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Humanitarian Action for Children

unicef 

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has deteriorated dramatically over the past year. A surge in violent conflict in the Kasai and Eastern regions has forced more than 1.7 million people from their homes, including over 1.4 million people in the Kasai region alone.¹ The number of internally displaced persons has more than doubled since January 2017, reaching 4.1 million,² the highest number in Africa. More than 13 million people will need humanitarian assistance in 2018, including 7.8 million children, and 13.6 million people are in need of safe water and adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities.³ Some 7.7 million people are facing severe food insecurity,⁴ representing a 30 per cent increase since 2016, and an estimated 2.2 million children will suffer from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in 2018⁵—12 per cent of the global caseload. The country continues to experience frequent and deadly disease outbreaks, including measles and malaria, and is undergoing one of the worst cholera outbreaks of the decade. Grave violations of children's rights, including forced recruitment, killing, maiming and sexual violence, are key features of the conflict. Violence and insecurity are seriously impeding access to basic education for 3.4 million children across the country.⁶

Humanitarian strategy

In 2018, UNICEF will continue to scale up its integrated, multi-sectoral response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, focusing on the Kasai and Eastern regions. The Rapid Response to Movements of Population⁷ (RRMP) mechanism will target areas affected by shocks and mass displacement, and provide a multi-sectoral package covering non-food items, multipurpose unconditional cash transfers and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services. In areas affected by conflict and disease outbreaks, UNICEF and partners will reinforce access to primary health care at the community and health centre levels. Child protection services will include the provision of psychosocial support and recreational activities to children who are displaced, separated, unaccompanied, formerly associated with armed groups, or survivors of sexual violence. As part of cholera prevention and response, UNICEF will pre-position WASH supplies, including for water purification and chlorination, and will support the renovation/construction of latrines/water points. UNICEF will increase outreach for screening, referral and treatment of SAM to absorb a larger share of the national SAM burden. WASH-in-nutrition assistance⁸ will also be expanded for SAM prevention. UNICEF will continue to lead the education, non-food items and shelter, nutrition and WASH clusters and the child protection sub-cluster and co-lead the cash working group.

Results from 2017

As of 31 October 2017, UNICEF had received US\$52.5 million against the US\$165 million appeal (32 per cent funded).⁹ Despite this funding gap, UNICEF reached more than 2 million vulnerable people¹⁰ with nutrition, health, WASH, education and child protection support. UNICEF provided basic WASH services to 435,000 people affected by natural disasters and conflict, and responded to the unprecedented cholera outbreak by providing WASH response packages to more than 580,000 persons in cholera-prone zones. Nutrition interventions benefitted 160,458 SAM-affected children admitted for therapeutic care, with a cure rate of nearly 85 per cent. More than 1.3 million children were vaccinated against measles; and medical drugs were provided to treat 26,000 cholera cases. In addition, some 62,000 displaced, refugee and returnee children gained safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning. Given the important increase in population movement, the RRMP played a key role in assisting internally displaced persons, returnees and host families through a multi-sectoral package covering non-food items, multipurpose cash transfers and WASH services, reaching more than 866,000 people. More than 9,000 children (including 4,700 girls) were reintegrated into temporary learning spaces in the Kasai Region.

Total people in need:

13.1 million

Total children (<18) in need:

7.8 million

Total people to be reached:

10.5 million

Total children to be reached:

6.3 million

2018 programme targets:

Nutrition

- 1.1 million children aged 6 to 59 months with SAM admitted for therapeutic care

Health

- 970,000 children aged 6 months to 14 years vaccinated against measles
- 520,000 people affected by conflict and disease outbreaks supported to access primary health care

WASH

- 1.2 million people affected by natural disasters and conflict provided with access to WASH services
- 1.5 million persons in cholera-prone zones and other epidemic-affected areas benefitting from preventive and WASH cholera response packages
- 550,000 severely malnourished children and host families receiving WASH assistance

Child protection

- 6,000 children associated with an armed group provided with reintegration support
- 11,700 unaccompanied and separated children identified and reunited with their families
- 5,200 identified survivors of sexual violence provided with a comprehensive response

Education

- 510,000 girls and boys aged 5 to 11 years affected by conflict or natural disasters received access to quality education and psychosocial activities

RRMP¹¹

- 875,000 internally displaced persons benefitted from multi-sectoral assistance

	Cluster 2017 targets	Cluster total results	UNICEF 2017 target	UNICEF total results
NUTRITION				
Children aged 6 to 59 months with SAM admitted for therapeutic care	388,262	160,458	310,609	160,458
HEALTH				
Children aged 6 months to 14 years vaccinated against measles			1,902,180	1,338,598
People affected by conflict and disease outbreaks having received access to primary health care			300,000	158,885
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENEⁱ				
Natural disaster and conflict-affected people with access to WASH basic services	2,975,411	1,249,977	1,284,768	435,182
Persons in cholera-prone zones benefitting from WASH cholera response packages	4,162,964	1,713,135	1,665,186	582,581
SAM-affected care/mother and children who receive hygiene kits with key hygiene message	91,698	24,046	128,862	12,694
CHILD PROTECTIONⁱ				
Children formerly associated with armed forces/groups released and provided with temporary assistance	3,700	2,217	3,600	1,891
Separated and unaccompanied children identified and reunited with their families ⁱⁱ	1,200	4,489	9,600	1,659
Displaced, refugee and returnee children provided with safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning ⁱⁱ	50,000	77,431	70,000	62,273
Identified survivors of sexual violence provided with a comprehensive response			7,000	3,532
EDUCATIONⁱ				
Girls and boys aged 5 to 11 years affected by conflict or natural disasters given access to quality education and psychosocial activities	500,000	195,668	359,960	136,151
School-aged boys and girls aged 5 to 11 years affected by crisis receiving learning materials	500,000	129,569	359,960	99,253
Teachers trained on learner-centred methodologies, peace education, conflict/disaster risk reduction and psychosocial support	9,090	3,966	6,545	1,352
NON-FOOD ITEMS/SHELTER				
People accessing essential household items and shelter materials	1,678,683	477,889	900,500	796,650
MULTIPURPOSE CASH-BASED ASSISTANCE				
People assisted with an unconditional cash grant	300,000	245,035	366,450	200,540

Results are through 31 October 2017 unless otherwise noted.

ⁱ UNICEF did not achieve some targets in WASH, child protection and education due to three key factors: 1) funding gap: only 32 per cent of the 2017 appeal was mobilized; 2) security and access issues: attacks against humanitarian staff increased in 2017 and armed conflict spread in several areas reporting humanitarian needs; and 3) physical access and logistics were challenging in most implementing areas, which limited implementation capacity.

ⁱⁱ Child protection sub-cluster targets are lower than UNICEF targets because they do not include the Kasai caseload.

Funding requirements

In line with the revised inter-agency Humanitarian Response Plan for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2017–2019), UNICEF is increasing its funding request from US\$165,067,070 in 2017 to US\$268,121,004 in 2018 to support children and families in need of humanitarian assistance. The largest budget increase is for the nutrition response, given the three-fold increase in the targets. Without adequate and timely funding in 2018, UNICEF and its partners will not be able to address the critical humanitarian needs of children and their families in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Sector	2018 requirements (US\$)
Nutrition	137,940,000
Health	10,583,769
Water, sanitation and hygiene	28,085,485
Child protection	21,290,500
Education	16,269,000
RRMP (including cash-based interventions)	52,302,250 ¹²
Cluster/sector coordination	1,650,000
Total	268,121,004

¹ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Democratic Republic of the Congo Humanitarian Response Plan 2018', OCHA.

² Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, October 2017. The number of internally displaced persons includes returnees.

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Democratic Republic of the Congo Humanitarian Response Plan 2018', OCHA.

⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, June-December 2017.

⁵ UNICEF Nutrition Cluster data, October 2017.

⁶ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Democratic Republic of the Congo Humanitarian Response Plan 2018', OCHA.

⁷ The RRMP is a life-saving mechanism that responds to population movement with a multi-sectoral emergency package of support. 100 per cent of RRMP beneficiaries receive non-food item vouchers or multipurpose cash. Beneficiaries will also receive additional WASH, educational, nutrition and health support.

⁸ WASH-in-nutrition assistance is a tool used to support health and nutritional facilities, as well as households. WASH-in-nutrition kits are provided to the families of children enrolled in nutrition programmes and include Aquatabs, buckets, jerry cans and soap.

⁹ Available funds include US\$35.5 million raised against the current appeal and US\$17 million carried forward from the previous year.

¹⁰ This includes both the number of children vaccinated and non-food item beneficiaries.

¹¹ While the number of people targeted with RRMP support has decreased in 2018 compared with 2017, the funding requirement has increased because the package of services has been expanded, as has the geographical scope of service provision in the Kasai Region. The RRMP has also been re-established in South Kivu. Of the 875,000 beneficiaries, 787,500 will receive WASH support; 437,500 will receive cash support; 437,500 will receive non-food item support; 113,750 will receive education/protection support; and 105,000 will receive health/nutrition support.

¹² The RRMP budget breakdown is as follows: multipurpose cash transfer: US\$15,881,250; non-food items: US\$15,881,250; integrated WASH/health/nutrition package: US\$15,534,750; child protection/education: US\$5,005,000.

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