




CHILDREN FACING VIOLENCE IN TANGANYIKA AND SOUTH KIVU

unicef  | for every child



Inter-ethnic conflicts, in the Provinces of Tanganyika and South Kivu, have displaced more than 1.3 million people. We estimate that almost 800,000 children are displaced. Some found themselves in spontaneous camps such as around the city of Kalemie. Others sought refuge with host families.

Children are the first victims of this violence. Our field teams have identified many cases of child rights violations, including the recruitment of children into militias and sexual abuse. We call on all parties to immediately stop any act of violence against children.

The health of thousands of children is impacted by the crisis. The destruction of health facilities has reduced access to health care for the population affected by the violence. Thousands of children are malnourished in the many health zones affected by the crisis. Outbreaks of measles and cholera are on the rise. Even education is not spared. We estimate that more than 160,000 children have stopped education because their schools have been attacked, destroyed or occupied by displaced persons or militias.

Today, the children of Tanganyika and South Kivu Provinces are suffering. Violence must stop and help must be provided immediately. With our local partners, we provide humanitarian assistance, while continuing our structural development activities. But, our response is insufficient because humanitarian access and financial means are still limited. I appeal to all to mobilize for the children of Tanganyika and South Kivu.

Dr Tajudeen Oyewale
Acting Representative of UNICEF in the Democratic Republic of Congo





A conflict with devastating consequences for children

An inter-ethnic conflict, opposing militia groups mainly Pygmies and Bantu, has been impacting the Tanganyika Province for several years. The conflict took a new turn in June 2017, when ethnic minority militias formed an alliance with the Mai Mai Yakutumba armed group that led attacks in the Provinces of Tanganyika, South Kivu and Maniema. Inter-ethnic violence and clashes between the regular army and militias have led to significant displacement of people.

The Tanganyika Province has 717,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), of whom 340,000 have fled in 2017 (OCHA, December 2017). 430,000 IDPs are children. The city of Kalemie has 48,000 displaced people from different affected territories (IOM, November 2017). They live in one of the 13 spontaneous camps or have sought refuge with host families in the city of Kalemie.

The total number of displaced persons in South Kivu Province is estimated at 609,000 (OCHA, December 2017), including 365,000 children. Since June 2017, more than 285,000 people have moved to the territories of Fizi (South Kivu) and Kabambare (Maniema).

Displaced persons and returnees face precarious and dangerous situations for their survival. They often lack access to basic services such as water and sanitation, primary health care, education, protection, and access to emergency shelter and non-food items.



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David*, 12 years old, dropped out of primary school to fight alongside adults.

“I am an element in the Bantu self-defence group. When I decided to enroll myself in the militia, I felt at the moment that my life was going to change. In the battlefield, I was often on the frontline to coordinate operations and to push my friends to kill Pygmies.”

David quickly felt he had been used and exploited by his superiors.

“As usual in this kind of group, my leaders were older than me. They pushed me, showed me how to kill, and took advantage of me. But I did not gain anything except, maybe, horrible memories. I am a child; my place is at school and not in the militias.”

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*Name has been replaced



Protect children from violence

The consequences of the population displacement on children's protection are enormous. UNICEF and its partners have documented numerous cases of child rights violations, including recruitment of children by militias, sexual violence, killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals, as well as restrictions on humanitarian access. UNICEF calls on all actors to protect children from all acts of violence.

UNICEF estimates that in the Tanganyika Province the number of children recruited in militias exceeds 2,000. In addition, UNICEF and its partners identified more than 500 unaccompanied children, 400 cases of children injured during the conflict and 300 cases of sexual violence (figures end of October 2017).

In the affected territories of South-Kivu, the National Program for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration estimates that more than 1,000 children are recruited by militias. UNICEF and its partners have identified 39 unaccompanied children, 67 children who have left militias, and almost 500 cases of sexual violence.

In 2017, more than 200 schools were destroyed in the Tanganyika Province. As a result of this, and the storms that affected the schools, more than 70,000 children in the Province did not continue their education. 186,000 children were already excluded from school before the outbreak of the recent crisis, because of poverty and weaknesses in the school system. In the South Kivu Province in 2017, more than 100 schools were attacked. These attacks and school occupations deprive more than 93,000 children of education.



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Marie*, 7 years old, comes from Katbili, a small village located south of the city of Kalemie. Manda is one of the many unaccompanied children identified by UNICEF.

"My father and my mother died during the attacks on our village. I saw my parents being killed. My mother was murdered with an axe and my father with a poisoned arrow. I fled with neighbours to the camp. Here, we sleep on a wet floor and we do not have tarpaulins to protect us from the rain and cold. Life is not easy here."

With a few other children, Manda had the chance to continue her schooling in the camp but «when we were asked for money to continue, we had to stop school because we did not have enough money."

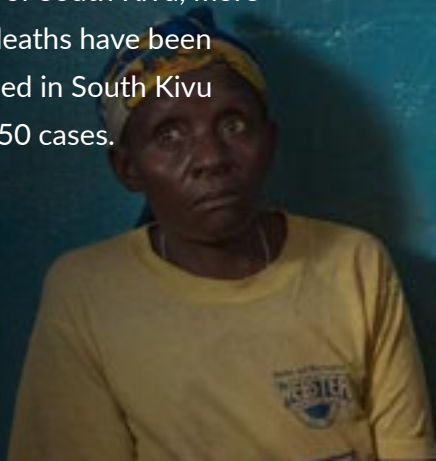
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*Name has been replaced

Maintaining the health of children and women at the heart of the crisis

The impact of violence on children's health is dramatic. The situation will deteriorate without an rapid and adequate humanitarian response. The destruction of 30 health facilities in Tanganyika Province has reduced access to health care for the population affected by the violence. Prevalence rates of acute malnutrition among children are increasing as a result of violence in many health zones in the Provinces of Tanganyika and South Kivu.

Conflict and lack of food and access to water contribute to the proliferation of epidemics, which are already common in the Provinces. The Tanganyika Province has registered 5,835 suspected cases of measles with 97 deaths and 6,041 cases of cholera with 134 deaths in 2017. The areas impacted by the conflict are by far the most affected. In the Province of South Kivu, more than 12,173 suspected cases of measles including 109 deaths have been notified in 2017. The number of cholera cases has doubled in South Kivu between 2016 and 2017, from 4,975 to more than 12,250 cases.



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Bolola Medard is the principal of the Nyalukemba school situated in Bukavu, the capital of the Province of South Kivu. Some of his students have been affected by the cholera epidemic that has struck the Province.

The principal emotionally remembers Frederic* and Germaine*, two students who were hospitalized for 10 days but have recovered today. “When we learnt that they were vomiting and had diarrhea, we asked that they be sent immediately to the hospital. Cholera kills and does so very quickly.”

To fight against the epidemic in schools, Bolola and his teachers raise the students’ awareness about prevention methods. “We tell them to always drink potable water and to wash their hands before preparing a meal, eating, and after using the toilets.”

The principal is proud to show us Nicolas, 14 years old, who placed a sticker on his schoolbag, on which we see a mother washing her hands with water and soap. Bolola considers that his students are “ambassadors in their families and their communities.”

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*Names have been replaced



In response to the crisis in Tanganyika and South Kivu, UNICEF has planned^[1]

to provide



350,000

displaced people with essential household items in Tanganyika and South Kivu

to ensure that



64,750

children affected by the crisis in South Kivu have access to education

to take care of



28,500

children suffering from severe acute malnutrition in Tanganyika and South Kivu

to take care of



1,200

children released from militias in Tanganyika and South Kivu

to vaccinate



857,782

children from 6 months to 10 years against measles in South Kivu

to provide



1,000

survivors of sexual violence in Tanganyika with appropriate health care

to assist



843,000

displaced persons, returnees and other people at risk with water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in Tanganyika

to provide



100,000

people affected by the crisis in South Kivu with cash support

to provide



120,000

children affected by the crisis in Tanganyika with psycho-social support

[1] Objectives for six months from November 2017 to April 2018 depending on the financial resources made available by the donors; non-exhaustive list of objectives (UNICEF Response Plan, November 2017).



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Françoise lived for several months in the camp of Katanika 2, located a few kilometres from Kalemie, before returning to her village in the hope of rebuilding her life. For a moment, life had resumed but violence once again reached the village of Françoise.

"I was working the land when I heard gunshots. I rushed to the village and it was horror again! The huts that had been rebuilt after the first attack were on fire. There were bodies on the ground and the village was deserted. I ran to our house but my husband and children had disappeared. I packed all our belongings and left for the camp."

It took a day walking to cover the 18 kilometres separating the village from the camp of Katanika 2.

"I did not find my husband and my children. I do not know what to do. I have lost everything!"

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Facing emergency

UNICEF is present since many years in the Provinces of Tanganyika and South Kivu and has an extensive network of local partners. Together with its partners, UNICEF provides humanitarian assistance while continuing structural development work.

UNICEF provides multi-sectoral support to newly displaced persons and returnees through the Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP) program. In addition, UNICEF organizes the vaccination of children against measles, the care of malnourished children, the fight against cholera, the distribution of school material and recreational kits, the training of teachers in peace education and psycho-social care. UNICEF also provides assistance to children released from militias unaccompanied and separated children, victims of sexual violence, and provides a safe space to children affected by armed conflicts and displacement.

The humanitarian response is insufficient because of limited humanitarian access. UNICEF calls on the actors involved in the conflict to guarantee humanitarian access to people in urgent need of assistance and to free the schools they occupy. UNICEF asks the authorities not to organize the return of displaced persons to their villages without the security conditions being met.



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In the territory of Uvira, 17-year-old Prisca lost both parents and now has to care for her two younger brothers.

"It was a night in early September, there was shooting everywhere. While they were trying to flee, dad was shot in the head and mom in the back."

Since then, the teenager has taken refuge with a host family. Three times a week, Prisca goes to work in the field to get food or money. She stopped studying.

Thanks to an unconditional cash transfer operation organized by UNICEF and its partners, Prisca has received the sum of 120,000 Congolese francs [approximately US\$ 75] and wants to start a small smoked fish business.

"I have to make good money to pay for my studies next year."

The girl dreams of becoming a nun and working as a nurse to look after children and mentor young girls in her community.

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UNICEF's urgent asks

1. Protect children against any act of violence;
2. Put an end to looting and destruction of health facilities;
3. Guarantee humanitarian access;
4. Provide security before the return of displaced persons to their communities and guarantee the voluntary nature of the return;
5. Liberate the occupied schools;
6. Ensure an adequate level of funding for the humanitarian response.





US \$65 million

UNICEF needs US \$31 million to fund its humanitarian response in the Province of Tanganyika and US \$34 million for the Province of South Kivu.

UNICEF faces a lack of resources to organize its humanitarian response.



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