



CP AoR Donors-Partners Call notes – Kasai Update

Wednesday, 30 August 2017

Organizations present on the call

CP AoR; UNICEF; UNHCR; Save the Children International and regional office; Geneva Call; World Vision International; War Child UK; Terre des Hommes; ICRC.

Donors: OFDA; US Department of State.

Speakers and Interventions:

Sabrina Cajoly – DRC CP AoR

Petra Heusser – Global CP AoR

Jennifer Groves – OFDA

Ibrahim Sesay – UNICEF NY

Michael Copland – Global CP AoR

Bilal Sougou – Global CP AoR

Agenda

1. Update on the situation in the Kasais and reference to other hotspots in DRC (10 minutes)
2. Current child protection response capacity and gaps (10 minutes)
3. Integration of child protection with other sectors, in particular education (5 minutes)
4. Key advocacy points (10 minutes)
5. Questions and Answers (15 minutes)
6. Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Update on the situation in the Kasais and reference to other hotspots in DRC

The **Child Protection Working Group** (CPWG) in DRC is currently structured in 1 national CPWG in Kinshasa, supporting 23 sub-national CPWGs – including 3 CPWG groups in Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi and Tshikapa, as well as 2 CPWGs in Kwilu provinces (all affected by the Kasai crisis).

Two-thirds of the DRC are currently affected by various emergencies, resulting in **4 million IDPs** (which constitutes the highest number on the continent), of which approximately **60.5% are children**. Since the Kasai crisis started in August 2016, **1.4 million people have been internally displaced**.

The impact of the ongoing Kasai crisis currently extends to **nine provinces and Angola** (with hosts more than 30.000 refugees as of August 2017). The impact is particularly severe as this region is among the poorest of the country. Before the outbreak of the conflict, the Kasai region was very much oriented towards development and therefore few humanitarians had a pre-existing field presence or a strong anchorage on the ground to facilitate their scaling up now quickly.

On August 4th, 2017 UNICEF activated the Level 3 Response for the Kasai region, and so did other UN agencies.

Children in the Kasai region are particularly at risk of attacks, abuse and reprisals based on them being perceived as member of the militia.

A Secondary Data Review had been shared widely in July. It is based on reports from the field and it can be seen that most of the **numbers of children in need of protection have much increased** in less than a month. The SDR will be shared again with the call participants.



Current child protection response capacity and gaps

Thanks to some of the allocations from the Common Humanitarian Fund in DRC and the activities of child protection actors on the ground there is an initial response and results as per the presentation, particularly for detained children, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and for general psychosocial support (PSS) for children affected by the conflict. Still, there is a strong **need to scale the response up** given that numbers of children and people in need are increasing greatly with continued armed conflict in certain areas, and with others become more accessible and hence revealing the needs.

For the child protection Cluster Lead Agency, UNICEF, internal redeployment of staff and funding re-allocation are ongoing. However, given the large number of emergencies in the country, any internal redeployment means opening a gap somewhere else.

Most urgent needs include:

- Thousands UASC incl. children used in militias in need of assistance;
- Girls need more attention;
- Need for tailored specialised psychosocial support;
- Livelihood and vocational training for children formerly associated with the militia;
- More transitional care arrangements and monitoring of these children.

While there is much presence of local child protection actors, only a few are operational and able to quickly scale up. **Local actors' capacities need to be increased** so that they can effectively respond to the crisis. Currently the CP AoR and other clusters in the area are carrying out capacity building efforts, but these need to be complemented by additional strategies to be sustainable. A good practice is already underway by UNICEF, who is entering or extending already existing partnerships with international or recognized local actors, and at the same time embedding partnership with local actors who needs much more assistance and mentoring. In this regard, international actors are encouraged to **pair up with national actors** when scaling up their response in the region, not only to address access issues but to ensure mentoring and transfer of competence.

Integration of child protection with other sectors

The Kasai crisis is overwhelmingly a **child protection crisis**: in order to be adequately responded to, child protection needs to be mainstreamed in all the different clusters (Education, WASH, Nutrition, Health, NFI, etc.). The **'I'm just a child' campaign** carried out by UNICEF DRC, its partners and hopefully by the CPWG members at large very soon, addresses this child protection crisis. Currently it is being implemented in two provinces, and more financial support would allow for its extension to all the nine affected provinces.

An innovative integrated **CP-Education-Mine Action approach** has been set up to adequately respond to the needs resulting from the over 400 attacks on schools. A **joint strategy** has been developed with the **GBV sub-cluster** to address 68% of the 1.400+ GBV documented cases involving children. **The Rapid Response Mechanism of Movement of Population (RRMP)**, which been set up in Kasai to provide a multi-sectorial response, includes also protection aspects.

Key advocacy points

The proposed key advocacy points for coordinated action are the following:

- Given the scale of the emergency, **humanitarian funding needs to be scaled up** to provide an adequate response.
- There need to be strong efforts by the international community to bring these conflicts to a sustainable end. Immediate mediation and conflict prevention have to be carried out upon early warnings.
- **More international partners are needed** to respond to the increasing needs within the overall framework of the CPWG action plan under development. When scaling up, it is encouraged to enter partnerships and build on local actors who are already on site but are not fully operational.
- Support for the 'I'm just a child' campaign promoted by UNICEF DRC;
- Need for specialized services, including particularly:



- Specialized PSS;
 - School/socio-economic reintegration, livelihood and vocational training for children formerly associated with the militia;
 - Transitional care arrangements and monitoring of these children.
- Given the complexity of the crises and the great number of needs, experienced human resources are required.

Discussion

Current presence of partners on the territory

UNICEF is the UN agency with the longest presence in the affected area. Currently, MONUSCO, UNHCR, UNFPA, and also IOM are setting up local offices and are scaling up the response. There is limited presence of INGOs who are scaling up in response to the increasing needs. Judging by the high number of child protection projects submitted by international and local NGOs in the framework of the allocations launched by the Common Humanitarian Fund over the past few months, there are reasonable grounds to think that many organizations are willing to scale up but lack funding to do so.

Funding

The Flash Appeal done in April is outdated and currently under revision to be relaunched by the end of the year (as needs have increased enormously). In addition, the 2017-2019 HRP is to be updated to include the new emergencies in the Kasais and in Tanganyika.

National DDR programmes for former children affiliated with militias

There is currently an ongoing discussion with national authorities to include children having left the militia in the national DDR programmes, as their former belonging to militias, and not armed groups, currently excludes them. Additionally, the CPWG is advocating to obtain the usually provided for signed commitment from the government to consider children formerly associated with militia groups as victims rather than criminals, and therefore obtain core protection guarantees to prevent retaliation and persecution.

Wrap Up

- Efforts to scale up need to be coordinated and CPWGs are developing coordinated, cooperative plans of action to this end.
- Efforts to mainstream child protection into the different cluster responses humanitarian action remain at the centre of concerted efforts in the Kasais.

Contact information

For any further questions, please be directly in contact with the national coordinator, **Sabrina Cajoly** (scajoly@unicef.org). In particular, INGOs planning to scale up or planning new programmes are invited to be in contact with her for a coordinated response.

Annexes

- PowerPoint Presentation: CP AoR Kasai update, August 2017
- Child Protection and Education Infographic on the Kasai crisis, August 2017
- SDR on the Kasai crisis (English and French), July 2017