



Democratic Republic of Congo

Reasons for Displacement:

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been marred by decades of conflict between rebel groups and the Congolese Army in its Eastern Province. As a result of the conflict, many Congolese have been displaced to other parts of the Congo or abroad to neighbouring countries. Despite the UN's authorization of the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade in 2013 in an effort to neutralize armed groups, conflict is ongoing with massacres and indiscriminate killings common. In addition, continuing conflicts in the DRC's neighbouring countries has caused many from abroad to seek protection in the DRC, helping to further exacerbate instability and tension in the DRC.

Refugee Camps:

Although refugee camps exist in the DRC, most live with host families in urban or regional settings. Camps are considered dangerous with abductions



and sexual and gender based violence common. Such violence prevents women and girls, as well as boys and men, from leading healthy lives. Refugees and IDPs are particularly at risk of rape and sexual abuse at home, in public places and at school, while the perpetrators are rarely prosecuted or punished.

In addition, diseases like cholera are common due to the cramped and unhygienic conditions of the camps. These factors combined with inadequate access to health care, result in many deaths from preventable diseases each year.



Assistance:

- UNHCR works with the government and several NGOs, such as Encadrement des Réfugiés Urbains de Kinshasa, Search for Common Ground and Agir pour le Genre, to assist refugees, IDPs and returnees

Number of refugees:
117,907 residing in the DRC
493,494 originating from the DRC

[source: UNHCR]

**Number of Internally
Displaced Persons (IDPs):**
2,857,400

[source: IDMC]

History:

1960—Independence from Belgium

1994—Thousands of Rwandan Tutsis flee to DRC, then known as Zaire

1996, 1998—Invasion by Rwandan and Ugandan armies

1997—Zaire's ruler Mobutu is forced from power; the country name is changed to DRC

2002—President Kabila is successful in negotiating a withdrawal of Rwandan forces; The Pretoria Accord is signed, but fighting continues

2009—Military operations carried out by the Congolese army against the FDLR rebels in North and South Kivu forces hundreds of thousands to flee from targeted abuses by all armed actors

2012—M23 rebels move into Goma where the conflict displaces many people

2013—Representatives from 11 African countries sign a peace agreement pledging to help end the conflict; the M23 rebel group surrenders

2014—Around 60,000 civilians are deported to evict illegal immigrants; by now, 70,000 refugees from Central African Republic have received UNHCR's assistance in DRC

2015—continuing insecurity impedes the implementation of agreements with neighboring states for the voluntary repatriation of DRC refugees; dozens are killed during protest against electoral changes