

NRC's operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Humanitarian overview

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) faces a dire humanitarian situation marked by large-scale displacement and a pervasive gender-based violence (GBV) crisis. The country is grappling with long-standing conflicts, political instability and economic challenges.

With 6.91 million people forced to flee their homes, DR Congo hosts the second largest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world. This exacerbates the strain on already fragile infrastructures, hindering access to essential services such as healthcare, education and clean water. It also intensifies the risk of malnutrition and disease outbreaks.

There is an alarming prevalence of gender-based violence. Women and girls in particular are vulnerable to sexual violence, exploitation and abuse. The breakdown of social structures, coupled with the presence of armed groups, creates an environment where GBV thrives. The consequences extend beyond immediate physical harm, contributing to a cycle of trauma and long-term psychological distress.

Humanitarian organisations, working in challenging conditions, strive to provide assistance and address the underlying causes of displacement. Efforts are focused on delivering emergency relief, shelter and medical care while implementing programmes to empower women and girls, combat GBV, and promote community resilience.



Our core activities



Education



Information, counselling
and legal assistance (ICLA)



Livelihoods
and food security



Protection
from violence



Shelter
and settlements



Water, sanitation
and hygiene (WASH)

NRC in DR Congo

Established	2001
International staff	17
National staff	223

Our areas of operation

- Goma (country office)
- Ituri
- North Kivu
- South Kivu



Our activities in detail

In 2024, NRC assisted 240,661 individuals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our primary goal is to provide assistance and protection through integrated programming to populations at every stage of displacement. NRC delivers a multisectoral response to internally displaced people, returnees, and host communities. Our community-based approach aims to reduce community tensions, collaborate with local populations to identify peaceful solutions to conflict, and strengthen resilience.



55,913 people reached in 2024 ▼

Education

Our intervention strategy in this sector is built around four key global response areas: 1) first-line education response, 2) non-formal education, 3) support to formal education, and 4) youth education and training. To ensure quality in these strategic areas, NRC focuses on priority workstreams: safe and inclusive programming, teacher professional development, and education advocacy.

We provide quality education in safe and protected environments. Our education activities include:

- provision of protective education that prepares children and youth, as quickly as possible in an emergency response, for a smooth transition into long-term learning pathways
- provision of non-formal education classes for out-of-school children and youth to increase their access to flexible and preferably accredited non-formal education

- opportunities to catch up with their peers and reintegrate into the formal school system
- protecting children and youth affected by displacement and trauma events, both physically and psychologically, to create a sense of normality and routine
- provision of training for teachers, education authorities, and other education stakeholders on various pedagogical topics, including psychosocial support, education for peace, classroom management, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and good governance in school management, in collaboration with local Ministry of Education authorities
- providing youth with education that improves their livelihood skills and guides them towards a profession, helping them to become active and engaged members of their community
- supporting youth in choosing their transition into education pathways or livelihood opportunities, thereby improving their overall wellbeing
- advocacy for the Safe Schools Declaration

To support our interventions, we emphasise four programmatic modalities: climate change, cash in educational programming, educational technology, and exchange of expertise with local actors.



315 people reached in 2024 ▼

Livelihoods and food security

We provide emergency food assistance and support to agricultural livelihoods. Our LFS activities include:

- facilitating access to food to meet immediate needs during crises
- enabling access to food production inputs to restore and strengthen food production
- delivery of capacity building on agricultural production
- providing business skills and grants to start up or expand businesses
- facilitate financial access to consolidate and expand businesses



26,965 people reached in 2024 ▼

Information, counselling and legal assistance (ICLA)

In this sector, we support people affected by displacement and enable them to exercise their housing, land and property rights, as well as secure access to civil documentation. Our teams:

- provide information, counselling, training and legal assistance services on how to access and claim land and property rights
- facilitate access to land and land tenure for internally displaced people throughout all phases of displacement and promote and advocate for women's and internally displaced people's housing, land and property rights
- enhance the capacity of other humanitarian actors to address housing, land, and property issues
- advocate and contribute to land rights reform
- protect internally displaced people from forced evictions by monitoring and reporting, implementing prevention initiatives, and promoting stronger government leadership in eviction prevention
- facilitate access to birth and marriage certificates, and other legal identity documentation
- strengthen the capacity of local actors in alternative conflict and dispute resolution by providing material and technical support to

local institutions and authorities, both state and customary



262 people reached in 2024 ▼

Protection from violence

The Humanitarian Mediation and Protection from Violence teams have worked to address both inter- and intra-community conflicts in Tanganyika and Ituri provinces. The programme contributes to improving the protection of civilians by preventing and mitigating violence, facilitating safe voluntary returns, improving access to basic services, and ensuring respect of fundamental human rights in conflict-affected areas. The activities include:

- undertaking conflict-sensitive, gender and protection analyses
- increasing capacities of women, men and youth in conflict management and conflict resolution through participatory community-based workshops.
- supporting inclusive, participatory and empowering dialogue processes and humanitarian mediation processes
- increasing capacities of national and international actors in conflict-sensitive analysis and humanitarian mediation as tools for enhanced protection of civilians in conflict areas
- improving civilian safety, security and understanding between the parties to the mediation in targeted areas and contributing to preventing and mitigating conflict between communities
- assisting communities in implementing projects stemming from successful humanitarian mediation processes, and which empower communities and foster social cohesion, positive change, and long-term solutions



35,019 people reached in 2024 ▼

Shelter and settlements

Our shelter teams:

- provide housing upgrade kits to households in return areas and provide light shelter kits to families residing in sites where shelters have been damaged by the recent M23 crisis

- establish collective shelter hangars to accommodate displaced people temporarily residing in centres such as schools, churches, and administrative buildings
- provide technical and material support for the construction of transitional and emergency shelters to ensure safe, dignified, and appropriate housing solutions for affected populations
- support those in protracted displacement with access to land and housing
- actively collaborate with NRC's ICLA team to ensure that every household's property rights are respected and upheld
- construct and rehabilitate classrooms for displaced children and their host communities
- implement community-based projects focused on the construction and rehabilitation of essential community infrastructure, including economic facilities, agricultural access roads, bridges, as well as the development and rehabilitation of agricultural perimeters. These interventions include the restoration of dikes, bunds, and irrigation canals, in close collaboration with local communities, with the aim of strengthening their economic resilience and promoting sustainable livelihoods.
- distribute individual solar lamps and install streetlights in sites and community centres for access to energy and to prevent issues related to GBV and PSEA

- provide suitable sanitation and handwashing facilities by: 1) constructing or rehabilitating inclusive family and communal latrines and showers for internally displaced people, returnees and host communities; 2) building or rehabilitating institutional latrines in schools
- provide appropriate hygiene items and cleaning materials for households and schools based on market analysis
- distribute menstrual hygiene management items to women and girls in both communities and schools
- promote awareness of safe hygiene practices among people affected by displacement, in both communities and schools
- provide cash assistance and technical expertise to families and school committees for WASH infrastructure construction
- provide faecal sludge management through the emptying of sewage sludge in displacement sites
- ensure the effective management of water and sanitation systems through community mobilisation, structured organisation and capacity building, the development of tailored maintenance plans, and advocacy

121,722 people reached in 2024 ▼

Emergency response

NRC is a key frontline responder in eastern DR Congo. We respond to displacement with multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). NRC caters to basic needs in the first phase of emergency by providing emergency shelter, water and sanitation, and essential household and hygiene items. Furthermore, NRC supports the identification of land for establishment of shelters, and support the immediate return of children to safe classrooms.

Supporting returns and durable solutions

The context in DR Congo is complex, volatile and multi-faceted. Some (though few) areas of the country have potential for more durable outcomes. NRC continues to support the integration and return of internally displaced people and intends to support with individual and community-based packages to make a long-lasting impact in a stable environment. Such situations are suitable for all our core competencies: Shelter, WASH, ICLA, Education, and Protection from Violence.



59,102 people reached in 2024 ▼

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

NRC's WASH teams:

- provide access to safe drinking water for displaced populations through: 1) water trucking in urban emergency situations, 2) spring catchment systems in rural areas, tailored to the hydrological context, 3) solar-powered water supply systems/networks to serve large groups of people, and 4) rehabilitation of damaged or weak water points and networks
- provide sustainable potable water to schools through independent systems or by connecting them to existing networks
- distribute water storage facilities and conduct regular water quality testing as per established water surveillance plans

Camp Coordination and Camp Management

The programme, funded by BHA/USAID, started in August 2024 with an official opening end of October 2024. It was initially planned to run until February 2026, but funding ceased on January 24, 2025, following instructions from the US administration.

In 2024 the CCCM team assisted 2,284 households (assessments, evaluations, information management, sharing and coordination with CCCM Cluster for specialised actors to respond to urgent needs).

Our donors

We are grateful for the generous support from our donors:

- Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA – former DEVCO/EuropeAid)
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- The Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NORAD)
- Embassy of Sweden in DR Congo
- United States Bureau for Humanitarian Affairs (BHA)
- USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)
- UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office via the SAFER consortium (FCDO)
- Centre de crise et de soutien (CDCS) - French MFA
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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