

OVERVIEW

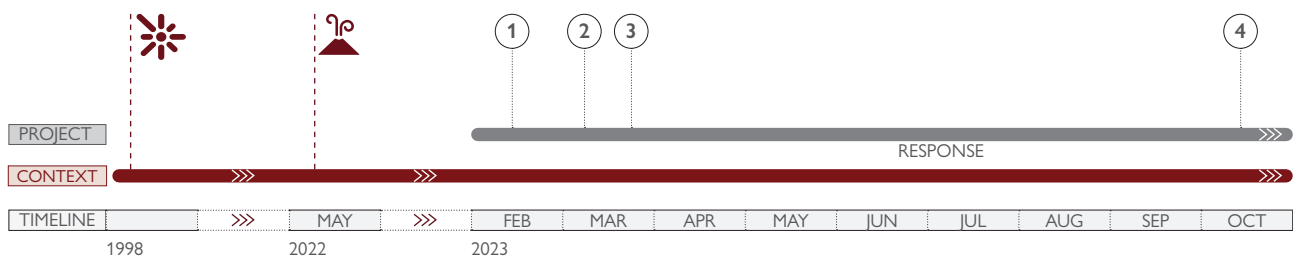
DEM. REP. OF THE CONGO 2022 / COMPLEX CRISIS

CRISIS	Persistence of armed and inter-community conflicts in the in eastern of DR Congo
PEOPLE AFFECTED	27 million people in need 8.8 million people targeted in 2022*
PEOPLE WITH SHELTER NEEDS	4 million people *
LOCATION	Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika provinces
PEOPLE SUPPORTED IN THE RESPONSE	460,475 , among which 238,285 women
RESPONSE OUTPUTS	<p>75,077 shelters built 460,475 people assisted in shelter including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 185,000 people received transitional shelters • 138,000 people received emergency shelters • 56,000 people received light assistance kit in shelters (2 tarps) • 32,000 people assisted with rental support



SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSE

The Democratic Republic of Congo has been facing a complex and protracted crisis, or a crisis characterized by a continuous resurgence for the last 25 years. In 2022, the number of people in need of shelter was estimated at 4 million (HNO); of which 1 million were targeted within the response (HRP). By the end of 2022, only around 460,000 people had received some kind of shelter assistance.



1998: The Second Congo War, also known as the Great War of Africa or the Great African War, began in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in August 1998.

May 2021: Volcanic eruption of Nyiragongo displaced 450,000 people in the region.

- ① **Feb 2022:** Strategic workshop with sectoral donors in Kinshasa.
- ② **Mar 2022:** Decline of the March 23 Movement (M23).
- ③ **Mar 2022:** Establishment of the Environmental Protection Working Group.
- ④ **Oct 2022:** Evaluation of the impact of shelter interventions on the environment in Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces.



Emergency response - Construction of emergency shelters on site.

CONTEXT

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the third most populated country in Africa, with over 100 million inhabitants. It shares borders with nine neighboring countries: Angola, the Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zambia.

The DRC is experiencing one of the most complex humanitarian crises in the world, with multiple conflicts affecting several parts of its vast territory. The country is home to the largest population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Africa, with nearly six million people displaced to date. Since 2021, the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri have been under a state of siege, due to the resurgence of armed and intercommunal conflicts. In May 2021, the province of North Kivu experienced the volcanic eruption of Nyiragongo, displacing nearly 300,000 inhabitants of some neighborhoods in the city of Goma. During 2022, the security and humanitarian situation deteriorated further in the eastern provinces (North Kivu and Ituri) and the western province of Mayi-Ndombe. In addition, flooding affected the entire country, particularly the city of Kinshasa and the province of Equateur, between October and December 2022.

With the crisis-affected areas primarily accessible by air, logistic challenges and constraints remained throughout 2022 given the size of the country and the bad condition of its road infrastructures. Additionally, the cancelation and/or price increase in United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) flight services reduced the humanitarian actors' response capacity to assist in those areas. This problem led many actors to resort to private companies, despite persistent untimely cancellations of flights from their side too. In addition, the war in Ukraine affected as well import and transport activities and the costs of shelter and household items, which had an impact on operations and sectoral response.

SITUATION BEFORE THE CRISIS

The situation in the DRC is that of a prolonged crisis, and thus it is difficult to describe the situation prior. However, according to [the study published in 2019 by the DRC Shelter Cluster with the support of CRATERRE](#) on local constructive cultures for sustainable and resilient habitats, populations lived in a variety of homes before the advent of the crisis. Inhabitants of different regions developed local solutions to adapt to their contexts and meet needs by using locally available resources for the construction of their housing. According to another survey on the perception of poverty conducted by the Unité de Pilotage du Processus d'Élaboration et de Mise en Oeuvre de la Stratégie de Réduction de la Pauvreté (Poverty Reduction Strategy Development and Implementation Process Steering Unit), 81 percent of households said they were not satisfied with their housing. According to the same source, 76 percent of households lived in overcrowded settings throughout the country. It is therefore in a context of underdevelopment and structural challenges. The country has 145 territories with a total of 339 communes, including 137 urban communes and 202 rural communes. The provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri account for 50 of the communes, 80 percent of which are in rural areas. In total, these three provinces are home to a population of more than 21 million people, or approximately 21 percent of the total population of the DRC (estimated at 106 million in 2022).

The context of North Kivu provides a better illustration of the situation before the onset of the crisis. Indeed, when the Nyiragongo volcano erupted in 2021 the population of Goma was approximately 400,000. Today, it is estimated to be over one million. The city has experienced waves of migration from the countryside. This demographic growth has led to a high demand for housing in the face of a limited supply due to seismicity and ground deformation in several zones, which often indicates the presence of magma under the urban area of the city of Goma.



View of a Transitional shelter.

© DRC Shelter Cluster

SITUATION AFTER THE CRISIS

The deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation has led to large-scale population movements. It has also led to the loss or destruction of essential household items, the partial or destruction of homes in towns or villages of origin, and the accommodation of displaced households in host families, collective centers, camps, or sites for displaced people with the risk of exposure to insecurity, overcrowding, risks of protection and GBV, the deterioration of health and epidemics, among other things.

NATIONAL SHELTER STRATEGY

The Shelter Cluster promotes that any sectoral intervention must include exit routes or longer-term solutions to contribute to the recovery of affected households in a sustainable manner. But with the persistence of conflicts in the country, individuals or families are forced to remain on the move for extended periods. This justifies valuing transitional solutions alongside emergency responses as well as durable solutions, which are generally not implemented in the medium term.

The Shelter Cluster bases its response strategy addressing the following five scenarios, which consider various situations or locations of displaced persons and the needs of their host communities:

- Displaced persons in host families.
- Displaced in urban situations.
- Displaced in camps or collective centers.
- Returnees.
- Host Communities.

In addition, the diagram below (Fig 1.) represents the guidelines of the Shelter Cluster’s operational strategy according to the location of the displaced persons and the support activities that can be provided to them, for each of the emergency phases /transitional/development.

NATIONAL SHELTER RESPONSE

In 2022, shelter actors assisted 446,000 people, including 238,000 women and 234,000 children – representing 44 percent of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2022 sectoral targets.

Prior to 2022, the funded shelter response represented a low proportion of the sectoral targets of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). As an indication, by the end of 2021, the shelter response only reached 19 percent of its target.

Against the backdrop of these poor results, Shelter Cluster partners set two objectives for 2022. First, to strengthen or improve the advocacy to raise the funds needed to meet the sectoral needs identified during the year. Second, to review the methodology for estimating sectoral needs as part of the 2022 humanitarian planning cycle (HPC).

Regarding the second objective in particular, the Cluster reviewed its sectoral indicators as well as the ratios used for the identification of people in need of shelter, and for targeting, including the sectoral budget estimate. The review focused on the following points:

- The integration of the IDP/host population ratio;
- The reduction of the host community rate to 10 percent of the sectoral persons in need;
- The reduction of targeting rates according to the operational or financial capacities of the actors;

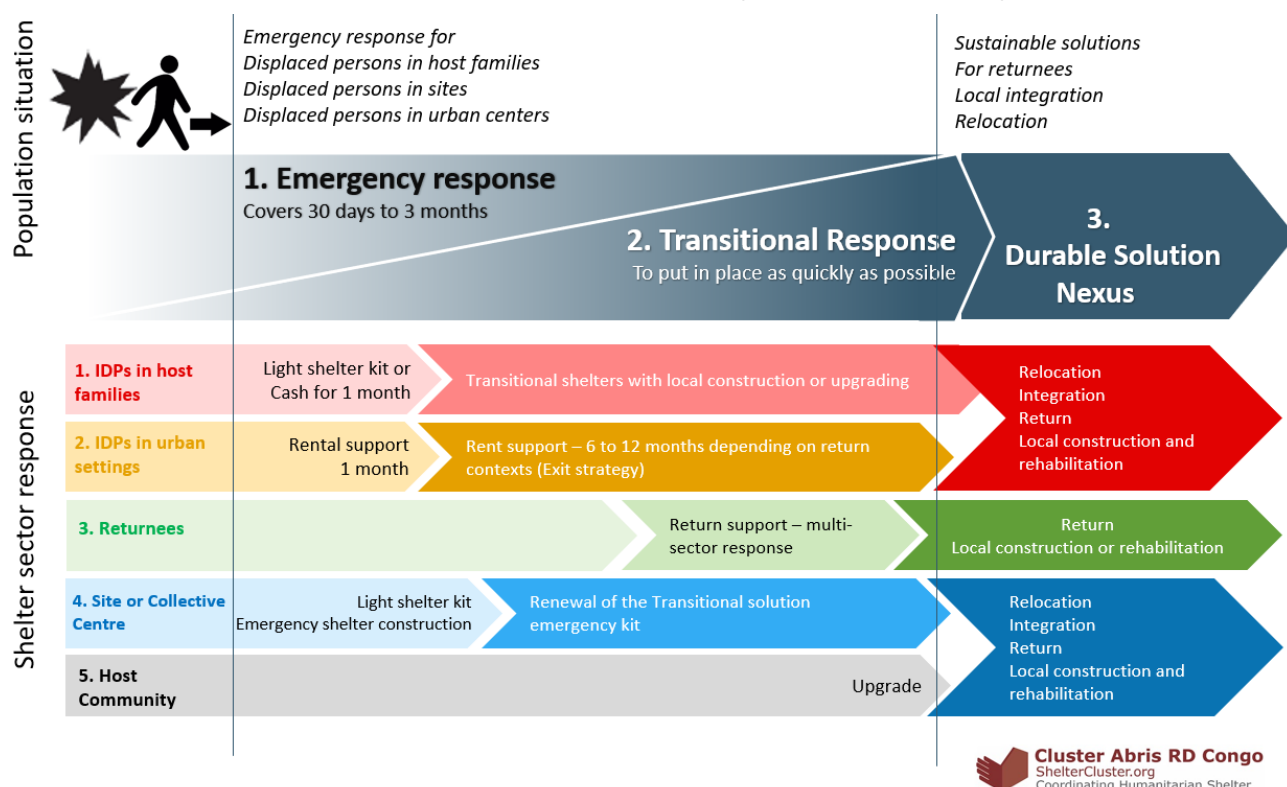


Fig 1. Guidelines of the Shelter Cluster’s operational strategy.

the harmonization of the costs of intervention packages.

This also justifies the fact that the sectoral target for 2022 was one million people out of the four million identified as being in need.

In addition, since the HRP in DRC is activity-based, each cluster uses its methodology to identify the number of people in need and the targets for its sector. It then derives the costs from the list of standard activities. As an example, in 2021, out of the 89 percent of displaced persons hosted by a host family, the Shelter Cluster targeted 65 percent as participants in the response. In 2022, this methodology was revised by considering 25 percent, which was the percentage of final sectoral achievements reached in 2021 (see table below).

MAIN CHALLENGES

In 2022, major challenges included:

- The decrease in funds to cover sectoral needs, which explains why more than 50 percent of households in need were not able to benefit from adequate shelter.
- The lack of capacity to cover the needs of more than 100,000 people impacted by the eruption of the Nyiragongo Volcano in May 2021.
- The increase in population displacements following the resurgence of conflicts in the east of the country (M23 crisis, community conflict in Ituri, ADF crisis, etc.) as well as the emergence of conflict in the west of the country with the Kwamouth crisis between Teke and Yaka.
- The destruction of emergency shelters built in some IDP sites following the resurgence of armed clashes. This was the case in the Rwasa site (North Kivu), where nearly 4,000 emergency shelters were immediately destroyed by clashes between the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and the 23 March Movement (M23, also known as the Congolese Revolutionary Army).

CLUSTER RESPONSE ACTIVITIES AND COSTING

Individual Shelter		
Types of activity	\$/HH	Details
1. Lightweight Shelter Kit / MPCA	50	2 tarpaulins, 1 roll of rope / HH - 1 collective tool kit / 10 max HH
2. Emergency shelter	122	Emergency or cash for shelters
3. Rent	240	20-60\$/month/ HH
4. Upgrading (Host Families)	150	Construction of family latrines, addition of a room, repairs, internal separation, etc.)
5. Local construction	350	For the returnees, rehabilitation or construction of a new shelter
6. Restitution of documents	30	+/- cost of a parcel card

Collective shelter		
Types of activity	\$/HH	Details
1. Upgrade of the collective center	143	Family latrines, repairs, internal separation
2. Construction of collective shelters	400	Construction of a collective shed



Transitional response - Collective transitional shelters.

METHODOLOGY FOR CALCULATING THE PIN AND SECTORAL TARGETS FOR HPC

Consequence 1: Risk of life population movement of less than 6 months		PIN 2021 & 2022	TARGETED PEOPLE 2021 & 2022	
IDPs	Host families	89%	65%	25%
IDPs	Site or camps	89%	85%	25%
Returnees	Damaged house or secondary occupancy	90%	71%	25%
Host community	High vulnerable households in need of shelter	10%	30%	5%
Consequence 2: Living conditions population movement of more than 6 months		PIN 2021 & 2022	TARGETED PEOPLE 2021 & 2022	
IDPs	Host families	65%	100%	25%
IDPs	Sites or camps	50%	100%	25%

- The resistance of the authorities to grant sites to accommodate the move, disregarding that the site remains a last resort.
- The extreme disrepair of roads and infrastructure. Operational actors had difficulty delivering aid in most displacement areas.
- The need to allocate considerable resources to cover the delivery of kits by air, especially in landlocked areas or with markets with low absorptive capacity. This situation has impacted the deployment of assistance, also considering the limited availability or number of airlines.

OUTCOMES AND WIDER IMPACTS

In parallel with the sectoral emergency response, shelter actors have met to discuss sectoral environmental protection and/or the identification of mitigation strategies necessary to reduce the risk of environmental deterioration following humanitarian interventions. Thus, in March

2022, a working group on the environment was set up, composed of five cluster members, including a United Nations agency, two international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), and two national organizations. The working group established an annual work plan, which allowed the following results to be achieved: Training of Cluster partners at the national and local levels on reforestation techniques and environmental assessment tools.

1. Development of the country's environmental profile.
2. An impact assessment of sectoral interventions on the environment in two provinces in the east of the country (South Kivu and Tanganyika), which made it possible to survey 2,000 households and reach 18 localities assessed using the NEAT+ (Nexus Environment Assessment Tool).

In addition, these environmental initiatives contributed to the capacity building of actors on environmental issues and will lead to the definition of an environmental protection strategy in the shelter sector.



Durable response - Shelters constructed for the returnees using local construction techniques.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND LESSONS LEARNED

LESSONS LEARNED

In the context of multiple crises, the consideration of the principle of harmlessness (Do No Harm) is essential. Thus, the Cluster identified the following actions as those to be undertaken to minimize the risk of inadvertent harm:

- **Targeting:** The establishment of a joint committee with the community, and the prioritization of a community approach alongside the use of a Shelter Vulnerability Score tool. Clarity should be provided on the objectives of the project and of targeting criteria. Labor should be recruited locally and involve the community in the selection of participants. Verify land or shelter ownership in the context of targeting a project participant for shelter assistance. For rent support activities, provide participants with a rent payment tracking booklet alongside the written agreement.
- **Brick production:** Awareness of the requirements for mud-brick storage, to ensure their protection and avoid potential delays in future projects (using tarpaulins/straw, etc.).
- **Rainy season:** The rains affect the production of bricks in particular; and may also slow down shelter construction in general. It is important to set up a construction schedule that is adapted to the seasonal or agricultural calendar.

RECOMMENDATIONS MOVING FORWARD

In 2023, the Shelter Cluster will continue to achieve the goals assigned through the ten key principles outlined in its strategy:

1. Putting communities at the heart of the shelter response;
2. Seeking an equitable and efficient response;
3. Promoting accessibility through universal design;
4. Valuing local standards and practices;
5. Promoting greater household choice and autonomy while optimizing project costs;
6. Accompanying households in (re)construction; Supporting households in the (re)construction, rehabilitation or upgrading of their homes;
7. Taking into account land tenure issues,
8. Taking into account community dynamics and gender in the design of the project;
9. Mitigating the risks of negative impact on the environment and;
10. Promoting a multi-sectoral approach in the same area.

In addition, the Cluster plans to develop its environmental strategy to reduce the negative sectoral impact on the environment. Emphasis will be placed on cross-cutting issues and cross-sectoral synergies. Shelter responses will include gender and GBV issues by promoting gender equity in interventions and contributing to a protective environment for women and girls. Responses will be implemented following assessments to identify and understand specific household needs. Thus, responses will consider age, gender, disability, and the cross-cutting protection principles of dignity, do no harm, accountability, access, participation, and empowerment. In terms of location, Shelter and AME interventions will involve local structures or organizations to the maximum extent possible to achieve an optimal exit or sustainability strategy. The Shelter Cluster and AME Working Group will support collaborative initiatives between international and national or local partner organizations, including the transfer of knowledge and experience.



FURTHER READING ON SHELTER PROJECTS

On Dem. Rep. of Congo: [A.4 / DR CONGO 2019–2020](#); [A.2 / DR CONGO 2018](#); [A.17 DR CONGO 2008–2016](#)

On Africa: [A.1 / BURKINA FASO 2019–2020](#); [A.6 MOZAMBIQUE 2020–2021](#); [A.6 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#)

On coordination: [A.9 / SOUTH SUDAN 2018](#); [A.12 / ECUADOR 2016–2018](#); [A.7 / NIGERIA 2017–2020](#)