

Press release: DRC: UK provides urgent lifesaving aid to victims of escalating conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The International Development Secretary Priti Patel has called for the international community to act now and not forget the millions of people displaced by increasing levels of violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Ms Patel's call came as she announced vital lifesaving support for hundreds of thousands of victims of political insecurity and increasing levels of violence in the DRC.

The crisis has forced 3.8 million people to flee their homes, resulting in widespread malnutrition, disease and suffering in many regions of the DRC.

Ms Patel also called on international partners and the UN system to follow the UK's lead and urgently step up support to this crisis, to prevent further unnecessary destruction and human suffering.

Over the next five years DFID's humanitarian support will provide:

- over 620,000 people with food assistance
- 220,000 children under the age of 5 with vital nutrition
- over 1.1 million people with access to clean drinking water
- 900,000 with essential health care such as drugs for pregnant mothers
- over 195,000 children with access to education
- 12,000 survivors of trauma including gender based violence with psychosocial support and counselling

The International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

Millions of innocent people are suffering from malnutrition and disease after being forced to flee their homes because of the horrific violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Families have been separated, homes destroyed and people are living in desperate conditions, in what is fast becoming one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

The UK government has not hesitated to act and is leading the way by providing essential food, water and medicine, but it is vital the international community also urgently steps up to ensure the displaced people of the DRC are not forgotten.

- This support is an allocation of £175 million for humanitarian aid from the DRC budget.
- The DRC has the highest number of internally displaced people in Africa with 3.8 million forced to flee malnutrition, disease, violence and insecurity to find safety in other parts of the country. In the first six months of 2017 the DRC had the greatest number of newly displaced people in the world.
- 7.7 million people in the DRC don't have reliable access to their next meal, 1.9 million children are suffering from life threatening malnutrition, and outbreaks of cholera, measles and malaria are exacerbating the situation.
- The UK is a major humanitarian donor in the DRC. Over the past five years (2012-2017) we have provided £168 million to the response, which has included:
 - Emergency food support for over 125,000 children under 5
 - Support for over 11,000 women and girls who have been victims of sexual or gender based violence, including psychosocial therapy
 - Income support for over 62,000 of the poorest households (360,000 people)
 - Access to safe water for over 2.1 million people
 - Education for 4,000 internally displaced children in DRC
- Since the start of the crisis in the Kasais in 2016 DFID has supported displaced and affected people with household items, livelihood support, and provided support through the Humanitarian Fund for distribution of aid and protection monitoring.
- DFID has also provided additional funding of £4.6 million for the Kasais in July of this year supporting UNICEF's Rapid Response to Movements of Population mechanism for the Kasais. This is allowing UNICEF and their partners to provide:
 - 50,000 people with items such as blankets, soap, buckets for fetching water and clothes plus access to adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities and health care
 - 4,000 children with vital nutritional support
 - Protection and support for 7,000 children affected by violence