



GOMA - DRC

CRISIS OVERALL EVALUATION

21 FEBRUARY 2025

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CIYOTA
EDUCATE. UNITE. GROW



CIYOTA is a community-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to empowering refugees and internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and host community children and youth in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Education, leadership, and entrepreneurship are the keys to transforming conflict-affected communities into thriving, self-reliant societies.

Every year, millions of people are forced to flee their homes due to war and natural disasters, becoming refugees or internally displaced. This crisis disproportionately affects women, children, youth, and the elderly. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), ongoing conflict and widespread poverty make access to education and other essential services a daily struggle for many children.



In late January 2025, the intensification of fighting between the government army and the M23 in the province of North Kivu/Goma town caused large population displacements and overall negative impact on both host communities and IDPs

- According to OCHA Flash Updates No. 3, February 2025, nearly 700,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) fled the violence of the atrocities and sought refuge in schools, churches, collective centers and host families in the city of Goma and its surroundings. Others were forced to return to their villages of origin despite the insecurity and various constraints.
- Schools occupied by displaced persons in Goma town with desks and other school furniture used as firewood, affecting thousands of host communities' children who lack access to education.
- A worrying increase in cases of violence, including gender-based violence (GBV), and poor sanitary conditions requiring appropriate prevention and response actions has been observed.
- The presence of unaccompanied and separated children has been reported, significantly increasing the risks of recruitment and exploitation of children.
- The economy was as well affected leading some business persons to incredible loses, less circulation of money within the town due to the absence of bank services.

The crisis worsened lives of thousands of people affecting mainly IDPs education, WASH, economy and health sectors.

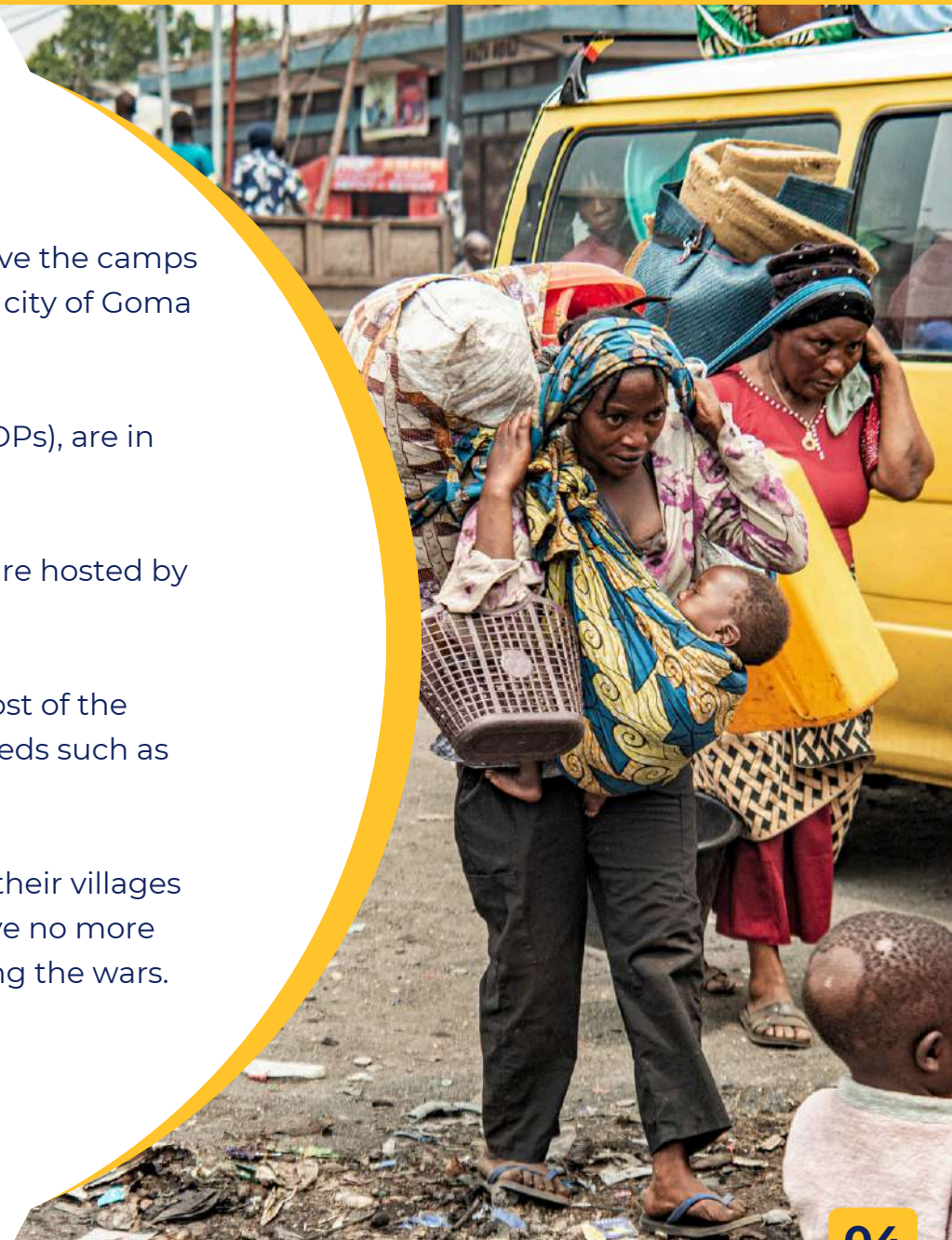
Over 2 million Internally Displaced People (IDPs) were forced to leave the camps under fire from bullets and bombs to new collective centers in the city of Goma and its surroundings (in schools, churches, etc.).

Approximately 121,485 households, including 474,219 individuals (IDPs), are in new collective centers with limited assistance.

Approximately 213,117 households, comprising 532,213 individuals, are hosted by families in the city of Goma and its surroundings.

Over 500,000 IDPs returned to their villages of origin. However, most of the returnees are facing harsh living conditions due to lack of basic needs such as food, treatment etc.

The IDPs in host families and some few churches fear to return to their villages because of high insecurity their villages are facing. Other IDPs have no more where to go as their houses have completely been destroyed during the wars.





RECORDED DAMAGE

The clashes affected 1,235 schools (nurseries, primary, secondary) and directly affected 39,956 children, including 19,9829 girls and 199,740 boys.

- As of February, 45 schools were still occupied by IDPs used as shelters where in some cases, furniture are used as firewood.
- Bullet and bomb impacts on school infrastructure and educational offices, School buses hit by bullets;
- Furniture, books, documents, and other school and office materials were vandalized while school furniture were used as firewood.
- WASH infrastructure and school equipment like computers were damaged, and/or stolen.

RISKS

- Economic exploitation of children due to the absence of school activities;
- Risk of family separation;
- High risk of road traffic accidents for children on the move
- Early marriage for minors
- Sexual exploitation and abuse of minors (girls)
- School dropout by adolescents
- Minors enrolment in armed groups.

ACTION POINTS

Advocate for the release of schools and classrooms still occupied or used as shelters by IDPs.

Schools where IDPs returned, consider advocacy actions with the appropriate services (UNMAS, SYLAM, Mine Action Task Force, etc.) to rid schools and their surroundings from unexploded ordnance, before any school opening action.

Strengthen awareness on the remains of explosive and unexploded war devices in the community and in schools, in order to limit the risks of exposure to children.





GAPS RECORDED

There is already a risk of a possible epidemic of cholera, malaria and MPOX, given the large population in the collective centers where the displaced people have taken shelter and the lack of WASH infrastructure;

- Women and girls do not have hygiene kits. They are increasingly exposed to infections and other serious obstetric diseases;
- Access to water remains a major gap, which requires urgent intervention.
- Lack of clean water may result in hydric diseases; etc.

ACTION POINTS

- Establishment of epidemiological assistance mechanisms;
- Awareness raising on disease and epidemic prevention (measles, MPOX, cholera, STI/HIV, etc.);
- Access to basic health structures (health centers, other social services);
- Ensure a complete package of primary health care coverage;
- Reduce the gap in terms of hygiene promotion activities including the installation of **WASH** kits and sensitisation on hygiene for community awareness raising on good hygiene practices in the center;
- Set up water tanks in new collective IDPs centers, etc.

The current WASH crisis has severely disrupted the economy's dynamics. A rapid observation of the city's leading economy indicates a slow recovery of commercial activities, with nearly one-third of the shops remaining closed.

- Main commodity prices have experienced significant increases compared to pre-crisis levels due to the limitations on importation (airports and borders are not normally operational).
- However, local agricultural products, such as vegetables, remain abundant, with prices having dropped by approximately 20%, which could indicate an oversupply of these highly perishable goods. It's important to note that the primary supply routes (from Masisi, Rutshuru, and Minova to Goma, which were closed during the battles, are now all open.

Financial institutions, including banks and microfinance institutions, have been non-operational since the capture of Goma and Bukavu by the M23. This situation limits the circulation of money and makes people's lives harder, especially for businesspersons, teachers who receive their salaries through banks, and other citizens.

Recommendations

Advocacy of an emergency and coordinate food and nonfood response: as food insecurity rates spike amid the crisis, with most of the IDPs lost their remaining livelihoods, it is important for humanitarian actors to provide a multisectoral response to prevent higher malnutrition rates and alleviate the living conditions of these affected populations; Advocate for airport reopening, banks, and other financial institutions to reopen to enable citizens to access money.



IMPACT OF THE CLASHES

- Partial or total destruction of 27 health structures and warehouses of humanitarian actors from January 26 to February 2, 2025.
- Over 8000 people were killed and over 2900 injured
- Runout of medicine stocks ;
- Difficulties in accessing health services for vulnerable populations linked to Insecurity
- Limited capacity to provide services Dismantling of IDP sites;
- Lack of beds and mattresses in several hospitals
- Imminent shortage of medicine stocks;
- Several war-wounded are crammed into hospitals without appropriate care;
- Insufficient ambulances during evening hours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Strengthen stocks of medicines and medical consumables (Closure of the airspace of Goma and customs problem);
- Increase the number of ambulances available 24/7
- Accelerate the supply of mattresses, beds and medicines;
- Recruit and deploy physiotherapy staff
- Ensure a secure corridor for the exit of patients requiring transfer abroad;
- Improve coordination between humanitarian actors;
- Ensure regular monitoring of needs and available resources.



A photograph showing CIYOTA staff members in a distribution site. In the foreground, a woman with dreadlocks and sunglasses, wearing a beige vest and a lanyard with an ID card, looks to the side. Next to her, a man in a similar beige vest and a white shirt is looking forward, holding a small white container. In the background, another person in a green shirt and a grey baseball cap with 'CHICAGO Bulls' on it is visible. They are surrounded by large white sacks and yellow bags, suggesting a food or supply distribution area. The background shows a stone wall and some greenery.

CIYOTA'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

CIYOTA has been playing a crucial role in providing food support to the most vulnerable such as elderly, orphans, widow, persons living with disabilities and children heads of families. Also, CIYOTA has been providing dignity kits to young girls and women victims of sexual violence, education, mentorship, and entrepreneurship training to internally displaced persons. Since 2019, CIYOTA has so far reached 3,461 households, bringing hope and relief to families struggling to rebuild their lives.

Food security: The ongoing crisis in Goma town has forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee their homes, creating an urgent need for food assistance. In February 2025, CIYOTA carried out Emergency Humanitarian Assistance distributing food ration, sanitary and dignity kits to over 500 families with over 2,000 individuals to displaced families and returnees.

▶ CIYOTA'S RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS

Goals of Emergency Food Distribution to IDPs:

- ✓ Prevent widespread hunger and starvation among displaced families.
- ✓ Provide basic nutrition to children, pregnant women, and the elderly.
- ✓ Reduce the need for desperate measures to survive, such as selling one's belongings or engaging in sexual transaction and other risky survival strategies.



Sanitary and Dignity kits to young girls and women:

CIYOTA provided sanitary and dignity kit to young girls and women victims of Gender Based Violence in the IDPs camps and returnees to ensure:

- **Prevention of health issues:** Access to sanitary kits ensures that women and girls can manage their menstrual hygiene properly, reducing the risk of infections, rashes, and other health problems related to poor menstrual hygiene.
- **Better menstrual health:** With access to clean and safe products, girls and women are less likely to use unhygienic alternatives, which can lead to infections and long-term health issues.
- **Restore one's dignity:** Being a victim of sexual violence such comes with a need for isolation or even societal exclusion and loss of one's self- esteem and worth. Providing dignity kits is part of the psychosocial support offered by CIYOTA to help women claim much control over their lives and health.

Education support

CIYOTA is sponsoring students, providing learning materials, psychosocial support to students, and mental health to both teachers and students, and advocating for IDPs' access to quality education.

- Supported 1,573 Students (750 Girls and 823 Boys) in primary and secondary schools
- Assisted 187 Students with university applications and out of these, 108 students enrolled to different universities around the globe.
- 68 have so far graduated of which 92% are currently giving back to community development through jobs or running their businesses.
- Provided psychosocial, numeracy and entrepreneurial leadership training to enhance employability.



Community Development

CIYOTA has empowered 1,377 families in financial literacy and entrepreneurship training and seed funding allowing households to operate small businesses and farms to cover needs such as supporting their children's education and spur economic growth.

Through these initiatives, we aim to break the cycle of poverty and displacement, ensuring that young people have the tools they need to rebuild their lives.





CIYOTA is seeking USD 100,000 between April and July 2025 to meet the essential needs of returnees, facilitating better integration into the community. The support will focus on:

- Providing emergency support, such as food distribution to populations affected by armed conflicts.
- Assistance of sanitary and dignity kits to young girls and women victims of GBV.
- Mental health and psychosocial support: To provide counseling sessions to students, teachers and supporting staff to help them deal and heal from trauma.
- Provide financial support to empower women running small businesses for supporting their children's education.
- Mentorship and tutoring programs: Focusing on bridging the gap especially to students who missed studies for more than a year for them to catchup and stay engaged in their studies.
- Emergency education programs: Setting up temporary learning spaces in communities where schools were destroyed.
- Scholarships: To help displaced children afford education and prevent dropouts by providing scholastic materials, sanitary kits and counseling sessions.
- Teachers training: providing trauma-informed teaching methods and skills.

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