on the verge of collapse as the output dramatically diminishes and the demand for basic produce is almost doubling in the host communities. The most critical issue is the availability of agricultural inputs." (UN July 1999, p.32)

"Congolese people are known for their hospitality. In the African tradition, room must always be made for a guest or those in need. Hundreds of thousands of Congolese who have been displaced by the fighting in eastern DRC have benefited from this tradition. Room has been made at the table in the homes of countless thousands of host communities throughout this war-torn region. Thanks to the generosity of the Congolese and their tradition of helping each other, large camps - so often the mark of similar crises - are not seen.

But this generosity comes at great cost. A household of six can host at most one extra person before the family's food security is seriously impacted. In the Kivus, this number is frequently far exceeded. On a recent mission to South Kivu, Refugees International interviewed displaced and host families where. The situation has reached a point in many communities where host families have exhausted their meager

reserves of food and money, placing their own children at risk. When this point is reached, those displaced by fighting must move on in search of other shelter, thus repeating the process with a new host family." (RI 14 September 2000)

“Sange se trouve à près de 85 km au sud de Bukavu et à quelque 35 km de Lemera, village d'origine de la majorité des déplacés. Ces derniers ont commencé à arriver à Sange à partir du vendredi 21 avril et continuent toujours d'y affluer en grand nombre, malgré l'éloignement et les longues heures de marche. "J'ai quitté Lemera avec mes enfants le jeudi 22 avril, vers 10h. du matin, raconte Rehema Anania, l'une des déplacés. Nous avons marché toute la journée et passé la nuit à Kahanda. Le lendemain, nous avons marché encore toute une journée avant d'arriver la nuit tombée à Sange".

Les conditions de vie à Sange sont loin d'être des plus agréables. Les déplacés ont trouvé refuge auprès de familles d'accueil qu'ils ne connaissaient pas au préalable. Ils doivent ainsi vivre à 10, 20 ou 30 personnes dans des maisons bien trop étroites pour eux. "Il y a 26.340 habitants à Sange, précise l'administrateur de la localité Albert Masumbuko. Or, la population qui vient d'arriver comprend entre 15.000 et 16.000 personnes.»

Pas facile. Avec l'arrivée des nouveaux venus, les prix ont flambé sur le marché. Et pour cause, les produits disponibles ne suffisent plus pour nourrir la population locale qui a grossi en l'espace de quelques jours. De plus, la majorité des produits alimentaires provenant autrefois de Lemera (haricots- manioc- patate douce- oignons) ont disparu des étalages suite à l'interruption du trafic commercial. Heureusement, Caritas a commencé depuis ce mardi à distribuer des rations alimentaires du PAM. "Toutefois, nous rencontrons beaucoup de problèmes, explique Pascal, l'un des représentants de Caritas. Les chiffres des déplacés ont été grossis de telle sorte que des gens de Sange puissent aussi profiter de l'aide alimentaire. Nous nous retrouvons donc aujourd'hui avec des listes de 4.300 ménages alors que les responsables concernés confirment que la population des déplacés ne dépasse pas 3.000 ménages». » (MONUC 13 May 2004)

DOCUMENTATION NEEDS AND CITIZENSHIP

General

IDP committees work with the UN to establish lists of beneficiaries in Beni, North Kivu (August 2004)

- Difficulty for IDPs to agree on the representatives of the IDP committee

« Plus de 26 mille personnes déplacées vivent toujours dans des sites ou hors sites, dans le territoire de Beni, Province du Nord-Kivu. Contrairement aux informations qui avaient circulé avant la fin de l'année scolaire passée, les sites des déplacés sont toujours pleins et rien n'augure un retour massif. L'ONGI CESVI vient de terminer la distribution des vivres à ces déplacés. Pour sa part, l'ONGI Solidarités poursuit la vérification des listes et la remise des jetons en prévision de la distribution des vivres à ceux qui vivent dans et hors sites à Oicha. OCHA a facilité la réunion des déplacés en provenance de Oicha et Eringeti qui se disputent la représentation du comité des déplacés de l'Ituri. L'accent a été mis sur le profit qu'un membre du comité fasse partie de la commission sectorielle sur le mouvement des populations en contribuant au partage des statistiques des déplacés. » (UN OCHA 13 August 2004)

62% of women in DRC marry under customary law and cannot get inheritance priority (Oct 2001)

"A national campaign to inform people of the advantages to officially registering their marriages was launched last week by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family (Ministère des Affaires sociales et Famille) of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in collaboration with UNICEF.

According to a statement from UNICEF in Kinshasa, a widow and her children are given inheritance priority under state law, as opposed to customary law, where other family members may make claims of the deceased assets. A woman is also entitled to greater protection against spousal abuse under state law. An estimated 62 percent of women in the DRC marry under customary law, while only 25 percent officially register their marriages with the state." (IRIN 1 Oct 2001)

PROPERTY ISSUES

General

Lack of access to land is seen as a structural cause of the conflict in eastern DRC (March 2005)

- In Ituri and in Masisi (North Kivu), contested purchase and expansion of agricultural and ranching concessions have been identified as one of the causes of violence
- The present conflict has radically changed land access patterns, through forced displacement and shifts in the level of authority enjoyed by different customary and administrative leaders

“The complex conflicts in the Eastern DRC have numerous sources. In addition to various economic and political issues, ranging from the military and economic strategies of Western powers and neighbouring countries, the weak nature of the state in DRC, and the historical relationships between ethnic groups, these include natural resources of much greater value, and much more 'lootable' character, than agricultural or pastoral land - such as diamonds, gold, cobalt, cassiterite, and coltan.

Nonetheless, land remains important for several reasons. First, insecure or insufficient access to land in many parts of the East is a significant factor in the impoverishment of thousands of rural people, and is seen by many as a 'structural' cause of conflict.

Second, in the case of Ituri Territory, contested purchase and expansion of agricultural and ranching concessions have been identified as one of the proximate causes of violence; and the same may be true in Masisi. Third, the present conflict has radically changed land access patterns, through a number of mechanisms including forced displacement and shifts in the level of authority enjoyed by different customary and administrative leaders. Conflict is producing new competition for land, as part of a wider renegotiation of the local economic space and re-drawing of ethnic, class, and other 'boundaries' between groups. Land is no longer merely a source of conflict, but a resource for its perpetuation.

In the DRC, a 'modern' system of land administration for white settlers, enabling them to establish their plantations, was superimposed on traditional systems, with compensation paid to the customary leaders (mwami), rather than to the people, and leading eventually to an undermining of both the customary and statutory systems.

Colonial promotion of migration also generated conflict over resource access. After the First World War, the Belgians brought Rwandan farmers into parts of Eastern DRC (such as Masisi) to provide the necessary labour for the newly created agricultural plantations and mining centres. When denied equal access to land after independence, they finally started purchasing land, but local chiefs continued to expect customary tribute. This explains the first major conflict: the 'Guerre des Kinyarwanda', which lasted for two years, was the first rebellion against chiefly abuse and the first step of a spiral of unending local violence.

The independent Zairian state introduced a land law emphasising individual ownership in 1973, removing the legal status from land occupied under customary rule. This enabled those in political or economic power to appropriate any land not yet titled. The traditional authorities became the privileged intermediaries for the sale of land. Rewarded with ministerial posts and newly armed with Zairian citizenship, immigrants from Rwanda were able to concentrate a large number of former colonial estates in their hands. In Ituri Territory, similar developments could be observed. Here, it was members of the Hema

who profited from their easy access to education and to employment opportunities within the local colonial administration, the mines and plantations.

With a peasant population under growing stress in the land-scarce areas of Eastern DRC, one might have expected more (or earlier) protest or regular outbursts of violence by peasant farmers against those responsible for land alienation. To understand why this did not happen, the traditional authorities need to be the focal point of analysis. In order to guard their position, and avoid blame for land sales, ethnic discourse proved to be a perfect instrument. This significantly raised ethnic tensions. In North Kivu, a wave of inter-ethnic violence which erupted in March 1993, lasted for more than six months and killed between 6,000 and 10,000 people, while more than 250,000 people were displaced.

The fragile 1993 peace settlement in North Kivu lasted until the arrival of more than one million Hutu refugees from Rwanda and the settling of the ex-Armed Forces of Rwanda (ex-Far) and Interahamwe militia in camps in Masisi and the Ruzizi Plain. A new coalition between the refugee-leadership and militias, shifted the balance of power, creating the concept of 'Hutu-land' and leading to persecution of the local Tutsi population.

Historical analysis of land access dynamics before 1994 suggest that even if the conflict-related changes could be rectified, and 'law and order' restored in Eastern DRC, a return to the status quo will not lead to an equitable outcome. Only a reform of land laws and institutions, along with some form of land redistribution, could achieve that." (ODI 1 March 2005)

Dual land system and resources like coltan have increased tensions in eastern DRC (August 2002)

- DRC has two land tenure systems, the modern and the customary
- In eastern DRC, land ownership is still believed to belong to the traditional king who distributes the land to its subjects
- Many fields have been left unattended as a result of forced displacement or the involvement of some section of the population in coltan digging

"The DRC has two recognised land tenure systems: the modern and the customary. Under the modern system, the government owns all land. The right to use land is thus assigned or allocated by the government through the Department of Land Affairs, Environment, Nature Conservation, and Tourism.

Under the customary land tenure system, land ownership is collective: groups or clans hold land. The group, though its appointee, assigns land for use to its members. Land used by a family over a long period of time is recognized by the group or clan as belonging to that family, but the family may not sell the land because, in practice, land ownership rights belong, ultimately, to the national government.

However, in places where strong chieftaincy exists, land ownership is believed to belong to the traditional king (Mwami) who then distributes it to his subjects through a sophisticated system of reward and punishment. This system is still very much alive in the eastern parts of the DRC, especially in the South Kivu Province where many traditional chiefs command authority. Allegiance to this system may also explain why the land issue is linked to the control of power and has become a sensitive matter. In particular, this aspect was improperly dealt with during Mobutu's regime. Indeed, Mobutu used to buy the cooperation of the Bamis – allowing them to continue exercising their traditional powers, while the official laws and regulations of the country said otherwise. The Banyamulenge factor in the war in DRC found its meaning around the struggle for land ownership and recognition of Mwami power. In this sense, the issue of citizenship (which sparked off the Banyamulenge violent uprising against the Mobutu regime) was just another way to claim the right to land ownership.

Agriculture's contribution to exports has declined sharply over the 40 years since independence. In particular, the illegal exploitation of natural resources (including coltan) has impacted on agricultural production. Many fields have been left unattended as a result of forced migration or the involvement of some section of the population in coltan digging. Agricultural productivity has thus declined – with resultant food shortages in urban areas and soaring food prices.

Across the east of the country, formerly surplus producing areas no longer grow enough to feed their populations. Reasons include insecurity, limited access to markets, cassava blight, and difficulties in making enough money from the sale of crops. Moreover, the mine exploitation has diverted the existing manpower from agricultural activities to mine exploitation, especially coltan. In mineral-rich areas such as Walikale, Punia, and Kalima, the short term benefits of mining have also encouraged some farmers to abandon agriculture. Instead of working in their fields, they prefer to dig for coltan, gold, or diamonds. In addition to the already high level of food insecurity in places in South and North Kivu, there is an additional problem posed by armed groups from all sides, who sustain themselves by stealing the limited food and crops from communities who are already struggling to survive.” (ACTS August 2002, pp.170-171)

Local NGO Aide et Action pour la Paix published a brochure to help IDPs know their property rights (2004)

- While the land of IDPs is often occupied, few know where to seek justice and recover their property
- The local NGO Aide et Action pour la Paix (AAP) published a simplified version of the property law of 1973, with the support of the Norwegian Refugee Council

« Parmi les obstacles majeurs au retour des déplacés dans leur milieu d'origine figure la dépossession par ruse ou par violence de leurs champs par des riches. Les personnes déplacées dont les champs sont occupés illégalement ne savent pas à qui se confier pour recouvrer leurs droits, et cela, à cause de l'ignorance de la loi dite foncière.

C'est pourquoi, Aide et Action pour la Paix, AAP en sigle, a pensé que la vulgarisation de la loi de 1973 à travers sa publication Etude Juridique pourrait contribuer à la protection des droits des déplacés dont la vulnérabilité expose à beaucoup d'abus.

Le Conseil Norvégien pour les Réfugiés / Goma, dans sa dynamique de protection et d'assistance aux personnes déplacées, a accepté d'appuyer la production et la multiplication de cette brochure et nous lui en remercions.

La présente publication ne reflète pas l'intégralité de la loi de 1973, mais tente de présenter les grands principes en matière foncière.

Cette brochure servirait de guide et renforcerait le travail amorcé en faveur des personnes déplacées. Tout citoyen pourra savoir la garantie du droit foncier par la Constitution de la Transition, les institutions de l'Etat qui interviennent en matière foncière, les catégories des terres qui existent en République Démocratique du Congo, comment acquérir le terrain, les obligations du concessionnaire et de l'Etat, la procédure en cas de conflit foncier, la succession et la prescription en matière foncière.

Que nos lecteurs trouvent, dans les lignes qui suivent, une perspective pour protéger et assister les personnes déplacées. » (AAP 2004, introduction)

PATTERNS OF RETURN AND RESETTLEMENT

General

NGO Atlas Logistique explains rationale for stopping activities in Ituri IDP camp (July 2005)

“Atlas Logistique would like to answer to the article published in the IRIN press review of the 8th July 2005 : Atlas Logistique has not suspended all activities in the Camp Aero until the 31st August 2005 as mentioned.

Atlas Logistique, together with the humanitarian actors directly or indirectly involved in the issues of the IDP Camp Aero in Bunia, has been driving in the last few months a reflexion on the future of the camp and its inhabitants and has decided, together with its fundraiser, ECHO, as well as with above mentioned actors, to stop its activities in the aero camp at the end of August 2005. Until then, all activities of coordination, management and return transport facilities will be ensured as always.

This decision was taken after two years of assistance to the internal displaced persons of the aero camp, and considering several key facts :

- Since its creation, the camp has seen its population reduced by more than 50% : the process of return is a reality that has to be encouraged and facilitated.
- In the beginning of July, the IDP camp gathers 7,312 persons (compared to about 19,000 in July 2003), out of which 50% are originary from Bunia city itself.
- IDPs are persons whose moral or physical integrity is threatened, and the IDP camp existed to ensure their protection. Humanitarian aid has only been implemented in the camp to respond to emergency needs of the populations that had left their places of origin and had arrived in Bunia in a situation of extreme poverty.
- The security situation in Ituri in general and in Bunia in particular has seen a positive evolution in the last years, and even if some places in Ituri are still insecure, most of them are accessible and favorable for return and reinstallation of populations.
- After two years of living in Bunia, in aero camp, the former IDPs are no longer in the 2003 emergency situation. Most of them have developed surviving mechanisms and have benefited from the socio economic situation of Bunia city, finding jobs or cultivating fields outside the city.
- The most vulnerable populations are still benefiting from food distribution on vulnerability criterias, and the organization of the distribution will be passed on to a local NGO, ADDSE, already in charge of food distribution for vulnerable populations in Bunia city.
- The aero camp is offering living facilities (current water, electricity, free parcels...) that have reached a better level than those of the population living in the city. This fact is contrary to “Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement” elaborated by UNOCHA.

Therefore, Atlas Logistique will concentrate efforts on encouraging and facilitating voluntary return of population to their places of origin, or any place choosed for reinstallation, instead of gathering help and efforts in fixing populations in the camp.

The date of the 31st of August has been defined taking into account the situation and a global strategy elaborated in coordination with all humanitarian actors directly or indirectly involved in the IDP aero camp issues. The IDP camp population was informed one month ago of this global decision, as well as local authorities.

In the next weeks, a stress will be put on defining and attributing responsibilities to local actors and authorities on the future of the camp, if population remains after the 31st of August.” (ATLAS Logistique 11 July 2005)

Pilot programme supports the return of 1,600 IDPs to Orientale and Equateur Province (May 2005)

“Some 1,600 internally displaced people (IDPs) began their journey home on Thursday along the mighty River Congo, from Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, to the provinces of Equateur and Orientale, according to a UN official.

In a statement, Jens Laerke, the information officer in the post-conflict unit of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), said on Friday the IDPs boarded a Congolese naval vessel at the Kinshasa harbour, marking the start of the operational phase of a joint UN pilot project aimed at providing protection and security for 67,554 IDPs.[...]

Laerke said being a pilot project, the operation would seek new knowledge 'by testing different methods, tools, and approaches in the reinsertion process, for instance in terms of identification, registration, protection, and assistance provided to the returnees'.

In addition, host communities would be prepared for the influx of IDPs, he said. Lessons learned from the project would, at a later stage, be incorporated in the search for durable solutions to the IDP problem on a national scale.

In January 2005, the first reinsertion of 350 IDPs took place in Equateur. In April, Laerke said, an additional 300 IDPs, who had taken refuge in Kinshasa, were reinserted in and around Kindu, the main city in the central province of Maniema.

He said the IDPs received a kit comprising basic necessities, foodstuff, a bicycle, and a cash grant of \$55 to \$90, depending on the number of people in a household.” (IRIN 23 May 2005)

900,000 IDPs estimated to have returned home from end-2003 to mid-2005

- Continued insecurity, ethnic conflict and poor road conditions hamper rapid return

“The Congo's transition may be failing in some respects, but for hundreds of thousands of people the option of returning to their towns and villages of origin is more attractive than that of remaining displaced, either in camps or with host families. In spite of the continued violence and human rights abuses, there are also pockets of stability where in many cases small-scale recovery projects have already started.

OCHA estimates that some 900,000 IDPs have returned to their places of origin since the end of 2003. While it is difficult to verify this figure, it is clear that large-scale returns have taken place and continue to take place. While it is difficult to verify this figure, it is clear that large-scale returns have taken place and continue to take place. In some cases, people who have been displaced for relatively short periods of time (up to two years) are returning, as in the case of IDPs returning from North Kivu to Ituri.” (OCHA, 8 June 2005)

“A visiting United Nations team including IDP specialists traveled to South Kivu to discuss with partners possible improvement of the return and subsequent reintegration of Congolese IDPs and refugees as well as ex-combatants. This involves need assessments and a common response strategy. The humanitarian

community cited continued insecurity, poor road conditions and ethnic conflicts as the main reasons hindering a rapid return of IDPs and refugees to South Kivu.” (MONUC, 23 May 2005)

Many IDPs return to troubled Ituri region (2003-2005)

- Over 100,000 people returned to Mahagi territory (March 04)
- One of the two camps in Bunia closed down following the return of IDPs (Sept 04) 10.000 returning families are now in Komanda-Lolwa-Ngeleza zone in Ituri (Sept 04)
- Of the 100,000 Ituri IDPs who fled to North Kivu, over half have now returned (Aug 04)
- Over 7,000 IDPs remained at Bunia airport as of May 05
- Some IDPs in Ituri say their houses are occupied by armed groups (July 04)

In September 2003, some IDPs started to return home in Ituri

"On 1 September [2003], the UN peacekeeping force, known as MONUC, took over control of Bunia from the French-led multinational force deployed in June to restore order. Unlike the multinational force, whose mandate was confined to Bunia, MONUC is authorised to enforce peace throughout Ituri.

WFP said it did not know how many people were still hiding in the forests of Ituri, fearful of armed groups that have terrorised the region for months. However, some, encouraged by recent political developments and improved security, were returning to their homes, it said." (IRIN 15 Sept 03)

Increased pace of return at the end of 2003

« Les retours des populations se poursuivent en provenance du Nord-Kivu plus précisément de la cité de Beni et des sites d'Eringeti. Les départs de Beni se font surtout en convoi, les mardis et vendredis, et les candidats au retour arrivent à Komanda (territoire d'Irumu, district de l'Ituri) après 3 jours de marche. Selon OCHA-Beni, le nombre des retours est encore inconnu, mais certaines ONGs avancent le chiffre de 4.000 personnes, avec une fréquence d'environ 30 personnes par jour. 90 % de ces déplacés retournent à Komanda et Irumu. Selon OCHA-Bunia, plus de 500 retournés ont été identifiés à Bunia en provenance du Nord-Kivu.

Les raisons qui les poussent à retourner sont : la sécurité qui revient petit à petit en Ituri ; les marchés qui ont repris dans certaines localités et la vie dure qu'ils mènent dans les camps et/ou dans les familles d'accueil. Dans le site d'Oicha, les déplacés attendent la distribution des vivres du PAM pour commencer à retourner alors que dans d'autres, ils attendent de connaître la position du Gouvernement de transition sur l'Ituri ainsi que la réhabilitation de la route Beni-Bunia. » (UN OCHA 21 Nov 03, p1)

Survey showed that people in Bunia IDP camp were hesitant to return home as of Dec 03

« **Enquête : pourquoi les déplacés du camp de Bunia ne veulent pas retourner chez eux ?** Voici les résultats de l'enquête sur les raisons du non-retour des déplacés, réalisée par la Commission pour la Prévention et le Contrôle des Conflits :

- 28% du fait de l'insécurité ;
- 23% en raison de maisons incendiées ou détruites ;
- 15% pour des raisons économiques ;
- 13% à cause de l'occupation de leurs maisons ;
- 11% pour d'autres raisons ;
- 10% pour des causes politiques. » (OCHA 26 Dec 03, p1)

“Environ 35.000 IDPs et plus de 100.000 retournés sont identifiés dans le territoire de Mahagi, dans le district de l'Ituri. L'ONGI AAA a identifié de janvier à mars 2004 6.978 ménages de déplacés et 22.971 ménages de retournés au nord du territoire de Djugu et au sud de Mahagi. Les IDPs qui avaient fui l'insécurité sont installés à Panduru (80 km de Mahagi), Shari (70km de Mahagi), Simbi (à l'ouest de

Mahagi), Mokambo (au sud-ouest de Mahagi) et à Mahagi port. Ils sont originaires des territoires de Djugu, Tchomia et Kasenyi. Les retournés reviennent de l'Ouganda et de la périphérie de Mahagi. Ils sont dans les différents endroits du territoire de Mahagi (Nioka, Ngote, Nyarambembe et Ame)." (UN OCHA 12 March 04)

As of August 2004, 33 percent of IDPs from Ituri had returned home

"According to OCHA, 83,000, or 33 percent, of IDPs in Ituri District are estimated to have returned home since June 2003. Of the 100,000 Ituri IDPs who fled to North Kivu, over half have now returned, though those from Bunia and areas north of Bunia have largely remained." (USAID 20 Aug 04)

« 10.000 familles des retournés se trouvent présentement dans la zone Komanda-Lolwa-Ngeleza en Ituri, dans la Province Orientale. Selon l'ONGI Première Urgence, on enregistre chaque semaine l'arrivée à Komanda de 100 à 200 familles des retournés en provenance de Beni. » (UN OCHA 3 Sept 04)

IDPs complain about persisting insecurity in 2004

"More than a year after inter-militia fighting in Ituri district in northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo sent thousands of residents fleeing for their lives, many are still holed up in an internally displaced persons' (IDPs) camp near the airport of Bunia, the main town in the district.

"I can't return to my home because the militiamen have taken everything I had," said Maki Ayanga, one of the IDPs. "If I had all I needed to resettle safely somewhere else I would gladly leave this camp."

The displaced mostly come from Bunia or from the territory of Djugu, north of the town. "They number around 13,000 today, as opposed to 15,000 in April 2003," Modibo Traore, of the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Bunia, told IRIN last week.

They had fled fighting between several militias, including the Union des patriotes Congolais (UPS), a militia mainly composed of people from the Hema ethnic group, and the Front des nationalistes intégrationnistes (FNI), which is mostly composed of ethnic Lendus. The fighting was particularly intense between April and June 2003. Some 8,000 people died, according to an August report issued by the Human Rights department of the UN Mission in the DRC, MONUC

In May 2004, seven militias signed a cease-fire agreement under the supervision of MONUC. But by early July, other militias, the Forces armées populaires congolaises, and the FNI started fighting again.

Militiamen continue squatting in houses owned by civilians, said Traore. "The situation is precarious. Most [IDPs] come from the neighbourhood of Muzipela, which is under the control of UPC militiamen." He said members of other non-Hema ethnic groups "are not safe there".

"Armed groups have turned into thugs," said Matteo Frontini, a spokesperson for the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which provides treatment for women and girls who were victims of sexual violence. "The rape of women remains a major issue."

A year ago, MONUC began deploying around 5,000 troops in Ituri with a mandate to disarm militias. But the proliferation of small arms in the region has been a daunting task. "Bunia is not free from arms; at night there are many armed robberies," Traore said.

Some IDPs spend the day in town, but return to the camp at night because of insecurity.

IDPs at the Bunia camp often complain of hunger, according to a relief worker who requested anonymity. Even so, few have volunteered to return home through a joint programme set up by OCHA in collaboration with MONUC and other UN agencies such as UNICEF, the World Food Programme as well as the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission (ECHO) and the NGO Atlas Logistique.

Those who decide to return are given kits containing plastic sheeting, cooking utensils, soap and blankets. So far only around 2,000 IDPs have expressed interest in returning.” (IRIN 16 Aug 04)

“Des IDPs de Rwankole [Ituri] souhaitent retourner dans leurs maisons. Ils déplorent que celles-ci soient illégalement occupées par des groupes armés. Ils sont présentement dans différents quartiers de Bunia. » (UN OCHA 30 July 2004).

General trend of return to places of residence in Ituri

“There seems to be a generalised trend of IDPs returning to their former places of residence. Those in Bunia returning to their homes either within town or outside, those in Beni (North Kivu province) trickling back to Bunia [For this category of IDPs from Ituri who fled for safety to Beni, there appears not to be an organised and coordinated action by anyone or organisation/agency to ship them back into Ituri. Most of the returnees so far have come back on their personal initiatives, using their financial means. However, some efforts are being made to correct this situation. For instance, in June, a meeting was held at the Bunia OCHA office to strategise on how to help the Ituri residents, now IDPs in Beni, to come back to Ituri.] and those who have been hiding in the bushes are returning to their villages. In addition, displaced peoples from Bogoro, on the Uganda shores of Lake Albert, are willing to return home. Bogoro is currently an FNI/FRPI-controlled territory, and most of the people who fled away from this area are ethnic Hemas. Three meetings of customary dignitaries from this area took place in Bunia during the second fortnight of June to plan and secure from all local stakeholders (including representatives of different ethnic groups) a safe return of all those that had been displaced.

For those in the IDP camp near the Bunia airport, Atlas Logistics, an international French NGO, is facilitating their return and their resettlement by first surveying the security conditions of the places they want to return to and then by providing those leaving the camps with a support kit made of food rations for a one-month period and tools for land tilling. (E.g. hoes, machetes)

This trend is indicative of significant improvements in security conditions in most parts of Ituri district compared to when Ituri got partitioned into different areas, each controlled by different ethnic armed groups.” (FEWER 4 July 2004)

May 2005

“Les effectifs du Camp Aero de Bunia sont de 7.778 personnes. Le 27 mai, 26 familles ont quitté le Camp Aero pour s’installer dans la ville de Bunia.” (OCHA 27 May 2005).

Most of the displaced of Mambasa, Ituri returned home without any assistance (May 2004)

- Massive human rights violations occurred during the ruthless military operation called “Effacer le Tableau”
- Widespread killings, rapes and looting of civilians, as well as report of cannibalism
- 20,000 people have returned to Mambassa, despite trauma and lack of assistance

« Ville de l'Ituri dans la Province Orientale, à l'Est de Bafwasende, Mambasa est situé à environ vingt minutes de vol de Bunia et trente minutes de Beni (Grand Nord Kivu) sur la route de Isiro au Nord. Les habitants de cette ville (entre 25 000 et 30 000 âmes) doivent leur relative prospérité aux activités d'exportation de riz, de bois mais aussi d'une petite quantité de la ressource aurifère. En automne 2002, la guerre qui ravageait la République Démocratique du Congo depuis pratiquement six ans déjà était arrivée à Mambasa et l'enfer y a élu domicile jusqu'en janvier 2003. [...]

[S]urvint l'éclatement du FLC (Front de libération du Congo) qui fut une alliance entre le MLC de Jean Pierre Bemba et le RCD/KML de Mbusa Nyamuisi. Le premier a juré d'« effacer » le second de la carte congolaise et du coup joindre l'Equateur à l'Ituri. Cette «opération » de suppression mise aux prises du MLC à l'UPC de Thomas Lubanga, autre transfuge du RCD/ML. Ainsi fut lancé la fameuse « Opération effacer le tableau », une opération militaire de grande envergure menée conjointement par le MLC et le RCD-N qui plongea toute la localité dans une indescriptible désolation. Mambassa qui, jusque-là, abritait des milliers de réfugiés qui fuyaient les affres de la guerre en Ituri perdit son statut de havre de paix. [...]

A la fin du mois de décembre début janvier, encore une fois, les forces coalisées du MLC et du RCD-N auxquelles se sont ajoutées les forces de l'UPC reviennent dans une violente contre-attaque qui éclate à Komanda pendant qu'une partie de la coalition était en progression vers Beni. Les actes de pillage, de viols de filles, aussi préméditées que systématiques étaient légion sur les territoires conquis. Même les paisibles pygmées n'étaient pas non plus épargnés. Les atrocités étaient gratuites. Mourir ne suffisait plus pour en être « épargné ». On risquait même d'être mangé. Des rapports font état d'une déclaration d'un chef de guerre qui, à partir d'un pays étranger recommandait à ses hommes « d'émasculer tout soldat du RCD-KML qu'ils auraient tué. »

A partir de décembre 2002 et janvier 2003, explique un témoin, « Mambassa était devenue une ville fantôme, vidée de sa population, enveloppée dans un silence de mort où règne une atmosphère de terreur qui donnait la nausée.[...]

Le retrait des troupes du MLC et du RCD-KML obtenu grâce à l'Accord de Gbadolite du 26 décembre négociée par Mme Sundh, Représentante Spéciale Adjointe du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies pour la RDC, avait permis l'arrêt des exactions. L'équipe des Droits de l'Homme de la MONUC avait effectué une enquête qui confirmait les viols systématiques des femmes, le rapt d'enfants, le pillage maison par maison de la localité, les tortures contre les hommes, et les témoignages de cannibalisme, y compris le cannibalisme force.

Un an après, les victimes pensent toujours leur plaie avec très peu d'aide extérieure

Un an après, le cauchemar s'est estompé et la délégation de la Monuc qui s'est rendue à Mambasa a eu l'agréable plaisir de voir la ville reprendre pied et se reconstruire. Les enfants ont réappris depuis à sourire. La nombreuse population qui a fui la ville y est revenue. Même vu du ciel, les changements sont évidents. Les maisons sont reconstruites, tout paraît normal, finie la vision cauchemardesque de décembre 2002, janvier 2003. Selon le père Silvano Ruaro, l'âme de Mambassa, plus de 20.000 habitants, sur 30 000 auparavant, sont rentrés et s'attèlent à la reconstruction de leur vie brisée. » (MONUC 19 May 2004)

In Katanga, many IDPs are ready to return (2004)

- According to UN survey, people in camps cite security reasons for not returning (Jan 04)
- In Lubumbashi, returning IDPs receive land from the government to resettle (Sept 04)
- About 20 percent of IDPs around Kalemie had returned voluntarily by end July, and planning to support the return of IDPs in camps around Kalemie in Aug 04
- According to UN OCHA, 40,000 households around Kalemie were ready to return home as of July 04, but lack the means to do so
- Urgent food, seeds and tools assistance.needs for IDPs returning to Kabongo and Kabalo Territories as of April 04

- Vast campaign to prepare for IDP return organised by humanitarian actors in several zones of Katanga in October 2004
- Some 50,000 IDPs who returned to their homes in Katanga without adequate assistance face food insecurity, as their crops and tools have been looted (March 2005)
- In June 2005, 341 families displaced in Lumbwe and Makala camps, close to Kalemie, returned home with international assistance

"Le District de Tanganika situé dans la partie Nord-est de la province du Katanga est l'une des multiples zones ou parties du pays qui auront été fortement touchées par les différentes guerres qu'a vécues la République Démocratique du Congo depuis un peu plus de six ans. Il en a résulté d'importants mouvements des populations fuyant les zones des combats à la recherche des lieux plus sécurisants. Et à cet effet on a observé des déplacements des masses vers la ville de Kalemie qui aux yeux de beaucoup est apparue comme un havre de paix. Ainsi il s'est créé dans cette ville pour la seule période allant de février à Juillet 2003 quatre sites d'hébergement des déplacés des guerres auxquels il fallait apporter assistance. En effet, des familles entières se sont constituées des abris de fortune et vivent dans des conditions les plus inhumaines.[...]

Malgré la guerre et/ou l'insécurité à la base du départ forcé des déplacés de guerre, ceux continuent à afficher leur intention de retourner dans leur village d'origine. En effet, plus de huit déplacés sur dix souhaitent regagner leurs villages en dépit du traumatisme vécu.

Intention du retour au village (tous sites confondus)

Motifs	Pourcentages
1. Oui	88.8%
2. Non	11.2%

Il y a, à côté de la multitude, quelques retissants qui, pour diverses raisons refusent de rentrer dans leurs villages d'origine.

Cependant même ceux qui souhaiteraient rentrer, il s'agit d'une intention assortie de condition de sécurité notamment. Ainsi donc par rapport aux motifs d'empêchement, l'insécurité qui sévit au village vient en première position à en croire les informations du tableau qui suit.

Motifs d'empêchement d'un retour au village

Quatre modalités principales ont été proposées aux déplacements quant aux motifs qui les empêcheraient de rentrer dans leurs villages d'origine :

1. L'insécurité ;
2. Jamais de proposition de retour ;
3. Ignorance du motif réel ;
4. Présence ou exercice d'une activité ici sur place. » (OCHA Jan 04)

In September 2004 : « Les anciens déplacés de guerre de la Kassapa viennent de décider de leur réintégration à Lubumbashi. Le gouvernement vient de leur octroyer des terres pour ériger des cases.

L'Armée du Salut vient de donner à ce même groupe des tôles pour la construction d'abris. » (UN OCHA 23 Sept 04)

IDPs from camps close to Kalemie:

“Contrary to other crises covered by the media in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a certain area in Katanga Province, as affected by the war as the other regions in the East, suffers from a lack of attention and therefore a smaller humanitarian response.

More than 4,000 families displaced in the District of Tanganyika have started to go home, according to Djuma Baudouin, OCHA liaison officer in Kalemie. All of them fled the war and the insecurity caused by various armed groups, active in the district since 1998.

The reasons that these people fled do not exist anymore today. The war is officially over. According to the head of the committee of IDPs from the camp of Lumbwe, the terror created by Mayi Mayi elements in villages disappeared three weeks ago with their integration into the DRC army.

A massive return of IDPs

The main worry for the humanitarian community, based in Kalemie, is the delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable persons in their villages of origin. The purpose is not only to allow IDPs to return in dignity but also to create a social and economic environment for them to fight their own vulnerability and to facilitate their reconciliation with those who did not choose to leave the village.” » (UN OCHA 16 July 04)

“According to the Inter-agency mission to Kitenge, Kabalo Territory, the majority of the 35,000 IDPs, displaced between June 2003 and April 2004 in the Kabongo Territory never received any substantial humanitarian assistance in food or Non Food Items. Since January 2004, nearly half (15,000) of these IDPs have already returned to their home villages, especially in the zone south east of Kitenge, and require urgent food, seeds and tools assistance.” (UN OCHA 30 April 2004)

« A l’issue de la vérification effectuée le samedi 24/07 par OCHA, l’ONGI NRC et Caritas pour évaluer la tendance du mouvement de retour des déplacés des sites de Makala et Lumbwe, il a été constaté un retour volontaire de 472 ménages sur un total de 3.088 ménages recensés par OCHA en décembre dernier au camp de Lumbwe. Soit 14,6%. Au Camp de Makala, on a noté un retour de 845 ménages sur un total de 2.549 ménages recensés. Soit 21,5%. » (UN OCHA 30 July 2004).

“Le processus de retour des personnes déplacées installées dans les sites des déplacés autour de Kalemie était au centre des discussions [de la commission mouvement des populations]. Pour permettre aux retournés de pouvoir développer des mécanismes d’auto prise en charge pour faciliter leur réinsertion socio économique, référene a été faite au projet d’appui à la réinsertion des ménages des déplacés, projet qui sera exécuté par la CARITAS en partenariat avec les autres acteurs humanitaires, sur financement de l’ONGI CORDAID. » (UN OCHA 6 August 2004)

« Le manque de partenaires et de financements adéquats rend très difficile la couverture de tous les besoins humanitaires [au Katanga], alors que la durée trop courte de certains programmes - pour des raisons budgétaires -- annule bien souvent les effets des initiatives mises en oeuvre. [...]

La gestion de 40.000 déplacés internes dans ce district devient problématique, elle aussi. Malgré les efforts déployés seuls 20% de cette population bénéficie d’une assistance au retour. Les disponibilités en biens non alimentaires, en semences, en houes sont insuffisantes.” (OCHA 6 November 2004, Tanganyika)

“Dans le but de promouvoir la pacification sociale à l’occasion du retour des déplacés internes, une vaste campagne de sensibilisation des populations dans les localités d’origine vient d’être menée dans le district du Tanganyika, dans le sud-est de la République Démocratique du Congo (RDC).

Cette initiative menée conjointement par les autorités locales, Caritas, la Commission Diocésaine et Paix et OCHA s'inscrit dans le cadre d'un projet pilote visant le retour et la réinstallation de 3000 déplacés actuellement répartis dans les quatre camps situés autour de Kalemie. Cette initiative sera soutenue par le Programme Alimentaire Mondial (PAM) et la l'Organisation pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture (FAO) à travers des distributions de vivres pour trois mois et de semences au moment du retour.

Sur les trois axes de retour identifiés (Kalemie / Bendera, Kalemie / Nyunzi, et Kalemie / Moba) 15 séances de sensibilisation ont été ainsi conduites jusqu'au 24 octobre [2004]. Ont été évoqués la pacification sociale, les principes directeurs au retour, la participation communautaire aux travaux de reconstruction des villages, l'interdiction de marginaliser la femme et la nécessité dans certains cas de restaurer sa dignité et enfin la prévention du recrutement d'enfants dans les groupes armés.

Ces séances ont également été l'occasion pour les acteurs humanitaires d'évaluer les besoins et la sécurité dans les zones." (OCHA 6 November 2004, pacifié)

"Plusieurs factions Mayi-Mayi ont nui à la population civile en occupant d'anciennes positions tenues par des éléments FARDC partis dans les centres de brassage, en attaquant des villages ou encore en combattant les forces gouvernementales encore présentes sur place. Malgré l'insécurité ambiante, une mission inter-Agences d'évaluation a toutefois constaté le retour progressif des 50.000 personnes qui s'étaient déplacées en raison des exactions. D'ores et déjà ces familles font face à des problèmes sérieux de sécurité alimentaire, les champs et outils aratoires ayant été pillés, sans qu'une aide adéquate ne puisse être fournie aux plus vulnérables ." (OCHA 31 March 2005)

« Caritas a annoncé le retour et la réintégration de 341 familles déplacées des camps de Lumbwe et de Makala, près de Kalemie. La plupart des personnes déplacées sont originaires de plusieurs villages situés dans un périmètre de 30 km au Sud-ouest de Kalemie. Le PAM et Caritas ont respectivement fourni des vivres et des non-vivres aux personnes concernées par cette opération de retour qui a débuté le 27 mai. De même, environ 3 000 familles déplacées avaient regagné leurs lieux d'origine en janvier le long des différents axes routiers Kalemie-Bendera, Kalemie-Moba et Kalemie-Nyunzu. La Section humanitaire de la MONUC continue son plaidoyer auprès de la communauté humanitaire pour faciliter le retour et la réintégration d'environ 1 500 familles déplacées dans les camps de Lukwangulo et Kabutonga, situés respectivement à 9 km et 28 km de Kalemie. » (MONUC 7 June 2005)

In South Kivu, return of IDPs to Baraka and Fizi areas (Aug 04)

"According to USAID/OFDA field reports, IDPs have begun to return to the Baraka and Fizi area of southern South Kivu Province. On the Uvira-Baraka axis, an estimated 60 percent of the population has returned, while on the Baraka-Fizi axis only 30 percent of the population has returned." (USAID 20 Aug 04)

In Fizi: "De janvier à mi août 04, le comité territorial de la Croix Rouge de Fizi a enregistré 810 ménages, soit 3376 personnes, rapatriés spontanés. Le nombre ne cesse de croître en prévision de la rentrée scolaire prochaine. Tous ces rapatriés vivent sur la côte car leurs villages sont inaccessibles et leurs habitations ont été détruites par la guerre et les intempéries. Certains rapatriés viennent d'abord prospecter le milieu et commencent à préparer les champs." (UN OCHA 13 August 2004)

In Maniema, many return home without any assistance (2003-2004)

- While over 20 percent of population in Maniema is displaced, few have received any assistance
- When they return, IDPs are faced with the lack of basic services and infrastructure, such as hospitals, health centres, schools and roads

- 9,000 IDPs who returned home in Kabambare Territory need urgent assistance (March 04)
- IDPs return to Pangi without any assistance (Sept 04)
- 12,500 IDPs returning to Kibombo cannot be accessed by humanitarian agencies (Aug 04)

« Plus de 20 % de la population du Maniema (165 427 personnes) est constituée de déplacés et l'assistance qui leur a été apportée jusque là est insignifiante. Si l'on constate aujourd'hui un retour progressif des déplacés vers leurs villages d'origine, ceux-ci sont toutefois confrontés à des multiples problèmes de réinstallation. Les infrastructures publiques (hôpitaux, centres de santé, écoles, entreprises de production) ont été pillées ou fermées dans de nombreuses localités. Ces personnes qui retournent constatent bien souvent que leurs maisons sont détruites, leurs biens pillés et leurs champs saccagés.

Aujourd'hui, les écoles ont rouvert leurs portes partout dans la province, contrairement aux années de guerre où les enfants de plusieurs territoires sous contrôle Maï Maï n'ont pas été scolarisés. Cependant, il faut bien le constater, les conditions dans lesquelles les élèves suivent les cours sont déplorables, faute d'équipements de base comme les bancs tables, les portes, fenêtres, fournitures scolaires et mis à jour des livres.

Enfin, il faut noter plus le plus sérieux des problèmes auquel fait face la province du Maniema : l'absence d'une infrastructure routière fonctionnelle du fait de l'impraticabilité de la plupart des routes et de l'état de délabrement des ponts. » (MONUC 18 May 2004)

« Plus 25.000 personnes sont récemment revenues de la brousse et se réinstallent dans la cité de Kibombo, au Maniema. Plus de 5.000 familles, soit environ 25.000 personnes, sont retournées dans leur ville origine, Kibombo, longtemps restée sous le contrôle des Mayi-Mayi qui l'ont pillée avant de partir. Selon OCHA-Kindu, ces personnes sont d'une grande vulnérabilité et dépourvues de tout. Elles ont besoin d'habits, d'ustensiles de cuisine, d'outils aratoires, de semences améliorées, et d'autres biens de base pour reprendre une vie sédentaire. » (UN OCHA 21 Nov 03, p1)

« On assiste à un mouvement de retour des déplacés dans leurs villages d'origines, selon OCHA-Kindu. D'après les organisations locales et les autorités locales de Kibombo, plusieurs familles retournées sont maintenant dans leurs villages le long de l'axe Kindu-Kasongo. Plusieurs villages étaient vides sur cet axe avant la fin de l'année écoulée. » (UN OCHA 16 Jan 04)

« D'après la Croix Rouge du Congo de Kambambare, 9.000 personnes (sur les 18.000 IDPs qui étaient Kamabare), ont quitté le chef lieu du territoire de Kabambare et se seraient installés dans des villages Buyu (Mukwanga, Kyangi, Fataki, etc.) sur l'axe Kabambare-Buyu, qui débouche sur le nord Katanga. Ces déplacés s'approchent de plus en plus de leurs milieux d'origine à cause de l'accalmie signalée. Ces déplacés/retournés ainsi que les autres restés à Kabambare sont dans des difficultés énormes. Ils n'ont jamais reçu d'assistance. » (UN OCHA 19 March 2004)

« Plus de 500 ménages sont retournés au centre de Pangi et n'ont jamais été assistés. La réinstallation pose problème par manque d'équipement de base tel les ustensiles de cuisine, les habits, les outils aratoires et les semences. » (UN OCHA 23 Sept 04)

« 12.500 personnes retournées au Sud-Ouest du Maniema ont besoin d'une assistance pour leur réinstallation, selon les premières conclusions d'une mission inter agences. D'après le rapport préliminaire de la mission qui s'est rendue à Kibombo, 2.500 ménages retournés dans plusieurs groupements du territoire de Kibombo n'ont jamais reçu d'assistance humanitaire et sont confrontés à de sérieuses difficultés de réinstallation. La partie ouest du territoire n'offre pas d'accès physique. L'action humanitaire n'est pas envisageable. L'accès aux soins de santé primaires y compris le PEV de routine pour les enfants n'est pas possible. Plusieurs cas de violences sexuelles ont été rapportés par des organisations locales dont 5 nouveaux cas commis contre les jeunes filles entre mars et avril 2004. L'ONGI Care International assiste la zone de santé de Kibombo en médicaments essentiels au départ de Kasongo. Mais cette assistance ne suffit

pas au vu des besoins énormes du milieu. Care International vient aussi d'aménager 38 sources d'eau dans la même région. L'ONGI COOPI qui travaille dans la prise en charge psychosociale des victimes de viol vient d'ouvrir une base à Kibombo. » (UN OCHA 27 Aug 04)

In North Kivu, many return despite heightened insecurity (2003)

- Returnees to Walikale, North Kivu, have great humanitarian needs (Nov 03)

“Some 10,000 of Walikale town's estimated population of 15,000 have returned since March, after having sought refuge in surrounding bush for several months. As populations continued to return, demands for food continued to increase as availability of food supplies continued to decrease. The mission found that populations were reluctant to resume agricultural activity, as armed groups helped themselves to food cultivated by others. [...]

The mission found that only one the area's of 24 health centres was found to be fully accessible. The one non-governmental organization that is operational in the area, Medecins Sans Frontiers, is working to rehabilitate the facility. The mission also found serious problems in obtaining medical supplies, given poor roads and insecurity; a very low level of vaccination coverage - less than 21 percent; and "very weak" epidemiological monitoring and reporting. Anti-polio vaccinations had not taken place in the past two years - despite the fact that the region had experienced a major outbreak of polio as recently as 1998.

The territory's education system was devastated. All schools had been seriously damaged, while many had been completely pillaged and destroyed during recent years of occupation both by various armed groups as well as by waves of IDPs and refugees. An estimated 40 percent of school-age children did not attend school at all, with girls constituting a majority of absentees. Of eight schools visited, none had a source of running water, and only two were equipped with latrines, making the risk of disease "enormous", according to the mission.” (UN OCHA 24 Nov 03)

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

General

Humanitarian workers at risk in Ituri (2004-2005)

“Medair strongly condemns the repeated acts of physical aggression, looting and hostage taking that the humanitarian community of Ituri has been subjected to by armed groups operating in this region, located in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Medair will suspend its humanitarian activities for 9 days as a sign of protest against this violence.” (Medair 17 June 2005)

“In Orientale, MONUC said the NGO Atlas Logistique temporarily suspended its rehabilitation of the 244-km Kisangani-Lubutu road because a Mayi-Mayi militia has been harassing some 2,000 people working for the NGO in the area.” (IRIN 27 April 2005)

“[D]uring March [2005] humanitarian workers have been specifically targeted by armed militiamen. The latest case in point is that of the French INGO Solidarites whose staff, including an expatriate, were violently bullied around and beaten up by guntotting UPC-L militiamen near the village of Lopa, over 50 Km North of Bunia on 24th of this month. This is not an isolated incident as there have been others. On March 11, a death threat was made to a German Agro Action (AAA) staff member and their humanitarian cargo was looted at Katoto while they were heading to do food distribution to the IDPs at Tche, some 60 Km Northeast of Bunia. On March 17, a team from Atlas Logistique was attacked between Boga and Bukiringi, some 45 Km southeast of Bunia. Their communication equipment and other personal belongings were taken from them.” (Africa Initiative Programme 1 April 2005)

“Supply lines to an estimated 54,000 civilians living in camps to which they had fled, and who were relying on aid agencies, and on the protection of UN forces, have been cut by the rise in violence.

The entire corps of international aid agencies working in Ituri withdrew their staff from the sites earlier this week, after the killing in preceding days of nine UN peacekeepers in a militia ambush.

Humanitarian organizations have had to temporarily suspend their relief efforts in critical areas such as health, water and food distribution. In one large camp, a water source maintained by aid agencies had broken down, but aid agencies were not able for several days to safely reach the site.” (UNICEF 4 March 2005)

“The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) condemned Wednesday the Monday 15 November 2004 attack against an International Non-Government Organisation 'Première Urgence/First Emergency' in Bukiringui district situated a hundred kilometres South of Bunia.

Addressing the Weekly Mission's press conference, MONUC Spokesman, Mamadou Bah, indicated that "the attack targeted four members of the NGO on board a vehicle". Three villagers were killed and a humanitarian worker wounded by bullets, he further said.

The attack took place in a zone under control of the Ngiti ethnic armed troops led by the "Forces de Résistance Patriotiques de l'Ituri (FRPI)". The group carried out a number of attacks against international NGOs during the last two months, Mr. Bah said, noting that MONUC condemns the attack, having occurred at a time when the Ituri key armed groups are engaged in the DCR process, Disarmament and Community Reintegration. MONUC urges these groups to abide by their commitment. " Either, they

control their armed troops and respond for their act or do not and still are responsible", MONUC Spokesman declared." (MONUC 18 November 2004)

Deliberate killing of peacekeepers by militias in Ituri (2005)

"One of four Nepalese U.N. peacekeepers wounded by militiamen in Congo's eastern Ituri district died overnight of his injuries, the world body said on Friday.

Militiamen in the remote area of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) attacked U.N. human rights investigators and peacekeepers on Thursday, wounding the four Nepalese and damaging a helicopter, the world body said.

The gunmen attacked the helicopters as they took off from Lugo, a village 60 km (38 miles) southwest of Mahagi, on Congo's border with Uganda, after a mission to investigate reports on kidnappings and rapes by militia fighters in the area.

'One of the peacekeepers died in the night from his injuries,' U.N. military spokesman Lt. Col Thierry Provendier said in Kinshasa.

'He was not evacuated to South Africa as he would not have survived the shock,' he added. U.N. troops wounded in the lawless, mineral-rich region are sometimes sent to South Africa for treatment.

The U.N. said it believed the militiamen were members of the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI), a group it suspects of gunning down nine U.N. peacekeepers in February. It was unclear whether any militia fighters were injured." (Reuters 3 June 2005)

"A United Nations peacekeeper died today from injuries sustained when about 20 "armed elements" ambushed a convoy transporting 40 UN troops in the troubled Ituri district in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the UN peacekeeping mission said.

"Three peacekeepers were injured in an armed vehicle that turned over and the other three were wounded by gunfire 55 kilometres southeast of Bunia. Of the three who were shot, one was wounded critically and later died, the UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC) said." (UN News Service 12 May 2005)

"The Security Council this morning condemned "with the utmost firmness" the 25 February attack against a patrol of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) by the Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes (FNI) in Ituri, resulting in the murder of nine Bangladeshi peacekeepers." (UNSC 2 March 2005)

"The chief of an eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) militia group has been arrested in connection with last week's killing of nine UN peacekeepers, a source close to the DRC presidency said Tuesday.

Floribert Ndjabu, leader of the Nationalist and Integrationist Front (FNI), one of six militias operating in the Ituri region where the Bangladeshi troops were ambushed and killed on Friday, was detained in Kinshasa on Sunday, the source said.

In addition, two of his lieutenants, Goda Sukpa, the FNI's former military commander, and Germain Katanga, who headed a branch of the group, have been placed under house arrest in Kinshasa's Grand Hotel, the source said." (AFP 1 March 2005)

Humanitarian access difficult in eastern DRC (2004-2005)

- Humanitarian access to Bunia became possible once again with the takeover by Ugandan troops in March 2003
- Access remained difficult despite withdrawal of foreign troops and the set up of transition government (Aug 03)
- Humanitarian needs of population along newly accessible axes of Maniema and South Kivu
- Lack of roads makes it very difficult for humanitarian agencies to access IDPs in South Kivu who would like to return home (April 04)
- 20 aid agencies lost a \$1.5 million in humanitarian supplies, equipment and vehicles due to looting by military and civilian demonstrations in Bukavu, Goma, Kalemie, Kinshasa, and Kindu (June 04)
- MSF suspended activities in war-torn area of North Kivu (January 2005)
- Looting of logistical base of NGO in North Kivu (March 2005)

“The formation of the National Transitional Government, the signing of local peace agreements in the Kivus, MONUC’s deployment in areas outside Bunia as well as OCHA/DRC’s advocacy activities have collectively contributed to the improvement of access to vulnerable populations in many areas in eastern DRC. Access along axes such as Kindu-Lokandu, Kindu- Kalima and Shabunda, Bunyakiri and areas surrounding Walungu have improved during the intervening period since the last report. Consequently, humanitarian needs have considerably risen due to the increase in the number of beneficiaries, hitherto inaccessible. In Ituri, MONUC’s deployment in places outside Bunia allowed humanitarian actors to reach vulnerable populations in areas previously inaccessible such as Fataki and Songolo. Prior to September, WFP’s activities in Ituri were largely confined to feeding the more than 12,000 displaced people from Bunia and the wider region that had taken refuge in the camp next to the Airport.” (UN OCHA 15 March 04)

“The poor state of roads in this province is having a huge impact on the humanitarian situation, especially for humanitarian partners wanting to access or assist vulnerable groups. For example, thousands of IDPs living in Bukavu want to return home to Shabunda Territory but due to the poor state of roads, humanitarian partners cannot accompany their return. For those who want to return on their own, they must face a 10-day trek. The same is true for many other zones in this war-torn province.” (UN OCHA 30 April 2004)

Following clashes in South Kivu in May/June 2004, “In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 20 aid agencies lost an estimated \$1.5 million in humanitarian supplies, equipment and vehicles due to recent looting by military and civilian demonstrations.[...]

Ninety per cent of the humanitarian organizations operating in Bukavu, Goma, Kalemie, Kinshasa, and Kindu have been affected by either looting, suspension of activities, or lack of access to vulnerable groups. A total of 193 staff from more than 30 United Nations agencies and aid organizations was relocated to safer areas.” (UN OCHA 28 June 2004)

“[H]umanitarian organisations estimate that approximately 2.6 million vulnerable persons have been affected by the reduction of humanitarian activities. The sectors most affected are health, water, food security, and protection. For example, in Katanga Province, an estimated 61,000 vulnerable persons will not receive planned food and/or seeds and tools assistance because of the looting of WFP and FAO stocks in Kalemie. This includes 9,000 malnourished children and 17,000 children in difficulty. In South-Kivu Province, 514,000 people are no longer receiving health or water and sanitation assistance from INGO IRC, who have suspended their activities.[...]

Humanitarian organizations are cautiously starting to resume activities in the most affected areas in the Kivus, Maniema, and northern Katanga. For instance, INGO AVSI, who lost everything to looting in Walikale, North-Kivu Province, was able to partially restart its food security activities in the Rutshuru and Masisi Territories. In neighbouring Maniema Province, INGOs are now starting to return to their operations, albeit at reduced staffing levels. In South-Kivu Province, INGOs MSF and ACF continue their health and nutritional activities in Shabunda, but at 50% of their previous capacity. At the end of last week, fewer than 25% of the humanitarian organisations affected by this crisis had returned to normal operations.” (UN OCHA 25 June 2004, Bukavu)

“Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has suspended aid activities in one of the most war-torn areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)’s North Kivu Province after people in army uniform attacked the charity’s facility late Tuesday.” (IRIN 20 January 2005)

“L’ONGI IRC se retire du District du Tanganika, dans la province du Katanga, à la suite du pillage dont elle a été victime. Le désengagement de l’ONGI IRC intervenu le lundi 28/02. Une dernière distribution de médicaments dans les centres de santé des zones de santé de Nyunzu et Kabalo a toutefois eu lieu. Des tracasseries et des pillages de matériels ont été rapportés au cours de l’évacuation des différentes bases (Kalemie, Nyunzu et Kabalo). Le départ de l’ONGI laisse un vide au sein de la communauté humanitaire, étant donné le nombre limité de partenaires présents dans le district du Tanganika.” (OCHA 14 March 2005)

« La délégation de la Commission européenne en République démocratique du Congo (RDC) suspend deux projets dans la province du Nord-Kivu suite aux pillages de la base logistique de l’organisation non-gouvernementale (ONG) Agro action allemande (AAA) dans le territoire de Nyabondo, a-t-elle annoncé ce mardi.[...]

‘La décision fait suite aux pillages systématiques survenus à la base logistique de AAA à Nyabiondo, entre le 20 décembre 2004 et le début de janvier 2005’» (IRIN 1 March 2005)

Fixing of railroad improves access to IDPs in Maniema Province (2004)

- Rehabilitation of railroad line from Katanga to Maniema Provinces (August 2004)
- “Humanitarian trains” will benefit over 2.2 million in Orientale Province (November 2004)

“Kindu-Kabalo railroad complete. On June 29, the first train to travel to Maniema Province in five years arrived in Kindu, the provincial capital. The train’s arrival marked the completion of the \$1.3 million USAID/OFDA project with Food for the Hungry International (FHI) to rehabilitate the railroad line from Kabalo, Katanga Province, to Kindu, Maniema Province. The line ceased operating with the outbreak of hostilities in 1998 and the ensuing partial destruction of Zofu Bridge near Kabalo.

The completed railroad line improves food security by reconnecting food-producing areas with urban markets and facilitates the delivery of humanitarian assistance in an area that previously relied solely on air transport. USAID/OFDA also funded rehabilitation of the road from Kasongo to the rail line so that this city would also benefit from the return of train traffic. FHI and its implementing partners-including CARE International, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and Concern Worldwide-cleared 490 km of track that had been neglected since 1998, completed repairs to a key bridge in Kabalo, and restored critical railroad communications systems.” (USAID 20 Aug 04)

« Les organisations humanitaires lancent des "Trains humanitaires" pour ouvrir l'accès à plus de 2.200.000 personnes après l'inauguration du trafic ferroviaire Kisangani - Ubundu. Le Ministre des Transports a en effet inauguré le mercredi 10 novembre le chemin de fer reliant Kisangani à Ubundu. Les organisations humanitaires proposent le lancement des " Trains humanitaires " sur ce tronçon à la fin du mois de

novembre 2004. L'opération permettra d'assister plusieurs centaines de personnes dans la région, directement ou indirectement concernées par ce projet présenté par l'ONGI IRC et financé par le fonds d'urgence EHI d'OCHA et par OTI/USAID. » (OCHA 12 November 2004)

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

National Response

Ministries in charge to respond to the needs of IDPs and returnees (2005)

- In June and July 2004, the Transition Government gave 1 million USD to rehabilitate the market of Bukavu and for humanitarian assistance

The proliferation of Ministries at the Kinshasa level has also complicated coordination arrangements – more than 50 were created, to allow all the parties to get Government posts. This has meant that return and reintegration activities are handled by at least four different Ministries, such as the Ministry for Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs and Ministry for Social Affairs (OCHA, 8 June 2005). The first one focuses on protection and assistance during displacement, while the second one is the focal point for return. In several Provinces, Governors have established offices to coordinate humanitarian assistance. (Based on correspondence with OCHA, 23 September 2004). In June and July 2004, the Transition Government gave 1 million USD to rehabilitate the market of Bukavu, South Kivu, and for humanitarian assistance (OCHA 23 July 2004).

International Response

UN Coordination

As per the recommendations of a multi-donor mission visit to DRC in May 2002, humanitarian coordination mechanisms were restructured, both at the strategic and operational levels, in order to enhance and improve the humanitarian response capacity of the UN system and the NGO community to adequately address the new needs and challenges (OCHA 18 Nov 03, p36).

In November 2004, the UN Secretary-General appointed Ross Mountain, a national of New Zealand, as his Deputy Special Representative for the DRC. In this capacity, he also serves as Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for the DRC and is responsible for ensuring a strategic and coordinated response to internal displacement in the country (UN SG, 18 November 2004).

OCHA, the coordinating body for the UN system, strengthened its field presence in eastern DRC in 2003 and 2004, and provided more regular monitoring on access and information on the humanitarian situation in DRC (OCHA 18 Nov 03, p11). Based within the OCHA office in Goma, North Kivu, the Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) aims to improve the exchange of information among humanitarian actors. MONUC developed with the assistance of OCHA a mapping system to determine areas of origin of IDPs (UNSC 25 March 2004, para.53).

In 2004, OCHA organised workshops to plan for durable solutions for IDPs in North & South Kivu, as well as Maniema and North Katanga, but insecurity has largely prevented follow up to the workshops (OCHA, April 2004 & 23 September 2004). As of mid-2005, there was no overall strategic plan for the return of the displaced. In April 2005, OCHA sent 6 teams of national and international consultants to evaluate the humanitarian needs in eight provinces of the DRC during a six weeks mission (OCHA, 29 April 2005).

The UN Inter-Agency Displacement Division (IDD) (and its predecessor, the Internal Displacement Unit), undertook several missions to DRC to support the UN's response to internal displacement. The latest mission, which occurred in May 2005, aimed to review activities related to the return and reintegration of IDPs, including a UNDP-funded Pilot Project (Projet de Protection, Réinsertion et Reclassement Social des Déplacés de Guerre). The mission recommended the set-up of Protection Working Group in eight hubs, namely Bunia, Beni, Goma, Bukavu, Kalemie, Lubumbashi, Kisangani, Kindu and Kinshasa. If established, such working groups would include a focus on issues relating particularly to displacement and return of displaced persons, such as disputes over property rights, which is a serious obstacle to return in many places. It also welcomed the planned establishment of a Return and Reintegration Working Group in Kinshasa, to be jointly chaired by UNDP and UNHCR, as there is no overall strategic framework for IDP return and reintegration, and as most humanitarian and development actors operate in separate worlds (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

In 2003, the Internal Displacement Unit and the NGO Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) collaborated on a training programme designed to identify and promote durable solutions for the country's IDPs by raising awareness on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement among the government, local authorities, NGOs, UN and IDPs. The programme was developed following two UN inter-agency missions to the country in 2002 and early 2003, which had identified a lack of knowledge and training on IDP issues." (IRIN, 21 October 2003). In 2004, NRC continued to provide training on IDP rights, and produced radio programmes on the subject. It also provided information and advice to IDPs on return, and promoted the establishment of local commissions identifying the needs of IDPs and possible courses of action (NRC, 30 June 2004)

UN and NGO activities

One of the major problems in DRC is the lack of operational capacity to assist vulnerable groups, like IDPs and returnees. Due to the shortage of operational partners, when humanitarian assistance does arrive in favour of vulnerable groups, it rarely meets international standards, such as those outlined in the Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) (OCHA, 31 August 2004). Also, some provinces receive less attention than others. It is particularly the case of the Provinces of Maniema, Oriental and of the Tankanyika district in Katanga Province (OCHA, 6 November 2004, Eastern DRC).

Humanitarian activities related to the return of IDPs have until now focused mainly on transport assistance and the distribution of return packages, mainly for lack of funding for other projects, such as the rebuilding of infrastructure and basic services in return areas. In 2005, UNDP launched, in partnership with the Congolese Ministry of Social Affairs, a Pilot Project on Return and Reintegration of IDPs in the DRC. According to the UN Inter-Agency Displacement Division, the project demonstrated that many IDPs in the DRC are ready to return to their homes if minimal support is provided. It also showed that for returns to be sustainable, improved collaboration between a wide range of government authorities, humanitarian and development actors is needed (OCHA, 8 June 2005). UNHCR does not have programmes assisting IDPs in the DRC, but it has stated that it will ensure that IDPs returning to the same areas as refugees will be included in their reintegration assistance programmes (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

The humanitarian community also responds to the needs of new and longer-term IDPs, providing food and non-food items, seeds and tools, health care, and emergency education. In Walungu territory, South Kivu Province, for example, WFP is providing food to 100,000 returnees and IDPs with the assistance of MONUC (MONUC, 23 May 2005). UNICEF and NGOs work to protect women and children against sexual violence. Where communities have been displaced, traditional prevention mechanisms have been eroded. UNICEF is training counsellors and establishing community watch groups among IDPs and host populations to prevent and respond to sexual violence. In addition to awareness raising, identification and

referral to medical structures, counsellors will also provide survivors with psychosocial support (UNICEF, 24 March 2005). Between August 2003 and January 2004, more than 550 victims of sexual violence have come for consultations to MSF emergency hospital in Baraka and it is believed that hundreds more are still cut off from help in inaccessible areas (MSF 1 April 2004, Introduction). In 2004, UNICEF reported that it was expanding its presence throughout DRC in order to better support international and national NGO partners to provide interim care, tracing and reunification of children with their families (UNICEF, 7 May 2004). MONUC and partners are setting up child protection networks to raise awareness on children's rights as IDPs start to return (UN SC, 25 March 2004, para.55). In July-August 2004, UN agencies and NGOs mobilised to respond to the needs of IDPs in South Kivu. MONUC provided logistical support (UN OCHA 20 August 04). In October 2004, NGOs distributed food and non-food items to thousands of people recently displaced by fighting in North Kivu, who found shelter in sites at Ngungu, Marambi, Gasake, Luinzi and Ruzirantaka (OCHA, 1 October 2004). At the end of 2004 and in early 2005, UN agencies and NGOs provided emergency assistance to more than 50,000 recently displaced civilians in the Tchomia area of Ituri, while MONUC military doctors treated more than 1,000 displaced persons who had sustained various types of injuries (UNSC, 22 March 2005).

See also, Alertnet, 22 June 2004, *FACTBOX-NGOs respond to crisis in eastern Congo* [\[Internet\]](#)

In 2004, Refugees International said that the failure of MONUC troops to prevent the violence against civilians in Bukavu was disturbing, especially since UNSC resolution 1493 empowered MONUC in July 2003 with a Chapter VII mandate and specifically charged MONUC "to protect civilians and humanitarian workers under imminent threat of physical violence and to contribute to the improvement of the security conditions in which humanitarian assistance is provided" (RI, 17 June 2004).

Local human rights groups have been monitoring human rights abuses against IDPs and other civilians. They also offer counseling and assistance. Most operate with almost no money and work in incredibly dangerous conditions. Human rights activists in eastern DRC have been beaten, detained and killed (CSM, 4 Dec 2002).

Donor Response

According to UNICEF, in general, the major constraint in implementing emergency activities in the DRC has been a combination of both low response to funding appeals and extraordinary levels of need throughout the country (UNICEF, 24 March 2005).

DRC is the second pilot country, with Burundi, to benefit from the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative which was launched in Stockholm in June 2003. 18 donors have pledged to: improve the flexibility of their financing; provide funds based on needs; reinforce local capacities to prevent crises; respond rapidly; and support the transition from emergency to development through appropriate funding. Under this initiative, donors also agreed recently to limit funding outside the CAP and to report all funding to OCHA, a step which is expected to provide a more comprehensive framework for measuring available funding against agreed upon priorities (OCHA, 31 July 2004).

Following the establishment of the transition government in June 2003, donors announced increased humanitarian assistance to DRC (ECHO, 14 August 2003; AFP, 6 October 2003; IRIN, 15 September 2003). At a donor meeting in Paris in December 2003, 3.9 million USD were pledged for development and reconstruction programmes for the period 2004-2004 (OCHA, 15 March 2004). Still, the level of funds committed to respond to the humanitarian needs of IDPs in 2004 was disappointing. One problem is the decision by donors to exclude "transition" activities from the 2005 CAP for DRC, which appears to have had the effect of helping to keep the humanitarian and development actors in two separate spheres, hindering efforts to develop a common strategy (OCHA, 8 June 2005).

The 2004 UN Consolidated Appeal, which requested \$163 million compared to \$268 million for the 2003 Appeal, received just 73 per cent of the requested funds. By totalizing financing allocated in and outside the Consolidated Appeal, food relief arrives at the top of the table (48,3 million), followed by protection (24,5 million) and health. Infrastructure and education sectors did not attract donors' interest (OCHA, 24 November 2004). For 2005, the humanitarian community has requested some \$185 million for essential life-saving assistance (UNSC, 22 March 2005).

The largest donor of humanitarian aid to DRC is the European Union's Humanitarian Aid Office, ECHO. From 1997 to 2002, ECHO allocated just under €120 million to DRC (ECHO, 28 January 2003). In 2004, ECHO declared it would increase its aid to the DRC in 2004 by €5 million (US \$6.3 million) over 2003 to €40 million as recent improvements in the security situation allow aid agencies to gain access to more people in need. ECHO will link relief rehabilitation to development. Key areas of ECHO's intervention will include the health sector, food aid, nutrition and support for rehabilitation and resettlement activities to assist returning populations and pave the way for sustainable recovery (OCHA, 15 March 2004, p17).

References to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

Known references to the Guiding Principles (as of July 2005)

- Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation
- Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)
- Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages
- Training on the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

Reference to the Guiding Principles in the national legislation

None

Other References to the Guiding Principles (in chronological order)

OCHA IDP Unit undertook mission in December 2002 to assess training needs on the Guiding Principles

Date: October 2002

Documents: IDP Unit Mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 7-10 October 2002 [Link below]

UN Inter-agency mission focuses on IDPs and emphasises the training needs on the Guiding Principles within the humanitarian community and authorities

Date: February 2003

Documents: Inter-agency mission on internal displacement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) 26 January – 8 February, 2003 [Link below]

Availability of the Guiding Principles in local languages

The GP are available in Swahili (DRC)

Document:

GP in Swahili [[Internet](#)]

http://www.idpproject.org/training/guiding_principles/Guiding_principles_Swahili_DRC.pdf

Training on the Guiding Principles

NRC and OCHA IDP Unit have undertaken a training program on the Guiding Principles for authorities, UN agencies, international and local NGOs, and IDPs. See list of sources for NRC document containing conclusions and recommendations.

Date: March 2003

Documents: Zeender, G., NRC, Advocating for IDP Protection in the Democratic Republic of Congo, April-September 2003, [Link below]

IDP Unit and NRC, Workshop on Internal Displacement and the Guiding Principles, Kinshasa, 26-28 May 2003 [Link below]

For other NRC workshop reports, please see [[Internet](#)]

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Against Hunger (Action contre la faim)
ACT	Action by Churches Together (ACT)
ADFL	Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaire)
ADF,	Alliance of Democratic Forces
ADL	Local Defense Unit
ANR	National Information Agency
APC	Popular Congolese Army (Armée Populaire Congolaise)
BOAD	Ecumenical Office for Support to Development
Coltan	Colombium Tantalum
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DDRR	disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration operations
DPKO	UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DMIAP	Détection Militaire des Activités Anti-Patriotiques
DRC (RDC)	Democratic Republic of the Congo (République Démocratique du Congo)
ECC	Congolese Church of the Christ (Eglise Congolaise du Christ)
ECHO	European Union Humanitarian Office
EH	Emergency Humanitarian Intervention
ex-FAR	Former Rwandan Armed Forces (Ex- Forces Armées Rwandaises)
FAC	Congolese Armed Forces (Forces Armées Congolaises)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAZ	Zairian Armed Forces (Forces Armées Zaïroises)
FDD	Forces for the Defense of Democracy (Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie)
FLC	Front for the Liberation of Congo (Front pour la libération du Congo)
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMC	International Medical Corps
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Network
JMC	Joint Military Commission
MLC	Movement for the Liberation of the Congo
MONUC	United Nations Observer Mission in the DRC (Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies au Congo)
MSF-H	Médecins Sans Frontières- Holland
NGO (ONG)	Non Governmental Organization (Organisation non gouvernementale)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PALIPEHUTU	Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People (Parti pour la Liberation du Peuple Hutu)
PPU	Presidential Protection Unit
PRRO	Protracted Relief Recovery Operation
RCD-Goma	Congolese Rally for Democracy – Goma (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie)
RCD-ML	Congolese Rally for Democracy-Movement of Liberation (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération)
RCD-N	Congolese Rally for Democracy-Movement of Liberation-National (Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération-National)
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund- United Kingdom
TCHA	Technical Committee on Humanitarian Assistance
UAGs	Uncontrolled-armed groups
UN	United Nations
UNDP (PNUD)	United Nations Development Program (Programme des National Unies de Développement)
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHO	United Nations Humanitarian Office
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPDF	Uganda People's Defense Forces
USCR	U.S. Committee for Refugees
WFP (PAM)	World Food Program (Programme Alimentaire Mondial)
WHO (OMS)	World Health Organization (Organisation Mondiale de la Santé)
WV (WVI)	World Vision (World Vision International)

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