



22 November 2014 – Forget the triangle between Bermuda, Florida and Puerto Rico. The area between the towns of Manono, Mitwaba and Pweto in northern Katanga in DR Congo constitutes what today is known as no less than the “triangle of death”.

The UN refugee agency UNHCR has [expressed deep concern](#) about the "catastrophic" humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's Katanga province, which has displaced hundreds of thousands of people.

400,000 people have fled their homes since the end of 2012. The total number of internally displaced people in the province amounts to nearly 600,000, which is more than the entire population of Dublin. During the last three months alone, more than 71,000 people have been forced to flee and joined the silent statistics of the displaced.

In October, UNHCR registered 1,737 incidents in the territories of Kalemie and the so-called "triangle of death". These included the looting and burning of houses, extortion, torture, forced labour and recruitment into armed groups, as well as sexual violence.

Between January and October, UNHCR protection monitors have helped 1,564 people who survived sexual violence and referred them to medical and other partners for help.

The limited presence of humanitarian and development organizations is a serious problem, leading to insufficient assistance to displaced people who struggle to have access to basic services.

There are 28 sites hosting internally displaced people in northern Katanga and many more displaced people live in host communities. While UNHCR has built some 1,500 emergency shelters since January, more is needed, including access to health care, potable water, food and education.



Elders in Mukondo site say that 19 young children have died since their arrival in March, mainly because of diarrhoea, anaemia and malaria. The site hosts some 1,300 people, more than half of them under the age of 12 years. During that same period, nine women died while giving birth. The nearest health centre is 22 kilometres away.

The conflicts are taking place in the northern part of Katanga, one of the Congo's richest provinces in natural resources. While there have been long-lasting tensions between the two communities, violence between the Luba (or Bantu) and the Twa (or Pygmy) tribes flared up earlier this year.

UNHCR believes that to stem the violence, there is a need to increase the presence of Congolese civil authorities in the affected areas and to look into peaceful solutions to resolve the conflict between the Luba and the Twa.

UNHCR is calling on the UN peace-keeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to reinforce its presence and technical capacity in northern Katanga to better protect the civilian population and prevent further human rights violations. Nearly 2.6 million people are internally displaced in the vast African country.

*UNRIC's related links:*

Article: [Triangle of death suffers scorched earth campaign](#)

UNHCR photo galler of the triangle of death <http://unhcr.org/g-546b7b3d6>