

# EVALUATION REPORT

June 2019

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## Evaluation of the UNICEF Level 3 Crisis Response in the Democratic Republic of Congo

EVALUATION OFFICE





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## Final Report

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New York, New York 10017

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# PREFACE

The UNICEF Evaluation Office is pleased to present this report on the evaluation of the UNICEF Level 3 crisis response in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The humanitarian situation in the DRC, already precarious in the wake of stalled elections and ongoing conflict in the east, worsened dramatically in 2017. Conflict broke out across the six provinces of the Kasai region, and violence in the east intensified, creating new waves of population displacement, food insecurity, malnutrition and epidemics. Some 13.1 million people required humanitarian assistance in 2018 – a 50 per cent increase over the previous year. Of these, 7.7 million were children, who faced displacement, separation from their caregivers, recruitment into armed forces and groups, sexual violence, and disruption of their education, as well as lack of access to health care, safe water and sanitation, and adequate nutrition, among other challenges.

From the outset, reaching children in crisis was immensely difficult, requiring swift and effective humanitarian resources. To ensure the right capacities and systems were in place to effectively meet the needs of children, women and communities in the affected regions, UNICEF activated its Level 3 corporate emergency procedure in August 2017. In June 2018, as required by the revised Evaluation Policy, UNICEF commissioned this evaluation, utilizing its emerging ‘rapid and timely humanitarian evaluation’ methodology to ensure that the evaluation findings were available early enough to inform the ongoing response. While the UNICEF response was multi-sectoral in nature, the programmatic focus of this evaluation is on education and child protection.

Overall, the evaluation found that the performance of UNICEF and its partners was fair, despite the challenging context in which the response was implemented. Needs were met, and lives saved through access to education and child protection interventions such as providing psychosocial support and establishing safe and learning environments that promote the protection of learners. For example, more than 120,000 young boys and girls (5-11 years) received access to quality education and psychosocial support and over 1,000 classrooms set up were constructed or rehabilitated. Nonetheless, a number of challenges hampered implementation, such as weak government capacity, access and security constraints, and the lack of predictable multi-year funding.

As a result of these and other challenges, the evaluation identified some areas in need of improvement. Preparedness was found to be largely inadequate due to absence of field-level capacity, the absence of contingency plans, and a lack of clearly-identified roles and responsibilities for preparedness. The response itself suffered from

shortcomings related to quality and equity, resulting in significant unmet needs in education and protection. There was also insufficient planning for the transition phase, which was further exacerbated by financial constraints and the low commitment and capacity of the state services. Support to gender equality, gender-specific vulnerabilities and coordination efforts were also weak overall. The recommendations highlighted in the report aim to help address these limitations and strengthen the response going forward.

The evaluation was conducted by a team of international consultants (Ms Soledad Posada, Mr Enrico Leonardi and Mr Ricardo Solé Arques) working under the guidance of the Evaluation Office. The evaluation also benefited from the guidance of a reference group, which included staff from the West and Central Africa Regional Office, UNICEF DRC, the Office of Emergency Programmes, the Programme Division, the Field Results Group and the Supply Division. We trust that the findings and the way forward identified by the evaluation will be used to inform programming.

I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Evaluation Office who guided this work, namely Mr Denis Jobin, Mr Koorosh Raffii, Ms Jane Mwangi and Ms Diana Sera. Finally, I would like to thank Ms Celeste Lebowitz and Ms Geeta Dey for their administrative support throughout the process.

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# ACRONYMS

<b>AAP</b>	Accountability to Affected Populations	<b>EiE</b>	Education In Emergencies
<b>ALNAP</b>	Active Learning for Accountability and Performance	<b>EMOPS</b>	Office of Emergency Programmes
<b>ARCC</b>	Alternative Response to Communities in Crisis	<b>EMT</b>	Emergency Management Team
<b>C4D</b>	Communications for Development	<b>EO</b>	UNICEF Evaluation Office
<b>CAAFAG</b>	Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups	<b>EPF</b>	Emergency Programme Fund
<b>CPPFs</b>	Country Programme Pooled Funds	<b>EPP</b>	Emergency Preparedness Platform
<b>CC</b>	Cluster Coordination	<b>ERIC</b>	Ethical Research Involving Children
<b>CCCs</b>	Core Commitments for Children in humanitarian action	<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>C/DRR</b>	Conflict/Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>FAT</b>	Host family (famille transitoire)
<b>CEAP</b>	Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure	<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>CERF</b>	Central Emergency Response Fund	<b>FO</b>	Field Office
<b>CFS</b>	Child-Friendly Space	<b>FTRP</b>	Fast-Track Recruitment Process
<b>CLA</b>	Cluster Lead Agency	<b>FTS</b>	Financial Tracking System
<b>CO</b>	Country Office	<b>GB</b>	Grand Bargain
<b>COAR</b>	Country Office Annual Report	<b>GCCG</b>	Global Cluster Coordination Group
<b>CP</b>	Child Protection	<b>GEC</b>	Global Emergency Coordinator
<b>CPiE</b>	Child Protection in Emergencies	<b>GEROS</b>	UNICEF Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System
<b>CRC</b>	Contract Review Committee	<b>HAC</b>	Humanitarian Action for Children
<b>CTO</b>	Transit Centre	<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team
<b>CwC</b>	Communicating with Children	<b>HNO</b>	Humanitarian Needs Overview
<b>DDR</b>	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration	<b>HPM</b>	Humanitarian Performance Monitoring
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)	<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>DIVAS</b>	Division of Social Affairs (Division des Affaires Sociales)	<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>DRC</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo	<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>ECHO</b>	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office	<b>HRPE</b>	Human Resources Partner for Emergencies
		<b>IASC</b>	Inter-agency Standing Committee
		<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology
		<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person

continued: ACRONYMS

<b>IM</b>	Information Management	<b>RD</b>	Regional Director
<b>IMCI</b>	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness	<b>RECOPE</b>	Community Child Protection Network
<b>INEE</b>	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies	<b>RIP</b>	Risk-Informed Programming
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organization	<b>RO</b>	Regional Office
<b>KIIs</b>	Key Informant Interviews	<b>RRMP</b>	Rapid Response to Population Movements
<b>L2</b>	Level 2 crisis	<b>RRM</b>	Rapid Response Mechanism
<b>L3</b>	Level 3 crisis	<b>RRT</b>	Rapid Response Team
<b>LTA</b>	Long-Term Agreement	<b>RTHE</b>	Rapid and Timely Humanitarian Evaluation
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation	<b>SD</b>	Supply Division
<b>MCH</b>	Mother and Child Health	<b>S&amp;L</b>	Supply & Logistics
<b>MRM</b>	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations	<b>SBP</b>	Stand-By Partner
<b>MSA</b>	Multisectoral Assessment	<b>SitRep</b>	Situation Report
<b>NFI</b>	Non-Food Items	<b>SSOPs</b>	Simplified Standard Operating Procedures
<b>NYHQ</b>	New York Headquarters	<b>STS</b>	Surge Tracking System
<b>OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	<b>TA</b>	Temporary Assignments
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	Organisation for Economic Development and Co-operation Development Assistance Committee	<b>ToC</b>	Theory of Change
<b>ORE</b>	Other Resources Emergency	<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>ORR</b>	Other Resources Regular	<b>UASC</b>	Unaccompanied and Separated Children
<b>PBF</b>	Performance-Based Financing	<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>PCA</b>	Programme Cooperation Agreement	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>PD</b>	Programme Division	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>PEAR+</b>	Programme of Expanded Assistance to Returnees Plus	<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>PEP</b>	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis	<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>PRRIS</b>	Projet de Réhabilitation et de Reconstruction des Infrastructures Scolaires	<b>UN-SWAP</b>	UN System-Wide Action Plan
<b>PSEA</b>	Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
<b>RBM</b>	Results-Based Management	<b>WCARO</b>	West and Central Africa Regional Office
		<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

This evaluation of the UNICEF Level 3 crisis response (L3) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was commissioned by the UNICEF Evaluation Office in New York. As expressed in the Terms of Reference (Annex 1)\*, this evaluation utilizes the 'Rapid and Timely Humanitarian Evaluation' (RTHE) approach, which prioritizes the process and learning associated with the L3 evaluation as much as the evaluation findings. The evaluation was triggered as per the UNICEF Evaluation Policy, which requires that protracted L3 emergencies should be evaluated once every three years.

In 2018, more than 13.1 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in DRC.<sup>1</sup> This included approximately 7.7 million children in need of protection and humanitarian assistance, representing an increase of 50 per cent compared to 2017.<sup>2</sup> The complex emergency that erupted in Central Kasai province in August 2016 spread rapidly throughout the Kasai region, resulting in huge humanitarian needs in six provinces of the country (Kasai, Kasai Central, Kasai Oriental, Lomami, Sankuru and Lualaba).

## Evaluation object and context

The object of this evaluation is the UNICEF response to the humanitarian crisis in the Kasai region of DRC following the declaration on 1 August 2017 of a Level 3 corporate

emergency in accordance with the UNICEF corporate emergency activation procedure (CEAP). The evaluation also covers the response in Tanganyika and South Kivu regions following the extension of the L3 to cover these provinces in October 2017. The programmatic focus of the exercise is on the education and child protection sectors, with some attention to other sectors when relevant.

At the beginning of the crisis in 2016, UNICEF DRC and the entire United Nations family were experiencing a period of funding shortages due to donor fatigue and a sense of unpredictability linked to the postponement of the presidential elections. While the CO was already in emergency mode, the L3 declaration required an organization-wide mobilization to address the scale of the emergency. Subsequently, UNICEF advocated with other

**\* Please note that *all* Annexes are in a separate document.**

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 'Democratic Republic of the Congo Humanitarian Response Plan 2017-2019', OCHA, Geneva, December 2017. <[www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/maj\\_drc\\_hrp\\_2018\\_fr.pdf](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/maj_drc_hrp_2018_fr.pdf)>, accessed 11.06/2019. [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/maj\\_drc\\_hrp\\_2018\\_fr.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/maj_drc_hrp_2018_fr.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.3.

United Nations agencies for a system-wide L3 activation through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) to further raise the profile of the Kasai crisis and mobilize additional resources. In October 2017, a system-wide L3 activation<sup>3</sup> was duly declared and expanded to include Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces. At the time of the evaluation mission (October 2018), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) were the only two agencies that still had an active L3 in the three regions/provinces.

## Purpose, objectives and scope

The purpose of the evaluation is to contribute to UNICEF efforts to support the affected population in DRC by providing an impartial assessment of the organization's response to the crisis. Given the protracted nature of the crisis (initial L3 activation in August 2017, with a renewal until end February 2019), the evaluation is also forward-looking and takes due consideration of the humanitarian-development nexus.

In terms of learning, the evaluation findings will inform future emergency programmes in the country and in the region, and eventually guide management decisions and adjustments for the upcoming country programme as well as the mid-term review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. The evaluation also aims to review of the involvement of the regional office (RO) and headquarters (HQ) and offer additional learning for the entire organization. Additionally, this evaluation makes recommendations intended to improve the UNICEF response on the ground.

The evaluation also contributes to accountability to affected populations, the Government of DRC and donors. The exercise has strived

to attain a balanced judgement of UNICEF performance in light of existing constraints (limited financial resources, logistic and security hurdles, low capacity of government and partners, etc.) and with a view to advocating for organizational change.

To achieve the evaluation purpose, the key objectives of the evaluation as per the terms of reference (ToR) are:

- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response adequately identified and met the needs of the affected population while prioritizing the most deprived, including from a gender perspective;
- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response to the Kasai, South Kivu and Tanganyika Crisis following the L3 declaration met its stated objectives and produced unintended effects (positive or negative);
- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response addressed the humanitarian-development nexus in a sustainable manner;
- To capture lessons that can be learned and identify good practices for L3 emergency settings.

The evaluation covers the period from the L3 declaration (August 2017) until the evaluation implementation dates (October 2018). In terms of sectoral analysis, although UNICEF provides a multisectoral L3 response, the evaluation focuses on assessing the response in education and child protection. The evaluation also includes an analysis of internal processes (e.g. administration, finance, human resources, supply) and how these and other organizational/structural aspects, as well as coordination with other actors, have

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<sup>3</sup> The IASC system-wide L3, however, expired on 20 April 2018 and has not been extended. For more details see: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-transformative-agenda/content/iasc-protocol-1-humanitarian-system-wide-scale-activation> .

supported or constrained the response. The geographic scope of the evaluation includes all L3 regions in the Kasais and South Kivu (see the maps of visited regions in Annex 5). Tanganyika has been included in the data collection through an online survey.

## Methodology and approach

The RTHE approach prioritizes timeliness and usefulness, emphasizing the learning component in order to allow the evaluation findings to inform the ongoing response. In addition, the evaluation used a naturalistic methodology<sup>4</sup> drawing upon a mix of data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) and drawing upon several sources, including document review, key informant interviews, an online survey with wide range of stakeholders, field site visits, direct observations, and more than 42 focus groups discussions with beneficiaries, communities and the affected population. The evaluation also adopted a Theory of Change (ToC) approach to further investigate the achievement of results for each of the two sectoral interventions evaluated (education and child protection). The evaluation questions were derived from the information gathered during the scoping phase, and were informed by three overarching questions, namely: Is UNICEF doing the right things? Is UNICEF doing things right? And what can we learn from it?

Several criteria were used to analyse the data and observations made, including the criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC) and the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP).

These included preparedness, connectedness, coverage, gender and human rights, coordination, appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency and lessons learned. The choice of criteria was motivated by the evaluation questions which were informed by key stakeholders' information needs.

The evaluation was affected by both methodological constraints and operational limitations, which influenced the overall management of the exercise and its timeliness. However, these did not prevent compliance with the objectives of the evaluation thanks to the support received from UNICEF and the efforts of the evaluation team.

Finally, the evaluation has followed an ethical approach guided by the principles of ethical research in involving children and relevant standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group.

## ● Key findings

**Preparedness:** *To what extent were appropriate preparedness measures in place in DRC CO, facilitating an adequate, timely and effective response?*

Preparedness arrangements and field-level capacity before the crisis were weak, and no contingency plans existed. This can be attributed to two main factors: UNICEF DRC was in the midst of a comprehensive downsizing process, during which decreasing attention was dedicated to preparedness, and there was an over-reliance on the rapid response to population movements (RRMP) mechanism for immediate response, further exacerbated by donor reluctant to fund broader preparedness and contingency efforts.

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<sup>4</sup> Rubin, Blanche, 'Naturalistic Evaluation: Its tenets and application,' *Studies in Art Education*, vol. 24, no. 1 (1982), pp. 57-62.

**Connectedness:** *To what extent has the UNICEF response addressed both the immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?*

Limited preparedness capacity is coupled with the lack of clear planning for the transition phase. Steps to link development programmes with the humanitarian response have been taken, but the lack of an adequate follow-up in the field, financial constraints and the low commitment and capacity of state services have affected the framework for a more structured and sustainable nexus. The evaluation team considers that the L3 response and the central role of UNICEF in DRC were good opportunities to create more ties with development agencies and exploit further the potential link of the RRMP with the transition phase through the programme of expanded assistance to returnees (PEAR+).

**Coverage and gender/human rights:** *To what extent did the UNICEF response meet the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*

UNICEF defined valid vulnerability criteria, especially geographically, and some specific vulnerabilities in the education and protection sectors were targeted in the L3 areas. However, given the financial shortages and operational constraints, in addition to the structural limitations of the affected areas, targets were not defined on the basis of specific vulnerabilities but rather as a proportion of the estimated needs. Through the enhancement of institutional capacities with RO/HQ support, UNICEF managed to better articulate response plans and strategies and scale up capacity by engaging partners and state services. Nevertheless, the response coverage remained relatively moderate compared with the case-load in nutrition, education and protection.

**Gender equality and gender-specific vulnerabilities** have not been addressed in the L3 response. The objective of putting gender dynamics and roles at the centre of programming efforts has not been achieved despite clear organizational policies and strategies on gender. The difficulties in mainstreaming gender are linked to institutional weakness: There are no dedicated gender staff in any of the field offices (FOs), and the planned incorporation of a P4 gender position at country office (CO) level has not yet materialized.

**Coordination:** *To what extent is the intervention harmonized, avoiding gaps and duplications?*

Internal coordination between different levels of the organization was broadly successful and smooth until the L3 crisis was merged with other emergency responses in the country, at which point the focus on the Kasais drastically decreased. Cluster coordination was affected by the challenging context and lack of financial resources; nonetheless, the perception is that UNICEF managed to do a reasonable job within the clusters under its responsibility. However, the CO did not fully utilize the potential support available from the rest of the organization, notwithstanding the L3 simplified standard operating procedures (SSOPs).

**Appropriateness:** *To what extent was the UNICEF response adequate and relevant to the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*

The L3 response, according to 35 per cent of the online survey respondents, has been "partially inadequate". Joint needs assessments have not been timely, in part because of the late system-wide L3 activation. However, the initial alerts and data from the Kasai region came from UNICEF. UNICEF has also shown a significant level of adaptation to changing (or emerging) needs, due to a degree of adaptive planning, also related to the evolution from a

full-blown L3 corporate emergency to a stabilization of the operation and the consequent adaptation to available resources and capacity.

There is potential for UNICEF to improve accountability to affected populations (AAP) in the humanitarian response. Two-way communication and feedback processes between community focal points and UNICEF have been utilized only to a limited extent, and community participation in the response design has remained poor. Complaint mechanisms are still weak. Practices that involve more explicit beneficiary feedback (e.g. third-party monitoring, RapidPro) should be extended, and other options explored to contribute to a more transparent system.

Child protection concerns have been adequately identified, but the intervention strategy has not been able to address root causes and has not provided alternative durable solutions to prevent child rights violations. However, there are positive elements of the design, such as the sensitization activities, the provision of immediate assistance for children in protective transit centres and/or host families, and the proactive identification of needs carried out by the child protection sub-cluster.

For the education sector, the education in emergencies (EiE) package as implemented in this context adequately addresses immediate challenges but is a long way from restoring secure and adequate conditions for education. In the Kasais, the condition of schools was generally substandard before the conflict due to a chronic lack of investment. This would seem to be an opportunity to 'build back better', but in practice this has happened only to a very limited extent.

With regard to integrated sectoral approaches, UNICEF has established links, mainly between water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and nutrition and education. However, protection as a cross-cutting approach has not been

assured in the L3 design. The UNICEF strategy to integrate protection and education activities is very appropriate and adapted to the DRC context, but has been poorly operationalized. Complementarities with other partners have been identified, but this has not resulted in a joint multisectoral response.

**Effectiveness/Efficiency:** *To what extent did the UNICEF response achieve the intended results under the changing circumstances, and did it produce any unintended results?*

The progress toward targets as established in the humanitarian performance monitoring (HPM) system has been significant for most of the planned activities; outputs have been achieved to some extent. Effectiveness in the education sector is affected by the poor standards of the rehabilitation carried out. The support provided has been necessary but not sufficient to reach the result/output. It should be noted, however, that the EiE package has been effective where it has been rolled out, even if some concerns were raised on the limited distribution of school kits and school furniture. The training of teachers has been an effective means to improve their engagement and to upgrade their skills, the benefits of which will be long-term, and partners were able to extend them to more beneficiaries within the same resources (efficiency gains).

Regarding protection, the L3 response has provided a fair immediate response to address child recruitment, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and other child vulnerabilities through temporary holistic assistance, with better results in the Kasai region. Overall, however, progress to targets and toward a protective environment has been limited. Prevention is attempted through advocacy, trainings and sensitization work with communities and security forces, but is poorly followed up after family reunification. The response to gender-based violence has had isolated cases of success, though overall

it has been affected by the limited coverage. Thanks to community networks, many protection cases have been identified and continuity of many aspects of the response has been possible even after project completion.

The activation of the L3 positively influenced the efficiency of the response. Human resources surge in support to the Kasai response was broadly effective, and successfully compounded by the parallel internal re-deployments and re-employments of staff affected by the closure and/or down-sizing of several DRC FOs, an approach which should be recognized as a good practice. The supply response, with consistent support from Supply Division, managed to overcome many of the logistical challenges posed by complexities of the country. Delays in delivery and distribution can be attributed to lack of financial resources, which limited the use of air transport, and to internal glitches linked to miscommunication between Kinshasa and the field. Administrative support to the FOs affected by the crisis was prompt and effective, although many of the administrative and financial simplifications allowed by the L3 activation were not implemented for lack of knowledge and risk aversion.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** *To what extent is the L3 emergency architecture fit-for-purpose, and what are the lessons that can be learned?* The activation by UNICEF of the L3 on 1 August 2017 had some initial positive effects, notably the immediate access to funds, the utilization of the fast-track recruitment process (FTRP), the prompt corporate supply response and the formalization of overall smooth coordination structures and processes between different levels of the organization. However, the implementation of the L3 SSOPs was not comprehensive: the human resources (HR) surge response was not utilized to its maximum extent (especially for cluster coordination), the simplification of administrative processes was

not implemented (largely due to risk aversion and lack of knowledge) and some COs refused to release staff to support the response.

Innovative approaches and monitoring adjustments have helped to gather information from inaccessible areas and to monitor partner performance but have not significantly contributed to a successful and adapted response. Good practices have been identified that could inform other emergencies in the region or globally. Unfortunately, these are not sufficiently documented or capitalized upon.

## ● Key conclusions

**Objective 1:** *To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response addressed the humanitarian-development nexus in a sustainable manner (preparedness, connectedness).*

Limited attention to preparedness and the unclear formulation of a transitional phase have limited the opportunities to integrate in a sustainable manner the humanitarian-development nexus. The recent launch and roll-out of the new Emergency Preparedness Platform (EPP) and the current challenges to continue financing the RRMP offer the CO the opportunity to revisit its broad preparedness and immediate response strategy for the country. At the same time, the growing donor interest in funding transitional programmes should motivate the development of a (joint) fund-raising strategy to attract longer-term funds.

**Objective 2:** *To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response adequately identified and met the needs of the affected population, while prioritizing the most deprived first, from a gender perspective (coverage, gender and human rights, coordination, appropriateness).*

A number of factors have hindered the adequate identification and coverage of needs of the affected population. UNICEF has been

able to manage constraints relatively well: ensuring links with the government while maintaining independence and strengthening local capacities, making regular programmatic readjustments to cover the greatest possible needs, and addressing constraints around insecurity and lack of access by wisely engaging local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities in the identification and data-gathering on specific needs. Also, UNICEF initiatives to undertake preliminary needs assessments and promote a response among humanitarian actors through the clusters are examples of good leadership and commitment. Despite these positive steps, the achievement of Objective 2 has been modest. Progress toward targets has been positive, but the estimated needs are far from being covered, which, in the DRC context, becomes a question of how to better connect the humanitarian assistance with development assistance and goals. Indeed, the lack of an early recovery response has affected the attainment of outcomes and calls into question the appropriateness of the response actions over time.

**Objective 3:** *To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response to the Kasai, South Kivu and Tanganyika Crisis since the L3 declaration met its stated objectives and produced unintended effects (positive or negative) (effectiveness, efficiency).*

The response has not met all its stated objectives, and the education and child protection interventions have not been as effective and efficient as intended, due in large part to operational constraints. UNICEF has recently applied innovative operational approaches that deserve recognition, even if the effects of these measures are not yet visible.

**Objective 4:** *To capture lessons that can be learned and identify good practices for L3 emergency settings.*

The central role of UNICEF in the country (multisectoral expertise, humanitarian/development mandate, RRMP management, cluster leadership) could have served to further promote joint integrated programmes and joint fundraising with other actors with a view toward early recovery.

The monitoring system in general needs improvement to better assess and monitor progress of the response and help deliver better on AAP. Overall, UNICEF DRC should reflect on the internal factors affecting the efficiency of its monitoring function, having harmonized tools and mechanisms.

To summarize, UNICEF has designed education and child protection intervention packages for the L3 response that are comprehensive and adequate. However, these packages lack a strong gender approach and are not fully adapted to the circumstances, which include scarce financing and the short-term conditions inherent to an L3 situation. Additionally, due to the limited attention to preparedness and transition, there have been limited opportunities to integrate humanitarian and development programme components. Overall, UNICEF has probably been too ambitious. The agency has not been able to fully implement some of the activities, and there has been limited monitoring of results. This has brought into question the intervention strategy – in particular the ambitious scope of planned activities in the education and child protection response within limited resources. Better planning and leveraging of partnerships, not only to attract donor interest and funding but to contribute to outcomes, seems essential in DRC. There is also important work to do in order to capitalize on all the accumulated knowledge, exchange good practices among L3 regions and inform other emergency responses in the region or globally. UNICEF has great potential to carry out improvements in its response.

## Recommendations

Priority 1: Immediate	
Priority 2: Short-term	

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
1	<p>To help attract longer-term funds:</p> <p><b>1.1</b> Develop a multi-year resource mobilization strategy with an objective to secure predictable and longer-term funding for implementation of priorities outlined in the country programme document (CPD) and the Humanitarian Action for Children report (HAC).<sup>5</sup></p> <p><b>1-2.</b> Develop a narrative and key message that provides linkages between the HAC and CPD in support of resource mobilization, advocacy and communication plan.</p>	<p>5.1 Preparedness (EQ P1 /Findings 1-3)</p> <p>5.8 Efficiency (EQ EFY2 /"Grand Bargain" subchapter)</p>	<p>Country representative; Support from RO and HQ.</p>
2	<p>Clarify the roles and accountabilities of CO staff with respect of preparedness and EPP requirements. The application of the EPP (defining prepositioning, contingency stocks and stand-by partners per FO) should be inspired by, and complementary to, the RRMP.<sup>6</sup></p> <p><b>2-1</b> Develop/update a CO accountability framework that will clarify the roles and accountabilities of staff, including in the field, with respect to preparedness and as per the EPP requirements.</p> <p><b>2-2</b> Significantly develop the capacity of staff – both programme and operations – in emergency preparedness as per the EPP.</p>	<p>5.1 Preparedness (EQ P1 /Findings 1-3)</p> <p>5.8 Efficiency (EQ EFY2 /Findings 63, 65)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative/ Chief of Field Operations</p>
3	<p>To better address the humanitarian-development nexus:</p> <p><b>3.1.</b> Adopt longer-term risk-informed humanitarian-development strategy, in accordance with UNICEF procedures and linked to Recommendation 1 above.</p> <p><b>3-2.</b> Engage with partners during key planning processes and devote significant attention to long-term results and strategies.</p>	<p>Connectedness (EQ C2 /Findings 7, 8, 10)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative/ Chief of Field Operations</p>

<sup>5</sup> This recommendation is in line with Recommendations 1 and 6 from the 2018 UNICEF evaluation of the RRMP. Rec. 1: "In line with HCT first multi-year strategy adopted in 2017 and Grand Bargain commitments, advocate to donors for multi-year funding that would allow for better prepositioning of partners and supplies as well as the transition from humanitarian to development programming and resilience-building (including support/follow-up activities)". And Rec. 6: "Advocate to donors for a specific share of humanitarian and/or development funding for recovery or transition (including follow-up support) to address the funding gap in transition between the humanitarian and development programming nexus and to achieve the collective outcomes." United Nations Children's Fund, 'Evaluation of the Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP) Mechanism based on Performance,' UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, October 2018, p.9.

<sup>6</sup> The application of the EPP and its platform (effective from March 2018):

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
4	<p>In order to seek complementarities with partners with a view to enhancing integrated transitional/resilience programmes:</p> <p><b>4-1</b> Advocate for a joint nutrition/education programme to be integrated with the WFP school feeding programme, which is expected to be scaled up and implemented in the three Kasai regions in coordination with government.</p>	Connectedness (EQ C2 /Findings 7, 8, 10)	UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative, with Chief of Education and Chief of Nutrition
5	<p>Reinforcing a cross-cutting gender perspective would help to harmonize and cross-fertilize specific gender issues within the planning and response of each sector and globally. Some institutional and programmatic measures are recommended for an enhanced gender perspective:</p> <p><b>5-1</b> Ensure gender analyses are conducted and fully integrated in the response plans.</p> <p><b>5-2</b> Education programme: (i) introduce preschool programmes to care for younger boys and girls; (ii) provide hygienic kits and support for menstruating girls (exploring possible synergies with the United Nations Population Fund).</p> <p><b>5-3</b> Child protection programme: (i) for the gender-based violence response, build on the experience of the CAMPS initiative of providing conditional support to women arriving at health centres before 72 hours; (ii) address the low participation of girls in child-friendly spaces, especially of girls with menstruation pain, pregnant girls or young mothers, through the provision of hygienic kits and the establishment of a creche for the care of babies; (iii) include more gender-based violence aspects in child protection (CP) training/sensitization activities and CP campaigns.</p>	<p>Gender section (EQ GE&amp;HR1 and EQ GE&amp;HR2/ Findings 16-19)</p> <p>Coverage (EQ CV1/Finding 13)</p> <p>Appropriateness (EQ A3/"adaptation of strategies" subchapter)</p> <p>Effectiveness section (EQ EFT1 / narrative on Table 9 and Table 10)</p>	UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative
6	<p>Address the programme monitoring weaknesses identified by:</p> <p><b>6-1</b> Establishing a monitoring strategy that includes regular field visits to assess implementation and measure progress toward results.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Consider expanding the RapidProSMS or similar technology within other sectoral response.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Ensure a systematic approach of community engagement through routinely collecting, analysing and using monitoring information to gauge community satisfaction with the appropriateness and effectiveness of the response.</p>	<p>Lessons learned section (EQ LL2/M&amp;E subchapter)</p> <p>Appropriateness section (EQ A3 / AAP subchapter)</p>	UNICEF DRC Chief of Planning and Monitoring
7	<b>7.1</b> Given the inter-agency review of the humanitarian architecture, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) to incorporate the experiences and lessons learned from the utilization of the L3 approach in DRC.	Efficiency/ L3 procedures/ Connectedness/ Lessons Learned	UNICEF HQ EMOPS
8	<b>8.1</b> UNICEF DRC Supply Section to expand its sourcing base in Kinshasa and other locations, especially in the field, in order to extend its network of local procurement and long-term agreements (LTAs) for contingency and immediate response.	5.8 Efficiency (EFY1 /Findings 58-60)	UNICEF DRC Chief of Supply

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
9	<p>In order to improve the education emergency response (including taking into account the experience in South Kivu), implement a transition plan that includes:</p> <p><b>9.1</b> A comprehensive EiE intervention package, including catch-up courses, in targeted schools;</p> <p><b>9.2</b> A review of what has been implemented so far and the establishment of a strategy that consolidates the interventions to date, ensures standards for rehabilitation and WASH, provides furniture and links teacher training with quality improvement of education for children in a crisis environment;</p> <p><b>9.3</b> In the case of the Kasais, building on the opportunity to define a solid 'build back better' strategy, raising standards of targeted schools to contextually acceptable levels;</p> <p><b>9.4</b> Advocating for the promotion of the inclusion of schools with damaged structures in the <i>Projet de Réhabilitation et de Reconstruction des Infrastructures Scolaires</i> (PRRIS) within the Annual workplans and;</p> <p><b>9.5</b> A promotion of schools as the entry point for convergence of programmes (health, nutrition, hygienic practices, communications for development (C4D), WASH and protection), building on Benchmark 4 of the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies for education.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>Appropriateness section (EQ A2/ Finding 32 and EQ A4 /Findings 41-43)</p> <p>Coverage (EQ CV1 / Findings 11-14)</p> <p>Effectiveness (EQ EFT1 / Findings 44-48)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Chief of Education</p>
10	<p>To improve CP programming:</p> <p><b>10.1</b> Strengthen and expand community networks (RECOPE, churches, parents) through reinforced CP training/sensitization activities and monitoring, and through the creation of (individual and community-based) incentives and/or conditional support for the identification and monitoring of child protection cases (including post-reunification monitoring).</p> <p><b>10.2</b> Contribute proactively through the CP working group and within the protection cluster to develop a global referral system in order to avoid situations where specific protection cases are identified but not targeted/supported by any protection actor.</p> <p><b>10.3</b> Advocate with donors and development partners in order to find synergies for an integrated child protection-education approach to ensure school reintegration for children associated with armed forces and groups, UASC and other vulnerable children.</p>	<p>Effectiveness (EQ EFT1 /Findings 51, 53, 54, 56, 57)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Chief of Child Protection</p>

<sup>7</sup> CCCs, Benchmark 4: 'All education-related humanitarian response integrates appropriate psychosocial, health and nutritional interventions'. United Nations Children's Fund, 'Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action', UNICEF, New York, 2010.

# 1

## BACKGROUND



This evaluation of the UNICEF Level 3 response (L3) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was commissioned by the UNICEF Evaluation Office (EO) in New York. As expressed in the Terms of Reference (ToR) (Annex 1), this evaluation utilizes the 'Rapid and Timely Humanitarian Evaluation' (RTHE) approach, an innovative and evolving approach developed by the EO. The RTHE approach prioritizes the process and learning associated with the L3 evaluation as much as the evaluation findings. The structure of the report is designed to comply with the UNICEF Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS) requirements.

# 2

## EVALUATION OBJECT AND CONTEXT



## 2.1. Object of the evaluation

The object of this evaluation is the UNICEF response to the humanitarian crisis in the Kasai region (Kasai, Kasai Central and Kasai Oriental) of DRC following the declaration on 1 August 2017 of a Level 3 crisis in accordance with the UNICEF corporate emergency activation procedure (CEAP). The evaluation also covers the response in Tanganyika and South Kivu regions following the extension of the L3 to cover these provinces in October 2017. The programmatic focus of the exercise is on the education and child protection sectors, with some attention to other sectors when relevant.

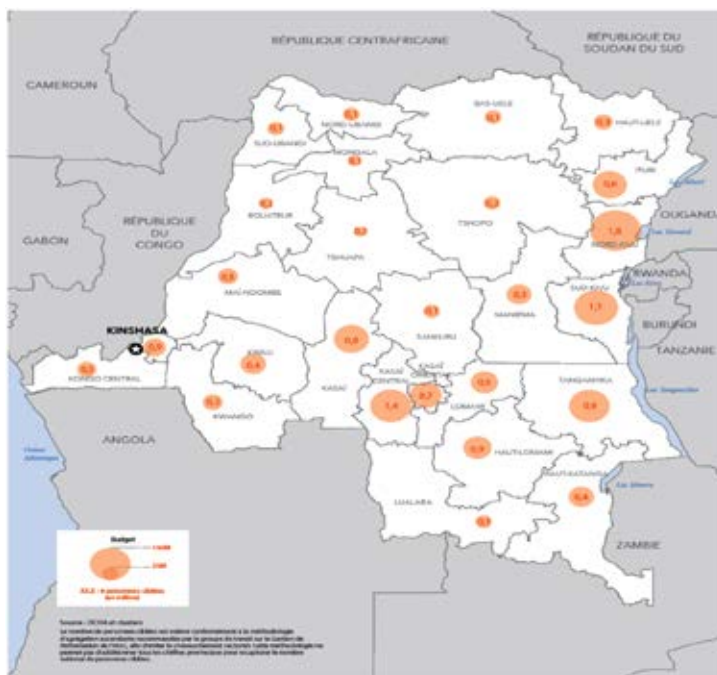
According to the CEAP, the declaration of a Level 3 emergency is necessary when “the scale of the emergency is such that an organization-wide mobilization is called for.”<sup>8</sup> Criteria used in the decision are: scale, urgency, complexity, capacity and reputational risk for UNICEF/the United Nations. Following the declaration of an L3, a set of simplified standard operating procedures (SSOPs) are expected to be undertaken at all levels of the organization according to a strict timetable: first 24 hours, first 48 hours, first week, etc.<sup>9</sup> The evaluation therefore covers the UNICEF response following the activation of these corporate emergency procedures through to the period during which the evaluation was conducted (October 2018).

## 2.2. Democratic Republic of Congo<sup>10</sup>

### 2.2.1 Operational Context

Despite the formal end of armed conflict in the DRC in 1994, the country has continued to experience a multitude of new crises, the magnitude and complexity of which have increased over time. The majority of the population continues to live in precarious conditions, making it vulnerable to shocks caused by internal conflicts, tensions in neighbouring countries, epidemics and natural disasters. In 2018, DRC had an estimated population of more than 94 million people, of whom 13.1 million were in humanitarian need, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

**Map 1: Democratic Republic of Congo – Estimated targeted population (OCHA 2018)<sup>11</sup>**



<sup>8</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Corporate Emergency Activation Procedure (CEAP) and Simplified Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs) for Level 3 Emergencies’, UNICEF, New York, 2015 (CF/EXD/2011-001).

<sup>9</sup> L3 SSOPs

<sup>10</sup> A timeline of relevant key events is presented in Annex 4.

<sup>11</sup> DRC Humanitarian Response Plan.

Armed violence linked to political tensions broke out in the Kasai region of central DRC in August 2016, triggering an initial displacement of 1.4 million people, often in difficult-to-reach areas.<sup>12</sup> Hundreds of schools were destroyed, and children were being enrolled in armed groups.

In June 2017, UNICEF reported that 2,000 people had been killed in ethnically-inspired violence in Kasai province, where numerous mass graves were found.<sup>13</sup> By 31 October 2017, this had led to the displacement of more than 2.5 million people, which represented more than half of the 4.1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) across the country.<sup>14</sup> The capacity of local authorities to respond was extremely low, and in some cases influenced by ethnic and political affiliation.

The crisis in the Kasais added to the already dire situation in the rest of the country. According to the Humanitarian Response Plan, 2017-2019 (HRP), in 2018, more than 16.6 million people in the DRC were affected by different crises. Among these, more than 13.1 million needed humanitarian assistance, including 6.8 million IDPs, 658,692 returnees and 418,417 host communities, and 7.9 million children (4.12 million girls and 3.8 million boys). The number of children in need of protection and humanitarian assistance represented an increase of 50 per cent compared to 2017.

UNICEF carried out a preliminary assessment in some of the areas affected by the Kasai crisis in November 2016, and began implementing some emergency interventions, including a cash transfer project, in the following weeks. The process to activate a Rapid Response to Population Movements (RRMP) for the Kasai region began with a preliminary assessment in December 2016. Initial interventions through the UNICEF Alternative Response to Communities in Crisis (ARCC) programme started in March 2017, while discussions for new RRMP partnerships (programme cooperation agreements, or PCAs) began in June 2017. The RRMP was formally activated in September of the same year, prior to the L3 activation.

On 1 August 2017, the UNICEF L3 was formally triggered for the humanitarian crisis in the Kasai region. Following an additional increase in violence and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in the Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces, in the east of the country, a system-wide L3 was activated in October 2017, and UNICEF expanded the coverage of its emergency response to these areas.

From the beginning, security and logistics hurdles in the affected areas, and the consequent limits to humanitarian access, left a dearth of information on numbers and precise locations of the beneficiaries. Notwithstanding some initial assessments, these weaknesses affected the design of the initial interventions and the reliability of the response plans subsequently developed.

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<sup>12</sup> 'Displaced Children Tell of Suffering in DRC's Kasai', UNHCR media centre, 8 September, 2017, <[www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2017/9/59b28e7a4/displaced-children-tell-suffering-drcs-kasai.html](http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2017/9/59b28e7a4/displaced-children-tell-suffering-drcs-kasai.html)>, accessed 11.06.2019.

<sup>13</sup> 'UN: 2,000 Children Used by Militias in Congo', *Financial Tribune*, 22 April, 2017, <[financialtribune.com/articles/international/62903/un-2000-children-used-by-militias-in-congo](http://financialtribune.com/articles/international/62903/un-2000-children-used-by-militias-in-congo)>, accessed 11.06.2019.

<sup>14</sup> 'Democratic Republic of Congo profile – Timeline', *BBC*, 10 January 2019, <[www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13286306](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13286306)>, accessed 11.06.2019.

## 2.2.2 Organizational context

The UNICEF DRC country office (CO) has long been engaged with different types of emergencies (conflict, displacement, epidemics, natural disasters, etc.). Some of its field offices (FOs) in the east (Goma, Bukavu, Bunia) have been at the centre of multiple humanitarian crises for more than 20 years. In 2004, the CO was the first to develop a Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) – subsequently re-named RRMP – to respond to sudden crises and displacements of people. Strong emergency response capacities were traditionally available within the CO and FOs, and with the exception of the worst phases, the country needed only limited support from the rest of the organization to react to humanitarian crises.

At the beginning of the Kasai crisis, in 2016, the DRC CO was experiencing a period of funding shortages. Different financial tracking systems indicate that emergency funding shortages affected the entire Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) (see Figure 1, page 22). According to several UNICEF and external respondents, this was due to donor fatigue and a sense of unpredictability linked to the postponement of the presidential elections.

Table 1 below presents the overall financial situation of UNICEF DRC from 2016-2018, and shows an evident reduction of Other Resources Emergency (ORE) and Other Resources Regular (ORR).<sup>15</sup>

According to the OCHA financial tracking service (FTS), the overall flow of humanitarian funding for the HCT in the DRC increased in 2017, and almost doubled the following year, due to the sudden nature and scale of the Kasai crisis. This can be explained by the much higher requirements for 2018, to which the Kasai L3 partially contributed.

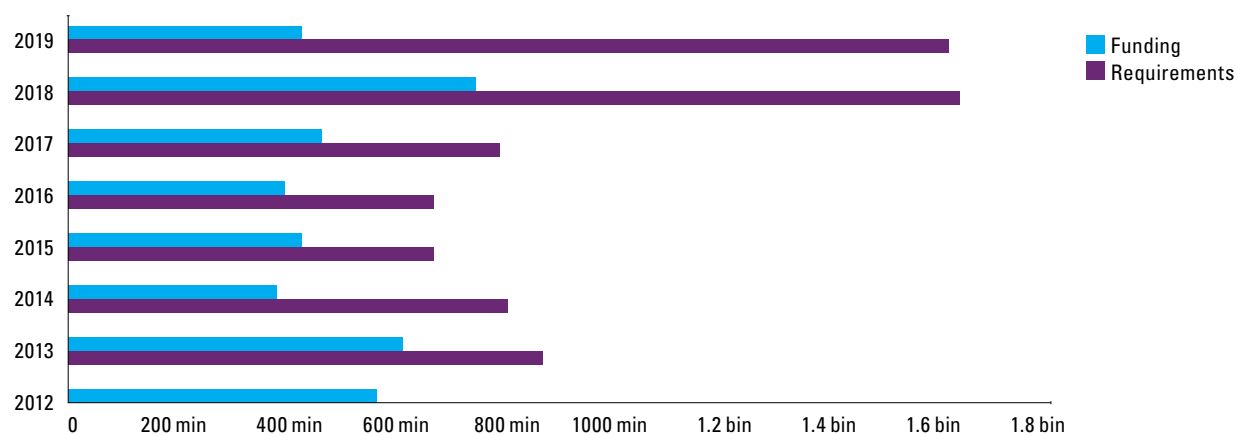
While UNICEF emergency response activities began before the activation of the L3, the latter required the scaling up of some of its operations. To a certain extent, there was continuity in the L3 response with some of the activities that began before the L3 activation. The response plans developed at various levels of the organization (HQ, RO and CO) soon after the activation became the core planning and programming tools guiding the organization's response, and a key reference for the evaluation. It should be noted that no formal theory of change was developed for the L3 response.

**Table 1: UNICEF DRC programme budget analysis**

Overall Programme Budget Analysis (in thousands of USD)												
Resources	2016				2017				2018			
	RR	ORR	ORE	TOTAL	RR	ORR	ORE	TOTAL	RR	ORR	ORE	TOTAL
<b>Planned</b>	63	108	130	238	62	130	165	295	62	115	268	383
<b>Allocated</b>	63	123	46	169	65.3	97	41	138	59	118	77	195
<b>Gap</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>188</b>

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'DRC Structural Review', Powerpoint presentation, UNICEF DRC October 17, 2018, revised and updated based on data received from CO for Sept. 2018.

**Figure 1: DRC humanitarian funding requirements versus funding received, 2012-2019**



**Stacked bar chart comparing requirements and funding by year**

**Source:** <https://data.humdata.org/dataset/fts-requirements-and-funding-data-for-congo-the-democratic-republic-of-the>

The main system-level initiatives and the internal organizational measures undertaken by UNICEF to respond to the Kasai crisis before the L3 activation include: the acquisition of a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) contribution from OCHA to initialize education and child protection interventions; some reallocation of funding provided by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) as agreed by the donor; the establishment of a specific RRMP for the Kasais with the support of staff from other FOs; and finally, the adoption, despite the challenges to shift into emergency mode, of a risk-informed programming (RIP) approach to revise the programme and adapt the development budget to the expanding crisis.

With the activation of the L3, operational activities started and/or were expanded within all programmatic sectors, including education, child protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), nutrition, health, as well as non-food item (NFI)/shelter and multipurpose cash-based assistance. The child protection and education interventions

carried out after the activation of the L3 are the focus of the evaluation. Below is a summary of the implementation activities contained in these packages.

**EDUCATION L3 PACKAGE:** Access to quality education and psychosocial activities for girls and boys (5-11 years) affected by conflict or natural disasters; provision of learning materials for school-aged boys and girls (5 to 11 years) affected by crisis; classroom rehabilitation; training for teachers on learner-centred methodologies, peace education, conflict/disaster risk reduction (C/DRR), and psychosocial support.

**CHILD PROTECTION L3 PACKAGE:** Provision of temporary assistance for children released from/formerly associated with armed forces/groups (CAAFAG); identification of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and placement in alternative care arrangements; family reunification; safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning for internally displaced, refugee and returnee children; provision of a comprehensive response for identified survivors of sexual violence.

# 3

## EVALUATION PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE



### 3.1. Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to contribute to UNICEF efforts to support the affected population in DRC by providing an impartial assessment of the organization's response to the crisis. Given the protracted nature of the crisis (initial L3 activation in August 2017, with a renewal until end February 2019), the evaluation takes due consideration of the humanitarian-development nexus.

In terms of learning, the evaluation findings will inform future emergency programmes in the country and the region, and eventually guide management decisions and adjustments for the upcoming country programme as well as the mid-term review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. The evaluation also aims to review the involvement of the RO and HQ and to offer additional learning for the entire organization. Additionally, this evaluation recommends changes to further improve the ongoing response.

The evaluation also contributes to accountability to affected populations (AAP), the Government of DRC and donors. The exercise has strived to attain a balanced judgement of UNICEF performance in light of existing constraints (limited financial resources, logistic and security hurdles, low capacity of government and partners, etc.) and with a view to advocating for organizational change.

### 3.2. Evaluation objectives

To achieve the evaluation purpose, the key objectives of the evaluation as per the ToR are:

- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response adequately identified and met the needs of the affected population while prioritizing the most deprived, including from a gender perspective;

- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response to the Kasai, South Kivu and Tanganyika Crisis following the L3 declaration met its stated objectives and produced unintended effects (positive or negative);
- To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response addressed the humanitarian-development nexus in a sustainable manner;
- To capture lessons that can be learned and identify good practices for L3 emergency settings.

### 3.3. Evaluation scope

The evaluation covers the period from the L3 declaration (August 2017) until the evaluation implementation dates (October 2018). In order to produce a fair assessment of UNICEF results, the evaluation also includes an analysis of internal processes (e.g. administration, finance, human resources, supply) and how these and other organizational/structural aspects, as well as coordination with other actors, have supported or constrained the response. Finally, the evaluation also considers the extent to which external contextual factors (e.g. limited funding, security, logistical access, lack of government support, low response capacity among partners) may have constrained the response.

In terms of sectoral analysis, although UNICEF provides a multisectoral L3 response, the evaluation focuses on assessing the response against targeted activities, outputs, and indicators in the education and child protection sectors only, as requested by the DRC CO, since these interventions are top sectoral priorities in UNICEF response plans. For assessing the linkage between both types of interventions, the evaluation gives attention to the

UNICEF DRC joint child protection-education strategy, developed in response to emergencies in 2017. The analysis also considers cross-sectoral aspects such as gender, human rights and monitoring systems.

The geographical scope of the evaluation includes all L3 regions in Kasai (provinces of Kasai, Kasai Central and Kasai Oriental) and South Kivu (see the maps of visited regions in Annex 5). Tanganyika is also an L3 location and has been included in the data collection through an online survey, as agreed with the EO and CO during the inception phase.<sup>16</sup> While the analysis evaluates the UNICEF education and child protection responses across the L3 regions globally, it also highlights key regional specificities when relevant.

### 3.4. Evaluation audience

The **primary audience** for this evaluation is the management team of UNICEF DRC and its staff, including in FOs, which are at the forefront of the response. The secondary audience includes the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), the immediate response teams that were involved in the response, and HQ entities including the Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS), Programme Division (PD) and Supply Division (SD). Other users include donors, government partners, cluster lead agencies (CLAs) and cluster coordinators, OCHA and other humanitarian and development agencies and organizations (local, national and international), and ultimately the affected population.



For a more detailed presentation of the intended users and their specific role and interest in/for the evaluation, see the stakeholder analysis in Annex 6 (and in the inception report).

<sup>16</sup> The key reasons for not visiting Tanganyika are that: (i) the region had recently been included in another external evaluation of the UNICEF RRMP mechanism; (ii) the logistical difficulties in visiting three regions and; (iii) the priority to keep a focused geographical scope and analysis given the particular interest placed in the three Kasais as expressed in the ToR and by the EO/CO.

# 4

## METHODOLOGY



## 4.1. Evaluation questions and approach

The specific evaluation questions listed below are based on the information needs and key criteria of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC) as well as other criteria specific to the evaluation of humanitarian action developed by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP), namely: preparedness, connectedness, coverage, gender and human rights, coordination, appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency and lessons learned. To achieve the evaluation objectives, the evaluation was broken down into seven key evaluation questions and nineteen sub-questions.

- *To what extent were appropriate preparedness measures in place in DRC CO, facilitating an adequate, timely and effective response?*
- *To what extent did the UNICEF response address both the immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?*
- *To what extent did the UNICEF response meet the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*
- *To what extent is the intervention harmonized, avoiding gaps and duplications?*
- *To what extent was the UNICEF response adequate and relevant to the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*
- *To what extent did the UNICEF response achieve the intended results under the changing circumstances, and did it produce any unintended results?*
- *To what extent is the L3 emergency architecture fit-for-purpose, and what are the lessons that can be learned?*

To answer these questions and sub questions (see ToRs in Annex 1), the evaluation uses a naturalistic approach, consisting of using both quantitative and qualitative data. The sub-evaluation questions can be found in the evaluation matrix (Annex 2) and in the structure of the findings section itself.

## 4.2. Evaluation approach<sup>17</sup>

As noted above, this evaluation utilizes the RTHE approach. Concretely, this involves (a) combining the inception phase with the in-country fact-finding phase, (b) having a staff member from EO embedded as a team member, and (c) delivering the first draft report within six months of contracting.

The evaluation has also employed a **naturalistic approach**, which consists of three key phases, namely, the familiarization phase, the data collection phase and the synthesis phase.<sup>18</sup> The familiarization phase is concerned with understanding the subject matter, identifying key issues and developing the data collection tools and overall approach to the evaluation. The data collection phase includes non-intrusive data collection methods such as review of documentation and secondary sources as well as key informant interviews (KIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and online surveys with a wide range of

<sup>17</sup> The methodology foreseen in the ToRs and approved at inception phase could not be operationalized due to inadequate planning; a naturalistic approach was then considered.

<sup>18</sup> Rubin, 'Naturalistic Evaluation'.

stakeholders and community members. The synthesis phase focuses on providing a final presentation of programme performance based on the analysis of the previous phases. The analysis aims to obtain evidence in order to respond to the evaluation questions and understand how processes contributed to the intended and unintended results. For the sectoral evaluation, the analysis has interrogated the logic of both education and child protection interventions, and reviewed the intervention using the Theory of Change (ToC) approach in order to test hypotheses, identify key risks and determine relevant causal explanations to the extent possible. The sectoral ToCs are presented on page 30 (Section 4.4.) and have been developed and tested during data collection. Two additional charts are presented in Annex 3 to give a more precise picture of the intended activities and final outcomes contained in the intervention packages.

In addition to the ToC approach for the two priority sectors, the **analytical framework** combines the OECD/DAC criteria with a number of other relevant benchmarks and minimum standards, including the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs), the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) standards, the Minimum Standards for Child Protection and the Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies, as well as other recommendations from the global education and protection clusters, all of which played a key role in assessing the timeliness and the overall performance of the response. The CCCs, in particular,

represent important corporate commitments against which the L3 interventions have been assessed, including the human rights-based approach, cluster leadership and participation, impartiality and neutrality, 'do no harm', and managing for results – especially with regard to preparedness, early recovery and advocacy.

### 4.3. Data Analysis, collection tools and methods

Several data collection tools were utilized. Consistent with the naturalistic approach, the information collected was mainly qualitative. To the extent possible, quantitative data were also gathered at the field level and later during the reporting phase.

**Desk review:** The evaluation has ensured a structured desk review of the relevant documents made available by UNICEF prior to and during the data collection mission. The documents were reviewed against the evaluation criteria, questions and sub-questions defined in the evaluation matrix.

**Field data collection:** The team spent one month in the field, with a brief inception phase in Kinshasa followed by travel to the Kasai and South Kivu regions. A purposive sampling approach for the selection of sites was applied during the inception phase and accordingly, a list of criteria for site selection was produced by the team, against which a list of sites proposed by the CO was vetted. See Map 2 for sites location.



- Online interviews with UNICEF staff from HQ, RO and Copenhagen (see the list of people met in Annex 7 and the KII guide in Annex 8).
- Online survey (92 respondents) conducted for UNICEF staff and implementing partners (HQ, RO, CO, Kananga FOs, Tshikapa, Mbuji-Mayi, Bukavu and Kalemie) (see the survey results in Annex 9).
- Field visits of child protection and education activities.
- 42 FGDs with beneficiaries of child protection and education activities in Kasai and South Kivu (groups of fathers, mothers, teachers, parent committees, service providers, community child protection networks, animators of child-friendly spaces; see FGD composition and visited activities in Annex 10 and the FGD guides in Annex 11). The team conducted FGDs in the following areas:
  - Central Kasai (Kananga): Kaswiyi, Mbumba, Nganza, Kaloka, Bukonde.
  - Kasai (Tshikapa): Kamajiba, Muyombo, Kamalenga.
  - Kasai Oriental (Mbuji-Mayi): Bena Lubashi, Miabi, Boya, Kabeya Kamuanga.
  - South Kivu: Makobobola, Mboko, Sebele, Baraka, Lusenda.

## 4.4. Data analysis

Throughout the different phases of the evaluation process, the team undertook analysis as follows.

**Inception phase:** The evaluation team set out the scope of the analysis and the evaluation methodology discussed and agreed by UNICEF. The methodology contained an evaluation matrix, a stakeholder analysis, data collection tools and methods, limitations and mitigating measures.

**Field phase:** The team tested the methodology in-country and validated or rejected key assumptions, risks and pathways of changes through the various data collection tools and methods described in the section 4.3. The evaluation team gathered all qualitative data in an internal tool called “observations matrix” to identify response categories and patterns, and to elucidate emergent themes and contextual factors. All data have been disaggregated by location and activity sector to capture differing perspectives or experiences among the groups and compare stakeholder perceptions. Emerging evidence and initial findings were discussed with the CO and FOs through informal debriefings in each site and in a formal final presentation in Goma.

The analysis of the sectoral responses has attempted to provide clarity on:

- Why did results occur (or not) and how were they produced?
- What factors influenced the achievement of results, and to what extent were they influential?
- To what extent has UNICEF succeeded in mitigating hindering factors and exploiting enabling factors to acquire the best possible results?

- How have the achieved results (outputs) contributed (or not) to the desired changes (outcomes)?

**Reporting phase:** To ensure the accuracy and reliability of the analysis, the following triangulation approach has been put into practice:

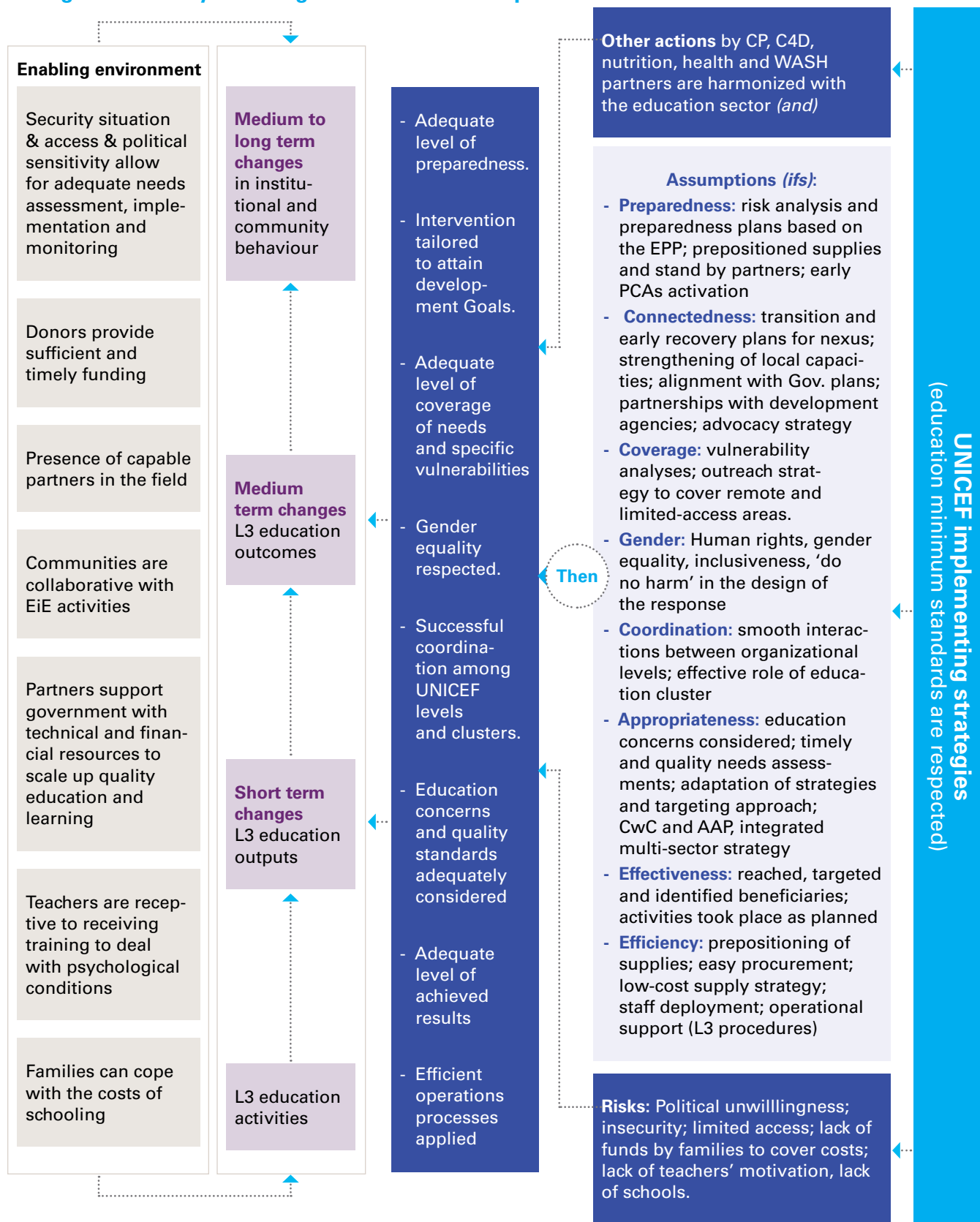
- **Source triangulation:** the team compared information from different sources – for example, perspectives from different stakeholder groups, documentation and observation.
- **Methods triangulation:** the team compared the information collected by different methods (interviews, document review, focus groups, online survey).
- **Researcher triangulation:** the team compared the information collected by the different researchers.
- **Geographical triangulation:** the team compared information gathered from different parts of the country to ensure differentiation between results that can be generalized and results that are limited to a particular context.

Findings from the field phase have been triangulated and validated through consultations with key stakeholders and the evaluators. The team has regularly consulted stakeholders on the data, with due consideration to the extent to which internal and external factors have influenced and explained the results. Finally, through the applied methods of data analysis (triangulation and ToCs presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3, pages 32-33), the evaluation has investigated why the observed results have occurred (or not) and the weighted roles played by the intervention and other internal and external factors. Assumptions, risks and external influences have been tested and their influence in the achieved results weighted.

The evaluation attempted to analyse how much of a difference a given intervention has made, in general, in the lives of the targeted population. The recommendations reflect suggestions around how things could be done differently to improve the results and reach the expected final outcomes.

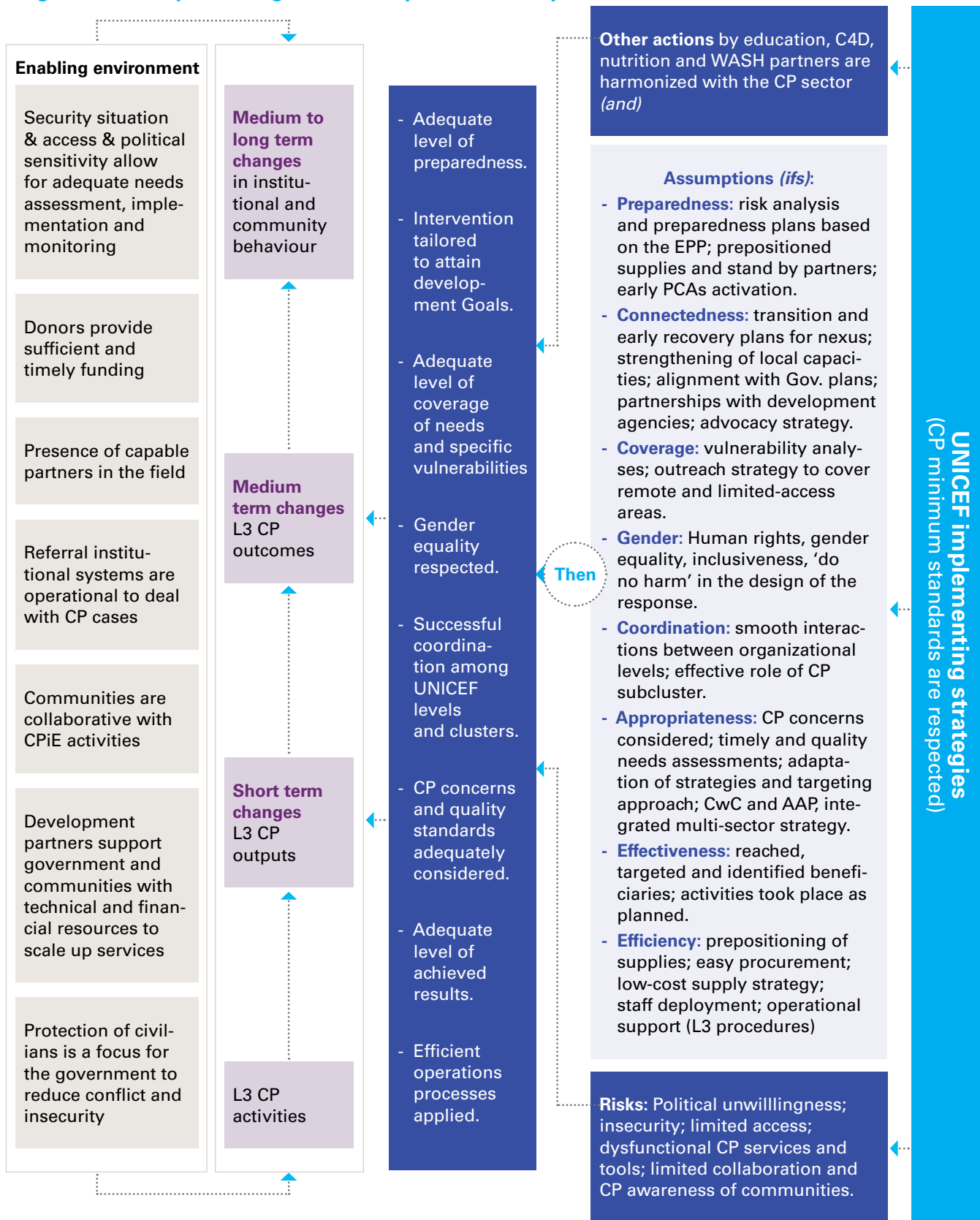


**Figure 2: Theory of Change – L3 education response<sup>19</sup>**



<sup>19</sup> For a detailed picture of the L3 education activities contained in the intervention package, see the graph in Annex 3.

**Figure 3: Theory of Change – L3 child protection response<sup>20</sup>**



<sup>20</sup> For a detailed picture of the L3 child protection activities contained in the intervention package, see the graph in Annex 3.

### Limitations of the evaluation

The key limitations of the evaluation are related to the approach and methodology.

- The naturalistic approach is affected by the context of the evaluation, in which key informants may have **different and contradicting views** on the subject matter under investigation, and thus might provide bias to the observations and findings.

➤ **Mitigation strategy:** The team triangulated the observations and data using different lines of enquiry, validating assumptions and observations among evaluation team members and across geographical sites, through the use of observation matrices.

- The naturalistic approach does not provide **control over external variables** and thus cannot fully ascertain and establish the cause-effect relationship.

➤ **Mitigation strategy:** Triangulation of data sources provided an additional level of confidence in the result and using the ToC approach provided a clear analytical framework for the two concerned sectors.



### Operational challenges:

- The specific situation in DRC posed significant **logistical challenges**.
- **Mitigation strategy:** The team developed alternative data collection sites that met the inception plan requirements in the event of security and/or operational challenges.
- **Turnover of key informants:** Since the L3 response was activated in August 2017, several staff members involved had already moved to other duty stations.
- **Mitigation strategy:** The team remotely interviewed relevant key former staff to ensure that all relevant stakeholders were interviewed and triangulated.

**Ethics review:** The evaluation approach has adhered to strict ethical standards in full compliance with the UNICEF principles of ethical research involving children (ERIC),<sup>21</sup> including:

- a commitment to producing an evaluation of developmental and practical value for the users;
- a commitment to avoid harm to participants;
- a respect for cultural norms;
- a commitment to an inclusive approach ensuring access and participation of women and socially-excluded groups;

- a commitment to ensure participation in the evaluation is voluntary and free from external pressure;
- a commitment to confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

The inception report, including data collection tools and methodology, was provided for review to the Chair and Human Research Protections Director, HML Institutional Review Board.<sup>22</sup> The inception report and protocols were approved on 11 October 2018 and duly implemented during the data collection phase by obtaining verbal consent for participation in the study from all focus groups with the affected population (see the consent form in Annex 12). The evaluation has not conducted any focus groups with children. The voice of children has been captured through their parents/caretakers as recommended by ethical standards.

The evaluation also abides by the ethical code of conduct research and evaluation in the United Nations system as stipulated by the United Nations Evaluation Group.<sup>23</sup> This includes obligations such as independence, impartiality, credibility, accountability, the anonymity and confidentiality of individual participants in the evaluation, sensitivity to social and cultural contexts and monitoring integrity and honesty in relations with all stakeholders.

<sup>21</sup> Powell, Mary Ann et al., 'Ethical Research Involving Children', UNICEF IRC, Florence, 2013, <[www.unicef-irc.org/publications/706-ethical-research-involving-children.html](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/706-ethical-research-involving-children.html)>.

<sup>22</sup> HML IRB is an independent institutional review board that provides research ethics approval for the international and domestic projects of UNICEF and other organizations.

<sup>23</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group, *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*, UNEG, New York, April 2005; United Nations Evaluation Group, *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System*, UNEG, New York, March 2008; United Nations Evaluation Group, *UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System*, UNEG, New York, 2008.

# 5

## EVALUATION FINDINGS



The UNICEF response to the Kasai crisis began against this overall backdrop, and while the organization managed to initiate some emergency interventions before the L3 activation, there is general agreement among key informants that the response should have begun earlier, possibly by the beginning of 2017. Discussions between the CO, the RO and HQ about the suitability of the L3 activation began around March 2017. Several factors contributed to the additional five-month delay between the onset of these discussions and the triggering of the CEAP in August.

First was the widespread perception within the organization that the CO had the capacity to cope on its own, or, as one respondent put it, “higher-level triggers should exist for L3 activation in the DRC”. While, as noted above, UNICEF DRC has in the past managed to cope with several crises without much assistance from the rest of the organization, the location of the crisis in a normally peaceful region, as well as the specific context at the time, should have raised alarms.

Another factor was the limited media attention to the crisis, influenced also by the difficulty of accessing the area to obtain a clear picture of the humanitarian consequences. This dramatically changed in March 2017 with the killing of two international United Nations experts in Kasai.

At Kinshasa level, other factors contributed to the delay. As a result of the postponed electoral process, the Government was not keen to have an emergency declared anywhere in the country. In addition, UNICEF was at that time awaiting the *agrément* (formal approval) for its newly-appointed representative in the country (which was not, in the event, obtained), and did not wish to jeopardize this process. Once the decision to activate the L3 was finally

taken, some additional time was then required by the CO to prepare the ground for the activation and alert key government counterparts.

Subsequently, UNICEF advocated with the other United Nations agencies for a system-wide L3 activation, in order to further raise the profile of the Kasai crisis and, hopefully, more funds. This decision was taken in October 2017, including an expansion to the Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces. UNICEF was not in favour of this expansion, but ultimately adhered to the approach. The system-wide L3 was deactivated in April 2018 after the failure of the DRC Conference in Geneva, where the Government of DRC refused to participate.

At the time of the evaluation mission, UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) were the only two agencies with a still-active L3 in the three regions/provinces. Following reviews in January 2019, the entire DRC was declared as a Level 2 emergency (L2), with the Ebola-affected provinces in the east remaining as L3 until 31 July 2019.

## 5.1. Preparedness

### How was the CO and FO level of preparedness to conflict outbreaks, health outbreaks and climate hazards (EQ P1)?

In a context of increasing donor fatigue, partially linked to the political situation and the election delays, donors were reluctant in 2016 to fund prepositioning and contingency planning in DRC. The RRMP, promoted by UNICEF, began to face donor resistance due to concerns around its efficiency and perceived complexity. The Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission (ECHO) decided in 2017 to stop funding the UNICEF RRMP in favour of a parallel response mechanism led by non-governmental organizations (NGOs),<sup>24</sup> which in many cases overlaps with the former, even in terms of partners involved. Other donors such as DFID are reviewing their support to UNICEF RRMP, citing similar reasons.

Other partners were directly affected by this situation, and their in-country capacities to fulfil their respective roles were diminished. OCHA suspended its already-limited contingency planning initiatives in 2016 due to lack of interest from donors and the Government. In addition, there was no OCHA presence in the Kasais before the L3 activation.

In the Kasais, the emergency preparedness and response capacities of the Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi FOs were extremely limited, and no specific initiatives were undertaken to scale up preparedness capacity, either in Kinshasa or in other FOs. This is corroborated by the survey results from staff and partners, which

reveal that only 11 per cent of respondents believe that preparedness was an essential factor for the success of the response (Table 13, Annex 9).

When the UNICEF L3 response was activated on 1 August 2017, no preparedness plans existed for any of the FOs, and only limited ones in Kinshasa. The RRMP was the only preparedness mechanism in place, with contingency stocks limited to items available in some of the FO warehouses, normally in quantities sufficient for a maximum of 20,000 people.

The mechanism was proposed for the Kasais before the L3 activation, with an initial assessment in December 2016. For a few months, however, the Alternative Response to Communities in Crisis (ARCC) programme was utilized, while the RRMP was deployed in June 2017 with the intention of kickstarting the response at a time when there was no additional funding. Preliminary interventions started with NGO partners Caritas and Solidarités.

The activation of the RRMP, in a form revised for the local context, was useful to complement the response initiatives already underway in the Kasais and served as an initial preparedness response. Some respondents indicated that this had the unintended effect of partially inhibiting the programme sections from a more structured response plan, since the RRMP was already providing assistance. With the RRMP receiving a large percentage (approximately 48 per cent) of the financial resources (see financial analysis in Annex 13), the expansion of the response was to a certain extent delegated to this mechanism.

<sup>24</sup> Since March 2018, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a traditional RRMP partner for UNICEF, has been leading an RRM consortium called Reflex (Réponse Rapide Flexible) composed of NRC, Solidarites International and ACTED. This consortium is funded by ECHO to respond to new and/or forgotten crises occurring in DRC, supporting affected communities to fill their essential needs mainly through cash- (or voucher-) based interventions.

In addition, the common approach of establishing stand-by/contingency PCAs<sup>25</sup> with key implementing partners was not explored, and no long-term agreements (LTAs) with product providers existed either at Kinshasa level or in other cities. These aspects further weakened the level of UNICEF preparedness in the country, a weakness that was only partially compensated for by the RRMP.<sup>26</sup>

In April 2018, UNICEF established a national position for an Emergency Specialist dedicated to preparedness. This is a positive development, which is consistent with the globally-required utilization of the new Emergency Preparedness Platform (EPP)<sup>27</sup> and the application of its procedures. Within this approach, the Specialist coordinates with programme 'sector contributors' and with FOs to identify main potential risks in different parts of the country. Currently, work is ongoing to define potential consequences and beneficiary numbers, and to draft FO supply and human resources (HR) requirement lists. The possibility of establishing stand-by/contingency PCAs is being explored.

The final responsibility for the EPP approach lies with the Representative, who supervises progress on the implementation and signs off the compilation of the online platform. To date, although this would be an option (e.g.

adopted by UNICEF India), FOs do not have editing rights on the EPP, which limits their engagement in and accountability for the broad preparedness process.

At the beginning of the Kasai crisis, the RRMP offered the only chance to build on limited preparedness and contingency stocks, and the complex displacement of targeted beneficiaries in the Kasais further underscored the usefulness and importance of the mechanism. However, it also underscored the organization's over-reliance on the mechanism, particularly for initial needs assessments and early emergency interventions.<sup>28</sup>

The RRMP does not and cannot replace the various contingency and preparedness plans that each humanitarian actor has the responsibility to develop; this underlines the importance of the EPP. The role of the RRMP therefore remains very relevant as a first response tool, but should not be stretched further and replace preparedness actions. It is imperative that this system ensures a continuity of interventions with greater capacity for preparedness and response of the actors in general.

The current reluctance of several in-country donors to keep funding the RRMP is a serious challenge for UNICEF DRC; however, this

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<sup>25</sup> In UNICEF, 'stand-by/contingency PCAs' refers to PCAs that are either administratively pre-cleared and can be activated at the onset of a new crisis, or PCAs including an 'emergency addendum' that can be activated at the onset of a new crisis.

<sup>26</sup> A recent evaluation indeed noted that "the RRMP has a clear added value in the humanitarian crisis context in DRC and is a relevant 'first resort response' mechanism in view of the limited capacity of other humanitarian actors and the cluster system itself." United Nations Children's Fund, 'Evaluation of the Rapid Response to Population Movement (RRMP) Mechanism based on Performance,' UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, October 2018, p. 120.

<sup>27</sup> The Emergency Preparedness Platform (EPP) and its procedures, effective from March 2018, represent the key component of UNICEF preparedness capacity under EMOPS. According to the EPP, depending on their size, COs must identify contingency supply stocks and potential HR surge capacity inside the office (and field offices) and, based on the agreed most likely emergency scenario and the local context, establish immediate shifts of responsibility for key staff at the beginning of a new emergency. Additionally, again based on the most likely scenario and the local context, COs must develop a draft list of additional required supplies and HR profiles and levels for surge to assist the CO and fill possible gaps. All this information is automatically shared with RO and HQ through the EPP platform. ROs play a key role in assisting COs to finalize these internal surge requirements and improve their broader preparedness arrangements.

<sup>28</sup> UNICEF, 'RRMP Evaluation'.

can become an opportunity to revise it – in close coordination with donors – in light of a broader humanitarian architecture for the CO, and to clarify its preparedness and contingency role within the EPP at Kinshasa and FO levels.

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#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. Limited preparedness capacity in UNICEF Kinshasa and in the FOs before the crisis: no contingency plans in place, no LTAs for local procurement of products and no stand-by/ contingency PCAs.
  2. Over-reliance on the RRMP for emergency stocks and response, exacerbated by ongoing reluctance of several in-country donors to continue funding the RRMP, is a serious challenge for UNICEF DRC.
  3. RRMP role is unclear vis-a-vis the contingency plans and preparedness plans each humanitarian actor has the responsibility to develop; this underlines the importance of meeting EPP requirements.
  4. Positive aspects that influenced the early response include: existing UNICEF FOs in Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi; early CERF contribution; new RRMP established for the Kasais; adoption of risk-informed programming (RIP) approach.
  5. Positive step in establishing the position of Emergency Specialist, Preparedness and expanding utilization of the EPP and its procedures.
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## 5.2. Connectedness

### To what degree and how has the humanitarian intervention been tailored to support the attainment of long-term development goals (EQ C1)?

A transition phase was not clearly formulated in the response plans in either sector. However, the contexts of the two L3 regions are different. The Kasai region, while experiencing low levels of development and structural precariousness, had been largely free of humanitarian crises, whereas the east of the country has been subjected for years to a chronic humanitarian situation. Neither situation is favourable for applying a linear process from emergency to transition towards development. In the Kasai region, where there was a regular development programme already in place, the process was rather the opposite: emergency elements were integrated into existing development programmes through the mid-year review of the annual workplan 2017. Accordingly, an internal strategic document defines the specificity of the UNICEF L3 response design in Kasai as an “emergency in development”<sup>29</sup>

This concept refers not only to the fact that the response design in Kasai incorporated emergency elements into existing development programmes, but also, according to the document, to the reinforcement of inter-sectoral approaches in the response, both internally among UNICEF programmes and externally between UNICEF and other agencies (inter-sectoral actions are analysed in Section 5.6). However, the evaluation observed that this approach has not included the articulation

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<sup>29</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Strategic Moment of Reflection’, UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, 2017. Termes de reference Kasai crisis L3-Activation midterm review.

of a comprehensive plan with concrete actions to be conducted in a post-emergency transition phase.

The evaluation found that there were no direct links to transition in the middle of the L3 crisis, nor did the conditions predominant at that time – L3 procedures, short duration of projects, limited and short-term funding – favour the formulation of a transition plan. The emergency response was clearly prioritized over transition in both regions. There was however a general recognition that, despite the constraints, it was necessary to have thought in the longer term from the beginning of the crisis, and to have engaged donors and the government further in early recovery efforts.

In **South Kivu**, there was stronger capacity of government partners, a greater number of implementing actors, and more familiarity with the opportunities for transition. However, given the limited internal capacities and scarce funds, attention was focused on the emergency response.

**The Kasai** region, a context of humanitarian-development overlap, is considered a great opportunity for the nexus or the ‘continuum’ to operate in order to consolidate results. UNICEF strategic guidelines to address the conceptual divide between humanitarian action and development work exist, but they have not been put into practice in this crisis. For example, a humanitarian-development continuum strategy note developed by UNICEF Supply Division<sup>30</sup> explains that there is an increasingly heterogeneous range of emergency/humanitarian settings where applying generic approaches to preparedness

and response is not an adequate solution. The advised measure is to “contextualize, link with local (and long-term) risk management processes and adapt tools and guidance to be compatible with different profiles”. In the same vein, the CCCs<sup>31</sup> explicitly mention that early recovery actions are “actions and approaches that should be applied immediately and in parallel with immediate response”. However, the evaluation has observed that these guiding measures have largely not been put into practice in the response.

In more positive terms, the evaluation noted that FOs did use the RIP approach.<sup>32</sup> In Kasai region, the RIP approach has been applied to revise programme components and integrate emergency response while remaining aligned with government priorities and assuring continuity with the development agenda. Although already involved in a chronic emergency, South Kivu also used the RIP approach.



<sup>30</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Theory of Change for Humanitarian-Development Continuum, UNICEF Supply Division Office Management Plan, 2018-2021,’ UNICEF, Copenhagen, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> CCCs.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Guidance on Risk-Informed Programming,’ UNICEF, New York, 2018.

In the **child protection sector**, other initiatives aiming at aligning humanitarian and development programmes have been observed. UNICEF applied, to some extent, the regular development programme called ‘safe schools’ to the L3 emergency response. The increasing role given to community networks through sensitization and training activities, as well as community approaches and awareness campaigns through UNICEF communication for development (C4D) programmes,<sup>33</sup> are other examples of humanitarian-development alignment. Finally, legal assistance for children, mine risk awareness and the generation of birth certificates are additional components of the regular child protection (CP) programme that were incorporated in the L3 response to some extent.

In the **education sector**, UNICEF has also included transition elements in its activities in the two regions, such as: psychosocial support with new pedagogical methods more related to development; construction of semi-permanent classrooms as well as some permanent ones; a focus on curricula; and capacity reinforcement of communities through peacebuilding for social cohesion. These all constitute valid elements to establish transition if properly followed up.

A programme that is explicitly intended to link humanitarian efforts with the transition phase is the Programme of Expanded Assistance for Returnees Plus (PEAR+). While the RRMP is a mechanism of first response, PEAR+ is specifically designed to provide assistance to returnees in more stable areas that are suitable for transition. For the combination of RRMP and PEAR+ interventions to work,

however, there should be strategies adapted specifically to returns, which the evaluation has not observed.

Overall, despite financial constraints and different chronic contexts, enabling conditions existed to enhance the humanitarian-development nexus, particularly in Kasai. Once the RRMP was activated (and indeed even before the L3 activation), some efforts were made to link it with longer-term actions (e.g. the RRMP signed a PCA with Action Contre la Faim to try to rely on existing medical supply mechanisms) but with limited success in providing continuity.

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#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The UNICEF L3 humanitarian intervention design did not facilitate a transition toward development (i.e. did not take sufficient account of the humanitarian-development nexus). The Kasai region offers a great opportunity to do so.
  2. In South Kivu, there are also factors favouring the humanitarian-development nexus (such as better capacity of partners and/or greater presence of implementing partners). These opportunities could have been exploited further in both regions.
  3. There were some UNICEF initiatives in the two regions with a view to developing integrated and shared analysis, frameworks and results of humanitarian and development programmes.
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<sup>33</sup> For instance, the C4D campaign “I’m a child” resulted in a letter from the governor instructing territorial administrators and all local chiefs to raise public awareness on child protection in the Kasai.

## How has the response affected longer-term key issues and coping mechanisms (EQ C2)?

The crisis has deeply affected longer-term key issues and coping mechanisms in the DRC. There is, for example, a considerable increase in the number of children moving alone to cities as a survival mechanism. The food security cluster has confirmed<sup>34</sup> food deficits, the lack of livelihoods (agricultural seasons failed) and a high dependence on coping mechanisms, with no improvement foreseen for 2019. The analysis confirms that, especially in the Kasais, many people have not even been restored to the (precarious) situation in which they were before the crisis, which means the emergency response has thus far fallen well short of 'building back better'. The fact that the situation is still fluid, with constant and cyclical displacements and without stable areas for return, does not make it easy to UNICEF to advance transition programmes. Recent allocations for returnees from the CERF and various country programme pooled funds (CPPFs), as well as the Healthy Villages Programme regaining access to some areas, are positive developments that will likely enhance efforts to build back better.

Given the multisectoral technical expertise of UNICEF, its leadership of several clusters, and its humanitarian/development integrated mandate, the evaluation has noted that the agency is considered to have a key responsibility for promoting projects that generate a nexus. While some good joint initiatives have taken place, other potential synergies have not been exploited or promoted. For example, the evaluation takes note of the following good joint projects aiming at humanitarian-development

linkages: (i) a UNICEF/WFP/Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) project funded by the World Bank to address chronic malnutrition through nutrition, food security, resilience and agricultural components;<sup>35</sup> (ii) an 18-month education in emergencies project with a child protection component, funded by DFID/ the United States Agency for International Development (\$8.5 million) with a transitional and integrated approach to protection aimed at "accelerating rehabilitation, reconstruction and access to basic educational services as affected regions return to more stable and sustainable educational development and structures".<sup>36</sup> These initiatives are understood as a common effort between agencies, and also demonstrate that despite some hesitations on the part of donors, there is at least some interest in funding these sorts of initiatives.

Other United Nations stakeholders have identified additional opportunities to work with UNICEF to reinforce the nexus, such as:

- Having a common strategy for engaging the World Bank (although UNICEF retaining its L3 designation is seen as a disincentive for that development donor);
- Finding ways to collaborate around employment and women's empowerment with FAO and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), despite the challenging political context;
- Contributing to the development of a joint United Nations framework for durable solutions for IDPs, which is currently being worked on by UNDP, OCHA and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR);

<sup>34</sup> The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative for improving food security and nutrition analysis and decision-making. <<http://www.ipcinfo.org>>.

<sup>35</sup> This project is scheduled to begin in 2019. It was initially conceived as a response to high-risk areas of food insecurity but turned into a more sensible integrated approach.

<sup>36</sup> United States Agency for International Development, 'Accelere, phase II: Education in emergencies', programme contribution agreement, USAID, Washington, D.C., 2018.

- Seeking complementarity with the WFP school feeding programme, which is expected to be scaled up and implemented in the three Kasai regions;<sup>37</sup> and
- Exploring opportunities to engage with an ongoing WFP-FAO<sup>38</sup> resilience project on community asset infrastructure, where a complementary role for UNICEF in engaging women is seen as potentially useful. WFP and FAO have a joint resilience section where human resources are shared. This is a good practice that could be replicated in the future between WFP and UNICEF, at least for defining longer-term joint priorities for food security, nutrition and WASH.

As evidenced by these opportunities, a few good United Nations initiatives aimed at resilience and early recovery have taken place. At the same time, however, many L3 emergency projects have been abandoned, without any continuity with longer-term programmes and without having consolidated state services. Some reasons for this are explained below.

At the policy level, alignment and integration with government priorities at the national and local levels, as called for in the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (SP), clearly appears in the UNICEF DRC two-year country programme, 2019-2020.<sup>39</sup> The country programme defines 29 zones of convergence in which to focus multisectoral efforts for children and adolescents. However, the alignment of humanitarian and development plans is not observed in practice.

In practice, the difficulties in involving the government in the L3 response have been evident. 57 per cent of survey respondents believe that local capacities were not or were only moderately strengthened. At the central level, the Government declared that there was no crisis, and challenged or even denied the figures being presented by the humanitarian community. In the Kasai region, the government of Central Kasai showed proactivity and dynamism at the beginning of the crisis, participating in the first needs assessments and delivering the first response in NFI and food distributions. However, with the change of governor, the region has returned to a situation of dependence on humanitarian aid, described by a key actor as ‘parasitism’. How far UNICEF can/should go with a non-engaged government is a recurring question within the agency. UNICEF interlocutors believe that to build government capacity and engagement, a longer-term strategy with adapted PCAs permitting the advancement of funds to government entities is needed.

The evaluation has found that there are both challenges and opportunities to developing a resource mobilization strategy, linked with a long-term vision and advocacy strategy, and securing financing for programming targeting the humanitarian-development nexus. It is important to highlight, first of all, that although a comprehensive fundraising strategy was not developed, UNICEF carried out a number of activities that contributed to raising awareness and mobilizing resources. These included UNICEF contributions to the United Nations

<sup>37</sup> A meeting initiated by UNICEF was held on 10 July 2018 with the World Bank, SPACE, PAQUE-GPE, donors, implementing partners and the government, to enhance synergies and avoid duplication in the Kasai region for development and emergency projects in education.

<sup>38</sup> Purchase for Progress (P4P). Through the Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme, WFP encourages national governments and the private sector to buy food in ways that benefit smallholders. P4P works with a variety of partners to promote smallholder farmers’ entrepreneurship as a way to build resilience and address long-term nutrition needs. <http://www1.wfp.org/purchase-for-progress>.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Conceptual Framework for the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and UNICEF Country Programme, 2019-2020’, UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, 2019. To note that the national plan is not yet finalized and that it will be a five-year plan (2020-2024), as learned recently.

Flash Appeal, an advocacy plan for the Kasai crisis,<sup>40</sup> and the development and dissemination of a 'Child Alert'.

Challenges observed by the evaluation with regard to mobilizing resources for programmes targeting the humanitarian-development nexus include:

- Humanitarian and development funding sources come from different donors with different requirements;
- The funding for bridging the humanitarian-development nexus depends substantially on development donors;
- ECHO, one of the largest traditional humanitarian donors in DRC, is not interested in financing the continuity of emergency interventions, and is scarcely funding education in DRC at all;
- UNICEF staff are overwhelmed and find it difficult to produce dashboards and updated data every quarter, which would be useful for providing documentation to donors about the crisis and needs. In addition, the field data required to improve fundraising efforts are often lacking.

Opportunities identified by the evaluation include the following:

- Ongoing discussions between WFP and UNICEF around joint nutrition advocacy and a common strategy to address malnutrition, including longer-term elements. This is particularly promising given the interest expressed by DFID in continuing to support integrated nutrition programming;
- At the beginning of the L3 activation, UNICEF produced many press releases, and consequently received media and donor visits. However, this helped to attract interest in financing the development programme rather than the emergency;

- Donors have shown interest in financing joint United Nations projects that aim to achieve more sustainable results, but they generally request agencies to develop better humanitarian-development nexus approaches.

To conclude, the challenges do not justify the absence of a dedicated resource mobilization strategy.

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#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. UNICEF is considered to have a comparative advantage in promoting a joint approach among actors to address the humanitarian-development nexus.
  2. UNICEF has shown capacity to build partnerships and agreements with development agencies through various initiatives, but the L3 activation and response was an opportunity to have created stronger links between humanitarian and development programmes, especially considering the existence of the UNICEF development programme in Kasai and its relationship with national and local priorities.
  3. The absence of a longer-term UNICEF strategy, including a resource mobilization component, with adapted and flexible PCAs, combined with the limited commitment and capacity of the government and development partners, have limited the UNICEF response and nexus approach.
  4. UNICEF has made advocacy efforts to mobilize funds, however in the absence of an overarching resource mobilization strategy, the CO was not able to attract adequate funding, including multi-annual funding.
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<sup>40</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'The Kasai Humanitarian Crisis Advocacy Strategy', UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, 2017.

## 5.3 Coverage

### **To what extent has the UNICEF response met the differing needs of men and women, children, the able and the disabled, the marginalized population and the very poor (EQ CV1)?**

Needs related to the crisis in DRC were analysed by the humanitarian community at large and set out in the Flash Appeal of April 2017, as well as the revised UNICEF Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) report in October 2017. Vulnerabilities were identified by different types of needs assessments (see Section 5.6), some of which were inter-agency, and some derived from information provided by government services or by partners. In many cases, needs were calculated on a demographic basis (extrapolating expected numbers of beneficiaries from available census data).

The RRMP offered initial needs assessments based around health zones, with tools to define vulnerabilities. It should be noted that demographic-based calculation of targets does not allow the response to be adapted to specific vulnerable groups, even if implementing partners have analysed and adapted the response to needs in the field. This helps explain in part the frequent changes in target numbers observed in the response plans, as they were progressively adapted to a better understanding of the needs. Following the needs assessments carried out by the HCT in October 2017, the resulting estimates of needs and targets were established in the operational plans published by OCHA in December 2017 (see the comparative table in Annex 14).

#### **Limited capacity**

The intended coverage of UNICEF as initially formulated in its internal response plans was a proportion of the cluster targets, and was further adapted when operationalizing the

intervention, as reflected in the humanitarian performance monitoring (HPM) targets. The operational capacity mobilized (PCAs) was short of what was required to reach the targets established by the clusters, the response plans and the HPM indicators in some sectors (nutrition, education) and in some provinces. This limited capacity for coverage is one of the weakest points of the response.

#### **RRMP was instrumental for needs assessment**

UNICEF and partners defined priority geographical areas of intervention – wider in the Kasais (a more extended area of conflict) and more concentrated in South Kivu and Tanganyika. Mapping of priority areas of intervention was established and based on criteria of multiple deprivations, including population displaced, impact of the crisis on access to social services, number of children affected, and other risk and vulnerability factors such as disease incidence, presence of children in armed forces and groups, etc. The RRMP mechanism proved instrumental as a tool to ensure coverage of emergency needs. RRMP needs assessment tools and prioritization criteria were utilized by UNICEF and allowed for the initial fine-tuning of vulnerabilities, establishing the basis for a vulnerability-based approach.

#### **Challenges in needs assessment and several changes in figures**

Coverage of humanitarian needs was affected by security, logistics, lack of capable implementing partners, and, to a significant extent, scarce funding. The evaluation has examined the strategies put in place and the resources mobilized, in addition to gathering primary evidence during field visits, and together these indicate, as a consistent finding, limited success in terms of coverage of needs.

Furthermore, targets have been revised by the clusters over time. This meant a definition of needs higher than those contained in initial estimates, with UNICEF targets increased accordingly (in nutrition and education sectors, for example). The adaptations of the targets to be covered by UNICEF are reflected as well in the HPM indicators table (see Annex 15). In Annex 16, specific coverage data are analysed for each key sector other than education and child protection. Of note is that the RRMP mechanism itself accounts for nearly 1 million beneficiaries for the three provinces, as shown in Table 2 below.

## Education

The education sector in DRC was already affected by several constraints, including insufficient budget allocations, difficult access to schools, financial obstacles for children, lack of teaching materials and generally low-quality education. Additional socio-cultural constraints affect schooling of girls across the country, and of children in some conflict areas, in spite

of indicators suggesting some improvements (e.g. increasing trend of completing primary school, from 50 per cent in 2017 to 70 per cent in 2015).<sup>41</sup> High numbers of out-of-school children is also a major problem. Among the 3.5 million children 6-11 years old who are out of school, the majority are 6 and 7 year-old boys and girls whose absence from school is largely due to the unaffordable cost of education, long distances to school and socio-cultural barriers like early marriage, girls' roles in society and other factors of vulnerability.<sup>42</sup>

The country office annual report 2017 states that UNICEF contributed to the enrolment of more than 2,772,848 children in first grade, and that 142,900 vulnerable children in 5,000 schools were retained in first to third grades through a tailored social protection package. This focus on vulnerabilities has been retained to some extent through the humanitarian response to the L3 crisis, although, consistent with the overall response, it was not extensive or systematic (limited coverage and prioritization of vulnerabilities).

**Table 2: RRMP coverage for L3 regions, 2017-2018**

Sector	Kasai	Tanganyika	South Kivu	Total
NFI	128,545	133,355	28,886	<b>290,786</b>
Cash	65,495	58,110	83,637	<b>207,242</b>
Wash	74,705	140,950	14,187	<b>229,842</b>
Santé-Nutrition	19,712	51,269	7,624	<b>78,605</b>
Protection -Education	86,449	13,734	4,491	<b>104,674</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>374,906</b>	<b>397,418</b>	<b>138,825</b>	<b>911,149</b>

Source: provided by the DRC CO

<sup>41</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Situation Analysis of Children in the DRC', ongoing situation analysis, UNICEF Kinshasa, 2017.

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of Education, *National Education Plan of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2019-2020*, MoE, Kinshasa, 2018.

Needs assessments conducted prior to the L3 response initially identified widespread consequences of the conflict for the education sector in the Kasais (targeting and destruction of schools by armed groups, displacement of populations including school children, etc.). Targets were estimated from data provided by the education administration and included in the humanitarian needs overview (HNO) of the Flash Appeal, as well as a demographic estimation of the number of school-aged children in the affected areas. Table 3 below shows a comparison between the estimated needs, the intended coverage, and the targets established for HPM. The intended coverage can be considered limited due to the lack of implementing partners and limited financial capacity.

The response of UNICEF and partners prioritized the most affected areas and attempted a wider coverage through direct institutional support (fiches techniques), such as providing tarpaulins and tents to the educational division of the local government to distribute to the affected schools (as illustrated in Picture 1 opposite). This mechanism provided an immediate support, but the provision of the full package of education in emergencies (EiE) interventions was limited to the areas where partners were available to provide school kits and psychosocial training.

**Picture 1: Temporary school, Kananga**



The feasibility of semi-permanent rehabilitation, including the provision of EiE activities, was constrained by the limited availability of partners, and the selection of axes to be targeted was not always consistent with a strategy for the coverage of needs. The selection criteria of schools for permanent rehabilitation were also not clear, given the needs in the sector.

UNICEF support has been very visible in addressing specific vulnerabilities. In many instances, catch-up classes have been organized, and support provided for specific vulnerable children to sit their sixth-grade examinations. In some cases, positive

**Table 3: Comparison of the education coverage**

	Children in need in education sector	Children targeted by education cluster	Children targeted by UNICEF	UNICEF targets as per HPM
Grand Kasai	1,664,980	832,490	248,460	149,969
Tanganyika	592,620	296,310	91,540	74,520
South Kivu	564,400	282,200	82,384	71,658
<b>Total L3</b>	<b>2,822,000</b>	<b>1,411,000</b>	<b>422,384</b>	<b>296,147</b>

**Source:** UNICEF DRC education section

discrimination was applied to support girls with their final grades. This seems a very valid approach to addressing vulnerabilities, and UNICEF advocated with partners to be proactive in this regard. However, the selection criteria for this type of support were not always well understood by beneficiaries, and during the field visits, communities and focus groups often claimed that they felt some eligible children were left behind with no clear reason. This is something that could have been picked up by regular field monitoring.

Progress towards broader coverage of the above interventions (catch-up courses and sixth grade support) is not captured in the HPM reporting, but from the information gathered, more children than originally planned have been reached. This points to gains in efficiency by partners, given their capacity to target additional children within the same resources.<sup>43</sup> Even so, coverage is ultimately limited by the capacity of partners and the availability of resources.

### Convergence: WASH in schools

The limited coverage of WASH in schools in the areas visited has already been mentioned. The cartography of intervention of the WASH cluster does not match the EiE mapping, leading to a poor WASH situation in many of the schools visited. In most cases, the numbers of latrines in schools supported by UNICEF are well below the required standards, and their maintenance was neglected. Training on hand washing and hygiene awareness is however present. Picture 2 opposite is an example of UNICEF WASH efforts in a school in Kananga.

Picture 2: WASH in schools, Kananga



### Child Protection

Coverage of child protection-related aspects is particularly challenging. Despite the fact that the crisis in DRC is considered first and foremost a protection crisis, institutional weaknesses limit the effectiveness of identification, reporting, referral and case management systems.

There is a structural dimension to the child protection situation, in that the challenges are not purely conflict-related. In this sense, the emergency response is limited by the underlying root causes. An important challenge is thus how to define and measure the scope of child protection issues to address within the framework of a humanitarian response.

<sup>43</sup> For catch-up courses, data were provided by partners in the field, as opposed to being captured in the standard HRP reports. Training of teachers, upgrade of teacher curricula and teacher capacities are also weakly reported, but implementing partners in the areas visited manage data testifying to these efficiency gains. For those regarding coverage of needs, please review targets from the UNICEF six-month response plan (November 2017-April 2018) and results from HPM tables of September 2018.

Table 4 below shows a comparison between the HRP protection targets and UNICEF child protection targets in L3 regions, and shows the relatively low level of UNICEF coverage in relation to HRP targets as well as to the needs. As per the HRP 2018 update, 13.1 million people are in need of protection, 7.7 million of whom are children and 2.6 million of whom require special protection. Out of the 2.6 million people requiring special protection, 60.5 per cent are children (1.5 million children). In other words, whereas the HRP estimates 446,200 children are in special need of protection in the L3 regions, UNICEF has targeted only 23 per cent of that figure. Moreover, the UNICEF figure (104,300) includes not only children but also cases of gender-based violence among women. Despite the regular updates of targets and needs, UNICEF coverage remains limited.

UNICEF has identified the main challenges and needs in child protection resulting from the conflict in the L3 areas, but the actual coverage of those needs remains limited. In some cases, defining targets beforehand is not easy, as protection cases emerge progressively. The HPM indicators cover a number of CP elements and needs to be harmonized since some of them overlap – such as, for example, children formerly associated with armed groups and UASC. Family reunification covers both types of situations.

Links with the education sector are pilot steps towards increasing coverage, but still need to be consolidated. Lessons should be derived from pilot experiences in order to establish coverage mechanisms systematically.

**Table 4: Comparison of HRP protection targets and UNICEF child protection targets in L3 regions**

Protection targets	HRP - SO2: Protect the affected population and ensure respect for human rights			UNICEF HPM targets (in thousands)
	People targeted (in thousands)	Number of children (60.5 per cent of total)	Number of women (52 per cent of total)	
Kasai	134.9	81.6	70.1	38.6
Kasai-Central	71.6	43.3	37.2	
Kasai-Oriental	197.6	119.5	102.7	
South-Kivu	229.6	138.9	119.3	22.7
Tanganyika	103.9	62.8	54.1	43.0
<b>Total L3 regions</b>	<b>737.6</b>	<b>446.1</b>	<b>383.4</b>	<b>104.3</b>
<b>Total all regions</b>	<b>2.6 M</b>	<b>1.5 M</b>	<b>1.3 M</b>	<b>-</b>

**Source:** Produced on the basis of the HRP, 2018 update and the HPM as of September 2018.

Table 5 shows the evolution of HPM targets over time.

**Table 5: HPM evolution in CP**

Indicator	Grand Kasai		Tanganyika		South Kivu	
	Target Nov. 17/ Dec. 2018 target	Results Sept. 2018	Target Nov. 17/ Dec. 18	Results Sept. 2018	Target Dec. 2018	Results Sept. 2018
# of children formerly associated with armed forces/groups released and provided with temporary assistance	1,600	1,793	1,000	220	1,000	318
# of UASC identified and/or placed in alternative care arrangements and/ or who benefited from individual follow-up (girls/boys)	9,000	4,245	2,000	996	1,000	272
# of UASC children identified and reunited with their families	9,000	3,847	1,000	390	200	119
# of displaced, refugee and returnee children provided with safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning	25,000	65,747	40,000	24,306	20,000	12,869
# of identified survivors of sexual violence provided with a comprehensive response	3,000	1,701	1,000	292	700	842

Source: HPM

Of note is the relatively high number of UASC identified in the Kasais, and the high proportion of reunification achieved (the effectiveness of the strategy will be discussed later). These numbers are explained by the fact that the government of Kasai did not accept the category of ‘children associated with armed groups’, and therefore these children were included in the UASC category.

**Picture 3: Child-friendly space, Makobola, South-Kivu**



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## SUMMARY FINDINGS:

### Education

1. The response of UNICEF and partners prioritized the most affected areas and attempted a wider coverage through direct institutional support (“fiches techniques”). The coverage intended can be considered modest and is again limited by the presence/availability and capacity of partners and/or financial capacity
2. The disparity between the intended targets for emergency rehabilitation and the actual provision of the full EiE package is one of the main weaknesses identified in the coverage of the education sector.
3. An effort has been made by partners and UNICEF to cover the specific needs of school children, which proved to be very relevant. However, coverage was limited, even if more beneficiaries than planned were reached. WASH in schools did not adjust its coverage to the areas where EiE was implemented.

### Child Protection

4. UNICEF has attempted to provide adequate coverage in the L3 zones through activation of mechanisms for identification, referral and case management of protection-related issues. However, CP coverage is limited mainly due to the weaknesses of government institutions, limited funding and complex root causes.
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## 5.4. Gender equality and human rights

### To what extent was gender equality and women’s empowerment advanced because of the response (EQ GE&HR1?)

At the policy level, UNICEF has been developing a strong gender approach across the board, including improved gender analysis, use of gender marker in all proposals, adherence to the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) and attention to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) within the organization and beyond (raising attention and awareness system-wide for the humanitarian community).

In the DRC, however, it does not appear that gender equality and gender-specific vulnerabilities have been addressed in the L3 response as required by UNICEF policy guidance. Key UNICEF policy documents on gender, such as the “Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding programming guide” and the UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, aim at shifting the organization to a more comprehensive perspective that puts gender dynamics and roles at the centre of the programming efforts. However, this has not been operationalized in the L3 response. This is evidenced by the fact that there is no mention of gender-specific approaches, objectives or indicators, neither in the L3 emergency response plans for South Kivu, Tanganyika or Kasai, nor in the monitoring reports reviewed,<sup>44</sup> nor do these include gender as a cross-sectoral issue.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Some examples include: ‘Note Conceptuelle: Third-party monitoring’; ‘Tierce partie monitoring de la réponse humanitaire de l’UNICEF à la crise du Kasai: Rapport de suivi des activités’; ‘UNICEF DRC Kasai Criss: TPM report template’.

<sup>45</sup> The cross-sectoral issues addressed in the L3 response plans are: assessment, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, communications, supply and logistics (cross-cutting), operations support, security.

At the level of needs assessments, gender analyses appear in basic form in the multi-sectoral assessments (MSAs) utilized by the RRMP. However, this is not replicated in other multisectoral needs assessments.<sup>46</sup> In PCAs, meanwhile, the gender requirement is limited to a short sub-section under project description called “gender, equity and sustainable development.” This purely qualitative section usually includes generic commitments that the specific needs of boys and girls will be met, gender equitable participation in the projects will be guaranteed and that all results will be disaggregated by gender. The evaluation has noted that gender requirements of these PCAs are weak and not translated into any strong gender response that actually addresses gender equality and women’s empowerment as established by the UN-SWAP accountability framework.<sup>47</sup> Adequately applying UN-SWAP performance indicators would involve, for instance, “enhancing results-based management” or “establishing oversight through monitoring, evaluation and reporting”

The UNICEF Gender Action Plan, 2018-2021, as well as UN-SWAP,<sup>48</sup> commit to establishing gender results not only in programming but also in institutional systems and processes, with an emphasis on resources, capacity and accountability. The evaluation has not observed any progress in terms of strengthening gender capacities in UNICEF DRC.

There is not a single FO in DRC with dedicated gender staff. In addition, while it was planned to incorporate a P4 gender position at the CO level charged with mainstreaming gender in all sections, this has not yet materialized.

#### FINDINGS:

1. UNICEF gender requirements have not been operationalized through the L3 response.
2. Gender-specific approaches, results and indicators could be strengthened in the response plans.

### Did the response design and planned results benefit from specific human rights and gender analyses (EQ GE&HR2)?

#### Gender approach in education

For the education sector, gender-sensitive implementation is basically absent, even if data on girls’ enrolment and abandon rates are systematically provided. The factors affecting successful enrolment of young girls into schooling are generally not addressed,<sup>49</sup> although some respondents in discussion groups invoked the need to avoid positive discrimination for girls, as boys share many structural limitations as well.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Some examples are: Medair, ‘Scoping mission in the Kasais Region,’ Medair, Kinshasa, July 2017; Alliance for International Medical Action, ‘Evaluation multisectorielle rapide, province de la Lomami’, Alima, Kinshasa, July 2017.

<sup>47</sup> UN Women, *UN-SWAP: A plan to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women across the UN system*, UN Women, New York, 2012.

<sup>48</sup> UN-SWAP requires “allocating sufficient human and financial resources” and “developing and/or strengthening staff capacity and competency in gender mainstreaming”.

<sup>49</sup> Among other issues, menstruation, early marriage, pregnancy, household work and infant care limit significantly the school attendance of young girls.

<sup>50</sup> This refers to the financial support subsidizing fees for sixth grade pupils, through which some partners seem to have prioritized girls. We captured anecdotal opinions from parents here; we could not identify a positive discrimination policy or a clear proactive strategy to favour girls over boys.

Respondents and discussion group participants also raised the need to include gender-sensitive approaches to the support of girls in late school-age, as from 10-11 years girls tend to have problems not accounted for and not addressed by teachers and schoolmates.

Some content related with sexual violence has been introduced in the psychosocial and peace-oriented training for teachers, and this is already an interesting way to introduce sexual education aspects in the education curricula. However, not all teachers have received the training (due to limited coverage of EiE psychosocial training), and there is little room for applying it in some contexts. There is a need for a better understanding among students and teachers of the physiology of the reproductive system, including consequences for boys and girls of school age, the phenotype and hormonal changes that can explain behavioural changes, and issues such as menstruation, which, according to respondents of KIIs and FGDs, goes mainly unattended and is hidden by girls, often leading to school dropout.

Structural reasons limiting a more tailored gender response, as evidenced by document review, observation in the field, and interviews and FGDs with members of the community, include the gender balance among teachers (the majority are male), harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, and other cultural norms such as the need for young girls to participate in domestic work and child care. The presence of young girls with babies at school is not rare, as observed in the schools visited, and relies on the tolerance of teachers to allow these girls to come to school.

#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Gender-related challenges for the education sector are poorly addressed in the L3 response, and girls of higher primary courses (10-11 years old) remain vulnerable to structural gender-related constraints.

#### **Gender approach in child protection**

Evaluation analysis indicates that gender aspects are not specifically covered in the L3 CP response. However, in several activities, gender equity is being addressed to a certain degree. For example, there are separate transit centres for boys and girls, gender-specific games and activities are provided in child-friendly spaces (CFS), and cash assistance is disbursed to women on behalf of their households. In addition, there are efforts to ensure equal participation of women and girls in training/sensitization activities.

However, there is a need to intensify gender sensitization in communities, specifically in the Kasais, and these actions are insufficient when they are compared with the programmatic gaps related to gender that the evaluation has observed in the child protection response. These include:

- The presence of girls in CFS is much lower than that of boys due to menstrual pain, pregnancy or child care responsibilities, and no action has been taken to try to facilitate and increase their participation;
- At the beginning of the L3 projects, the only choice of income-generating activity (for socio-economic reintegration) for both girls and boys was agricultural activities;

- Parents of reunified children prioritize sending their boys to school, and no preventive/mitigating action has been taken to sensitize parents to enrol reunited girls;
- Most community child protection networks (RECOPEs) are composed mainly of men;
- The majority of the local partner staff dealing with cases of gender-based violence are men;
- UNICEF DRC itself employs many more men than women, as confirmed by the online survey in which only 33.7 per cent of respondents were women.

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#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The L3 child protection response design and planned results do not include specific gender analyses in spite of the importance of gender issues in protection.
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## 5.5 Coordination

### How successful has UNICEF coordination within and between headquarters, regional office and country office been (EQ CO1)?

#### Internal Coordination

From the beginning of the crisis in the Kasais until mid-2017, UNICEF DRC handled the first steps of the limited humanitarian response within its internal capacities, including redeployments from within DRC CO as well as few support missions from the RO in Dakar. During this stage, an additional administrative layer (whereby transactions and administrative processes between the Kasais and Kinshasa were processed through the Lubumbashi FO) increased the administrative burden. The

associated transaction costs were reduced once this structure was changed and the two Kasai FOs began responding directly to the capital.

With the L3 activation, the coordination landscape changed dramatically. The Regional Director of WCARO (RD) was appointed as the Global Emergency Coordinator (GEC) for the response. In addition, per the SSOPs, internal processes were activated to mobilize financial resources, staff and supplies, and formal coordination meetings were initiated involving FOs, CO, RO and HQ. The CO began producing regular situation reports (SitReps).

Interactions between the RO and the CO ran smoothly. The RD/GEC leadership and her mission to the affected areas were appreciated by the staff. The Kasai crisis became one of the first opportunities for the RO to work more closely with the DRC CO, which had traditionally been self-sufficient and self-reliant. The main interactions took place between senior management in the CO and the RD/GEC and the emergency section of the RO, although all sectors – programme and operations – established respective channels of communication and coordination.

The number of formal and informal coordination meetings and calls increased. At the beginning of the crisis, daily calls were organized between the Kinshasa office and the FOs, and between the former and the respective counterparts in Dakar. The frequency of these calls progressively decreased; weekly, then by-weekly calls took place between FOs, CO and RO. These were appreciated by staff in the FOs, who found them useful and motivating; when their frequency decreased (to almost none), some FOs felt that the L3 was over.

The Emergency Management Team (EMT), established with the activation of the L3 and made up of representatives from HQ, RO and

CO, began holding formal weekly meetings at the beginning of the crisis (though these, too, would be scaled back over time). Demands from New York Headquarters (NYHQ) for updates and information also increased, and the initial frequency of the Kasai SitRep was every two days. This strained CO capacities, and a person was deployed on surge assignment to fulfil the SitRep-writing role.

Having the GEC in the RO partially reduced the level of involvement of HQ. Nevertheless, all key sections in New York, Geneva and Copenhagen participated in the response with technical and communications assistance and/or support missions. According to EMT meeting minutes and several respondents, coordination between HQ, RO and CO was smooth and no duplication of efforts was identified.

Formal meetings and SitReps specific for the Kasai crisis, expanded to include Tanganyika and South Kivu in October 2017, continued, albeit with progressively reduced frequency, until the beginning of the Ebola crisis in Equator province in May 2018. At this point, the attention of the media and the humanitarian response drastically shifted. Coordination meeting agendas were rapidly redirected to the new emergency, and the interactions between Kasai, Tanganyika and South Kivu FOs and Kinshasa became progressively more informal. The structure of the SitRep was amended to include information and indicators from the new crisis; unfortunately, no breakdown by province was maintained in the HPM matrix and monitoring of the response for the Kasai emergency – admittedly already quite complicated – became nearly impossible.

As of November 2018, the Kasai crisis is still considered an L3 emergency for UNICEF. However, not since May has it had dedicated coordination systems between organization levels, nor does it have dedicated SitReps. After the surge phase had been completed, and the affected FOs strengthened and re-shaped, the attention of donors faded. Ultimately, funding for the continuation of the response in the Kasais had to be taken from the broader HAC fundraising; this raises questions about the rationale of continuing to have the L3 in place.

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#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Generally smooth coordination structures and processes between different levels of the organization (FOs, CO, RO, HQ) were initiated with the L3 activation, with regular formal meetings (EMT) and frequent informal information flow.
  2. Effective leadership was provided by the RO, in light of the RD acting as GEC; the crisis increased the space for collaboration between the RO and the CO, the latter having traditionally been very self-reliant.
  3. The Kasai crisis coordination processes and reporting were abruptly absorbed within the country-wide response framework at the beginning of the Ebola outbreak in Equator province, affecting the relevance of the L3 approach.
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## Was the assistance at CO and field office level well-coordinated, relevant to the identified needs, and avoiding duplication and filling gaps (EQ CO2)?

### Cluster Coordination

Even before the Kasai crisis, UNICEF DRC had been the cluster lead for the WASH, nutrition and education clusters, as well as for the child protection working group and the NFI/shelter cluster. However, the entire inter-agency cluster coordination (CC) system in the DRC was affected by shortage of funds, limiting the capacity of OCHA and other organizations with leadership roles. Cluster coordinators were present in Kinshasa and some of the FOs, with many instances of 'double-hatting'.<sup>51</sup>

In the field, other contextual issues further weakened the system. The InfoHub network established by OCHA – intended as a lighter version of the CC system – did not match with the field presence of UNICEF and other organizations, limiting participation of key actors. In addition, in several locations, the InfoHub mandate confusingly overlapped with other government-led structures already in place at provincial level.<sup>52</sup>

The independent activation by UNICEF of an L3 in August, without the parallel strengthening of the broader CC framework by the IASC, created some confusion and affected the work of the different clusters, including interactions with government counterparts.

Following the system-wide L3 activation in October 2017, the Global Cluster Coordination Group (GCCG) fielded an assessment mission<sup>53</sup> to review the structure and processes of the cluster system in the DRC. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) was quite slow to take action on the proposed recommendations: some changes to the humanitarian architecture only began implementation in April 2018.

The organizational response to the increased demands for CC and information management (IM), as required by the SSOPs, was patchy, both at Kinshasa and field levels. In general, in Kinshasa, UNICEF fulfilled its responsibilities for coordination, but with frequent and long phases of 'double-hatting' by its programme staff, high turnover of coordinators, and very limited IM support. In the field, these problems were even more acute, especially in the Kasais, where the cluster approach had to be initiated from scratch and capacities for coordination were very limited. To a certain extent, the limited presence of NGOs and other actors, especially for some sectors (education, nutrition), mitigated the need for coordination.

Although additional support to the clusters was consistently offered and recommended by the global clusters in Geneva, UNICEF DRC did not act upon these offers. Several factors explain this. First, finding French-speakers for most sectors under UNICEF cluster responsibility is challenging. The CO, traditionally reluctant to ask for or accept external support, preferred to have more stable, longer-term deployments; however, these profiles are not

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<sup>51</sup> 'Double-hatting' refers to a situation in which the staff member responsible for cluster coordination is also responsible for agency-specific programmes of the organization in charge of the cluster – for example, a UNICEF WASH officer might be responsible for both the cluster and UNICEF WASH programmes.

<sup>52</sup> Such as, for example, the Inter-agency Provincial Committee or its incarnations at regional and local levels, as well as the provincial inter-cluster.

<sup>53</sup> The mission travelled extensively around the country and proposed (Nov. 2017) a long list of recommendations to optimize the system and make it more suitable for the DRC context (extremely large country, limited government capacities, decreasing resources and frequent – if not continuous – crises affecting different provinces at different times).

easily identifiable within the main stand-by partner (SBP) or rapid response team (RRT) rosters. In addition, requests from the CO were occasionally confused and suddenly revised, adding to the frustration on both sides. Finally, limited capacities and resources among key NGOs normally sharing cluster responsibilities with UNICEF (such as Save the Children for education) further compounded this difficult context.



The final result for UNICEF was a 'patchy' CC system, which went through functional and sometime less functional phases, supported by 'double-hatting' arrangements, deployments of SBPs with frequent turn-over, weak or no hand-over arrangements, and a variable degree of effectiveness directly linked to specific capacities and personalities. Notwithstanding these weaknesses, the perception of UNICEF CC performance in the field and Kinshasa has been mainly positive, especially in light of the difficult context.

The child protection working group is considered to have done quality, proactive work, both at national and provincial levels, and managed to produce data supporting the rationale of the response. It benefitted from a reasonable number of NGOs and actors involved in the response. Some problems were faced, however, in the interactions with the broader UNHCR-led protection cluster, which has been more focused on legal advocacy work than on operational interventions within the emergency response.

The education cluster faced a number of challenges. It suffered from occasional gaps and 'double-hatting' at Kinshasa level, and was affected by the lack of NGO partners, in particular the limited commitment and presence of the cluster co-lead Save the Children. Nevertheless, at field level, it managed to do a reasonable job, including the production of an information management plan.

Following the review of the humanitarian architecture in April 2018, UNICEF DRC revised its internal structures and shifted the cluster coordinator positions (P3/P4 level) from the respective programme sections to the emergency unit in Kinshasa. This is a positive move, which builds on the recommendations of the GCCG mission and of UNICEF WASH global cluster mission (October 2017).

By establishing long-term, dedicated positions for the national CCs, UNICEF commits to its cluster leader responsibilities, provided that financial sustainability will be assured. Information management support will normally be limited to one person for all clusters, and CC responsibilities in the field will still be ensured by a combination of SBP missions, 'double-hatting', and possible involvement of other actors as co-leaders. This seems a reasonable arrangement given the current

funding shortages in the DRC and could be rapidly expanded in the event of new crisis and increased resources.

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### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Inter-agency cluster coordination structures and processes in DRC have been affected by the progressive decrease of financial resources as well as complex and sub-optimal field offices structures.
  2. UNICEF CC response was affected by limited funding and the difficulty of identifying suitable staff.
  3. UNICEF DRC partially fulfilled its CC responsibilities, confirmed by a broadly positive perception of the UNICEF CC role.
  4. The recent review of the internal humanitarian architecture and the transition of the CC from the programme sections to dedicated positions within the emergency unit is a positive step to strengthen CO commitment to its cluster coordination role.
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## **5.6 Appropriateness**

### **To what extent have child protection concerns been adequately considered in the design of the response (EQ A1)?**

Child protection concerns are complex and sensitive by definition. In order to be adequately addressed, they require an experienced technical approach and a deliberate strategy accompanied by long-term commitment from protection partners. However, the short duration of L3 projects makes it difficult to achieve sustainable results in child protection. For example, the

reintegration of children who have been released from armed groups needs concrete and durable alternatives including schooling or socio-economic opportunities. While these activities are included in the child protection strategy, they have been implemented only partially, mainly due to funding shortfalls (see Section 5.7). Activities that provide immediate support (negotiation of release, first care in transit centres, etc.) have been prioritized over schooling, socio-economic opportunities and monitoring activities.

In its planned child protection package, UNICEF has attempted to address the key risk factors and has established connections with key actors (the protection cluster, the government, communities, implementing partners) but has had limited results (see Section 5.7). This is because, although comprehensive and appropriate in itself, the child protection package is not realistic under prevailing conditions – i.e. the crisis context, the short-term nature of L3 interventions, the lack of capacity and engagement from the government, the lack of legal structures, the limited number of qualified CP implementing partners, funding shortfalls, etc. These unfavourable conditions, combined with the rising number of protection cases requiring attention, have led UNICEF to prioritize addressing the physical risk factor (through immediate care) over legal and economic activities.

At the activity level, the child protection package is adequate and consists concretely of capacity-building of community structures on the principles of child protection, DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration), reporting of serious violations in the case of children associated with armed forces and groups, sexual and gender-based violence, care of unaccompanied children with support to transitional host families, family tracing and family reunification, psychosocial support

in CFS, and opportunities for schooling and socio-economic reintegration. These are key components where UNICEF has an added value in DRC according to the HAC, 2017-2019.

Although CP concerns have been adequately identified and considered in the design of the response, the intervention did not ensure the achievement of durable results nor the creation/maintenance of a positive protection environment. The unfavourable conditions expressed above did not allow, for instance, for post-reunification monitoring activities. Close monitoring of reunified cases would have helped in preventing violations of children's rights. Also, the fact that the government in Kasai did not initially accept the category of children associated with armed groups, or permit DDR activities to address the needs of such children, made it difficult to identify their specific protection needs.<sup>54</sup> In addition, once reunified, children returned to the same precarious living conditions in which they had found themselves before joining armed groups. Schooling and socio-economic activities were only partially provided. This means that the intervention strategy did not effectively provide these alternative durable solutions that help prevent children from being re-enrolled in armed groups. The lack of post-reunification monitoring means that the number of children being re-enrolled cannot even be established.

The evaluation did however note some positive elements of the design, such as incorporating both immediate action and prevention activities, the inclusion of

sensitization activities, and child care in transit centres or host families. In addition, the presence of UNICEF in Kasai prior to the crisis allowed for an immediate response and the proactive identification of needs by the protection sub-cluster.

#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. Child protection concerns and needs have been adequately identified and considered in the design of the L3 response. However, the intervention design has not been realistic in relation to the prevailing conditions and challenges.
2. Operational constraints led UNICEF to prioritize immediate support over the provision of alternative durable solutions. This calls into question the appropriateness of the UNICEF CP intervention strategy.

#### To what extent have education concerns been adequately considered in the design of the response (EQ A2)?

The education response in the context of the Kasai crisis was initially triggered by the widespread targeting of schools and schoolchildren by armed groups. The reestablishment of safe learning conditions and addressing psychosocial distress associated with the conflict were judged as priority elements of the UNICEF response, in accordance with the minimum standards of the Inter-Agency Network for

<sup>54</sup> The Minimum Standards for Child protection in Humanitarian Action indicate that the DDR process should be led by government authorities (Child Protection Working Group, 'Minimum Standards for Child protection in Humanitarian Action', Global Protection Cluster, Geneva, 2012.). Although the government of Kasai did not accept to implement DDR activities at the beginning of the crisis, a United Nations/Government of DRC joint technical provincial working group (JTWG) was established in Kananga and Tshikapa in June 2018. Among other responsibilities, the JTWG supports the work with children associated with armed groups according to the DDR operational framework.

Education in Emergencies (INEE).<sup>55</sup> In addition, the dynamics of the conflict, in which many school children and their families were obliged to leave their places of residence for weeks to months at a time, added a new challenge for the response due to the need to define mechanisms to re-incorporate children into school and avoid losing a school year.

The intervention was designed to provide the complete EiE package, which includes provisional rehabilitation of school spaces, psychosocial training for teachers and basic furniture and educational kits. Activities for catch-up classes were included, allowing returnee children to re-start their school year and for sixth grade pupils to sit their graduation examinations.

While the overall package approach of the response was basically adequate, including the fundamentals of EiE and integrating a response from other sectors (notably WASH) into schools, the result as evaluated in the field has been far from satisfactory. Appropriateness of the response has to be based on the application of agreed standards, and in this case the evidence gathered during the field visits in many cases showed delivery at substandard levels in the facilities visited, both in terms of quality of reconstruction work and in WASH interventions. The evaluation team understands, however, that an immediate result was achieved through the intervention, restoring the sense of security for many children and offering the opportunity to come to school, where schoolmates and teachers could offer a protective environment in time of conflict.

In order to contextualize those weaknesses, it is important to highlight that in the Kasais, the condition of schools was generally substandard even before the conflict. Any emergency intervention therefore faced the dilemma of whether to restore structures to their previous (deprived) condition or undertake to improve the schools ('build back better'), something already difficult with emergency funds and the short duration of contracts issued under L3 activation procedures. In the Kasais, the state of the targeted schools after the intervention is often regrettable and risks calling into question the reputation of UNICEF or its partners. In South Kivu, the standards of intervention were generally better in schools where the baseline structural situation was not as weak as in the Kasais. Furthermore, in South Kivu, the logic of early recovery seems already to have been incorporated. Many years of humanitarian intervention have led to a consolidation of results that helps transition from the emergency response (L3 or other).

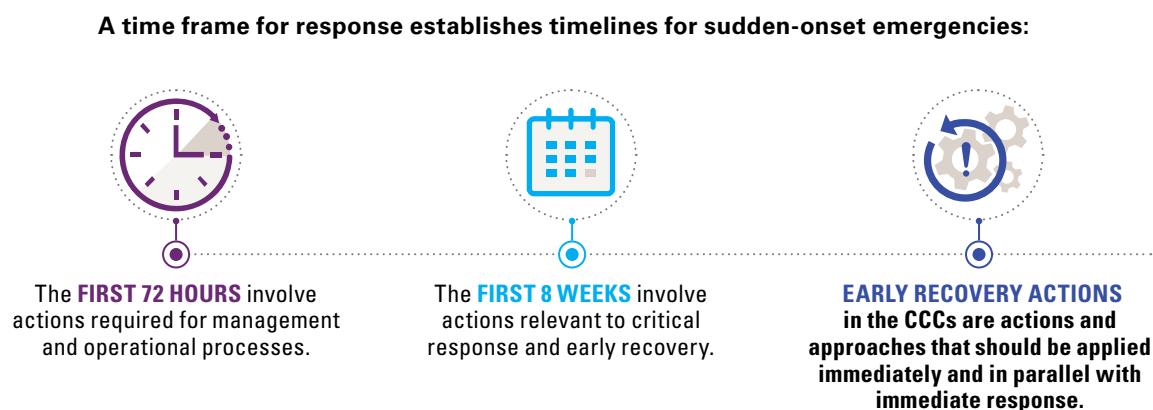
The evaluation concludes that the EiE package as implemented in this context addresses immediate challenges, but remains a long way from restoring secure and adequate conditions for education on a permanent basis. It would require comprehensive action to address the factors preventing progress toward sustainable access to schools and quality education.

The absence of a plan to transition to a more permanent solution affects adequacy as well. The need for an early recovery and transition plan when establishing an emergency response plan is well articulated by the humanitarian community and acknowledged in the CCCs, as shown in Figure 4, page 62.

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<sup>55</sup> Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies, 'Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, response, recovery', INEE, New York, 2010.

**Figure 4: Excerpt from UNICEF Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies**



Source: CCCs, page 5.

#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The overall approach of the response was basically adequate, including the fundamentals of EiE and integrating a response from other sectors. However, the actual interventions were often of inadequate quality, and fell well short of restoring adequate conditions for education. In the Kasais, the existing condition of schools was generally substandard before the conflict. This would seem to present an opportunity to 'build back better', however this concept was only applied to a limited extent.
2. The lack of early recovery interventions has affected the attainment of outcomes (effectiveness) and calls into question the appropriateness of the response actions.

#### To what extent has the UNICEF response adapted to the changing needs of the affected population (EQ A3)?

The analysis in this section centres around three main aspects: (i) the timeliness, quality and utilization of needs assessments; (ii) the adaptation of strategies and; (iii) the targeting approach and mechanisms for ensuring accountability to affected populations (AAP).

##### Needs assessments

In general, agencies have sought to provide a multisectoral package in areas of geographic convergence, prioritizing areas of intervention according to level of urgency. However, convergence with programming has not been sought with the purpose of identifying and targeting same populations on the basis of the level of vulnerabilities and needs. This also applies within UNICEF.

Packages are not adapted to the specific vulnerabilities, risks, needs and contextual factors of each geographical area; rather, they are standard for all regions. This could explain why the HPM is categorized by programme rather than by specific region. There are intentions, however, to increase the depth of analysis and to harmonize needs assessment tools across sectors within UNICEF as well as among other United Nations agencies operating in DRC in 2019. This should result in stronger convergence among agencies and between sectors, as well as intervention packages tailored more specifically to local needs. Proof of that is that the child protection and education intervention packages are standard packages for all regions.

In South Kivu, at the beginning of the crisis, an inter-cluster needs assessment mission took place, but a subsequent, more in-depth multisectoral RRMP assessment was required to better identify sectoral needs and cross-cutting issues.

In Kasai, where there was no experience in emergency response, the RRMP has generally been highly valued, given the rapidity and quality of its needs assessments. The RRMP conducted its first MSA in December 2016, well before the L3 activation. Following this, in February-March 2017, the deployment of ARCC for unconditional cash transfers took place. In June 2017, the identification of RRMP partners and the development of proposals occurred, followed by the signature of PCAs in late August the launch of the RRMP in September 2017. Another MSA was conducted in Lomami, at a time when it was still a 'forgotten area' and there was no mention of declaring it part of the L3. In comparison, RRMP interventions

were not as fast as the MSAs and had a limited scope (largely confined to the distribution of NFI kits) due to insufficient prepositioning of supplies.<sup>56</sup> These interventions, along with projects funded by the CERF, served as the first emergency response prior to the L3 activation.

Another advantage in the Kasai region was the UNICEF presence before the crisis. When the crisis broke out, UNICEF had come to update its development programmes. This served to provide baseline information for the first L3 needs assessments, which were carried out rapidly (within four days). Another rapid assessment was done in Luebo, jointly with WFP, FAO, UNHCR and NGOs, and was used to inform the response plan and funding proposals.

Although there are a number of good examples of joint multisectoral needs assessments for the L3 response, there are fewer examples of joint sectoral assessments, such as the one recently done in Kamonia by the clusters, or those undertaken on WASH and NFIs by REACH investigators. The evaluation has not found any joint assessment done on specific protection or education needs.

An important good practice of the L3 response in Kasai is that UNICEF activated an early warning network of parishes (through Caritas) and community leaders providing prompt updates on new displacements and some basic assessment of needs. This was considered useful to direct RRMP interventions and to obtain data from hard-to-reach areas, but it is certainly not an in-depth assessment system. UNICEF also used existing surveys to identify needs and, already in 2016, prompted the creation of a crisis committee among the few humanitarian actors present at the time.

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<sup>56</sup> The prepositioning of financial, material and human resources is the main feature and added value of the RRMP. However, due to the emergency, the RRMP that was implanted in Kasai did not initially have the advantages that exist in the east, where the mechanism has been operating for many years.

Although multiple mechanisms were put in place to identify needs, many of these could not be targeted. The targeting approach is discussed below.

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### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The child protection and education intervention packages are pre-defined standard packages and have not therefore been designed on the basis of contextual and vulnerability specificities across the L3 regions.
2. There have been good joint initiatives among agencies to identify needs and prioritize areas of intervention. However, joint needs assessments have not been particularly timely, in part because of the late system-wide L3 activation.
3. UNICEF has put in place adequate rapid mechanisms for the identification of needs, especially through the RRMP multisectoral needs assessments and tools, which are commonly used by the humanitarian system.

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### Adaptation of strategies and targeting approach

Adapting the response and strategies to changing needs is particularly challenging in a context like the DRC, where recurring population displacements require a continual redefinition of needs and priorities. In the child protection sector, as previously noted, there were many identified cases that could not be responded to because of financial constraints – in particular cases of gender-based violence.

These cases were not referred to any other actor, most probably due to the lack of a global referral system. Not referring a case goes against the minimum standards for prevention and response to gender-based violence in emergencies.<sup>57</sup>

Beyond not targeting all the people identified as eligible to receive assistance, there is the problem of having identified and targeted people who, after a period of time, can no longer be found because they have moved. In addition, beneficiaries expressed to the evaluation team (KII and FGD) some level of misunderstanding of the reasons for having been selected as beneficiaries, while others they viewed as being equally or even more vulnerable were not selected. This points to an insufficient level of information being given to beneficiaries, as well as the lack of a clear targeting approach.

Indeed, decisions made about adjustments in the CP intervention package – in terms of number of beneficiaries or types of activities – are not especially clear. Generally, targets have been revised upwards in all sectors to improve coverage, and to adapt the response to the increasing number of IDPs, among other reasons. However, decisions have been taken on a case-by-case basis, and not particularly guided by the intervention strategies defined for each type of area (IDP areas, areas of return, host areas or mixed areas).

In terms of readjustments of activities due to budget revisions, usually the types of activities that have been cut first have been sensitization/training activities and monitoring activities. In general, prioritizing assistance over prevention and monitoring seems logical; however the evaluation noted

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<sup>57</sup> The Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies indicate that “case managers should be familiar with the range of multisector services available and engage regularly with other agencies to ensure a coordinated process of referral, service delivery and follow-up”, p. 56

that prevention and follow-up activities are especially important in the protection sector in helping to achieve sustainable results. It is therefore worth considering whether it might be advisable to have a slightly lower caseload (by trying to refer cases to other protection partners) so as not to have to reduce those activities that most contribute to the sustainability of the project results.

In contrast, the evaluation has noted some relevant adjustments to the protection intervention package. First, in addition to UASC and children associated with armed forces/groups, the most vulnerable children have been added as target groups (orphans, wounded children). This is especially relevant (although done reactively and not from the design phase) considering that the minimum standards for child protection clearly indicate that actors should avoid targeted help based on blanket categories of children (such as 'separated children' or 'children formerly with armed forces or armed groups'). Rather, work with the child protection working group to outline criteria for helping children based on vulnerability to abuse, exploitation and violence. Second, targets have been increased to include existing protection cases. And third, additional options for socio-economic reintegration have been introduced based on the preferences of the beneficiaries (initially, only agriculture and livestock work were contemplated).

Regarding education, the adaptation of targets over time has followed better information about the needs, and the types of intervention have been adapted to the nature of the situation, from IDPs in host communities to returns. Catch-up classes and support to pupils in the sixth grade became very relevant through the consolidation of returns. In addition, training of teachers has sometimes been adapted to go beyond the EiE approach, including new pedagogy skills and training around new

curricula, in a context where these updates are usually difficult. Partners were able to adapt to the challenges with gains in efficiency as more activities were achieved within existing resources.

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#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. While the assistance packages are predefined, programmatic adjustments were made that show some adaptation to changing needs. However, these adjustments were mainly reactive and not framed within a clear targeting approach and strategic prioritization.
2. The education in emergency response was able to adapt, though limited by coverage constraints, to emerging needs such as catch-up classes for and adapting training for teachers to specific curricula requirements.

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#### Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) mechanisms

Beneficiary participation in project design, implementation and monitoring of the UNICEF response to the L3 crisis is relatively weak. In protection, in the identification/design phase, children, women and temporary host families (*familles transitoires*, or FAT) are asked about their needs, but mainly for identification purposes rather than for adapting the intervention package to their specific and differentiated needs. UNICEF and child protection partners therefore rely on community mechanisms, such as the community alert management system. Community networks work well for identifying beneficiaries but still need to be strengthened and their work followed-up more closely given that they are volunteers rather than part of any formal system. During the

crisis, thanks to the community alerts of the RECOPE (community child protection network) and the Government's Division of Social Affairs, UNICEF discovered that many people remained hidden in the bush, which explained why there were many deserted villages.

There are no sector-based complaint mechanisms formalized to help reinforce results monitoring and AAP. Actors such as WFP have long experience in complaint mechanisms, including a 'green line' to receive direct feedback on beneficiary satisfaction. There has been some discussion among agencies to try to unify a mechanism at the national level, but no further steps have been taken. Although not systematized or applied nationwide, UNICEF uses the SMS RapidPro tool meant to adapt the response to the rapidly evolving context through beneficiary feedback. This has been applied mainly for the health sector. There are also community monitoring committees (*comités de surveillance communautaires*) but, again, these are not as systematic as they should be to strongly fulfil the AAP purpose.

In the education sector, all beneficiaries in interviews and discussion groups stated that they have had little say in planning and in the decisions on the solutions provided; they have mainly been passive recipients, even if community engagement for reconstruction has been requested and community participation is part of the EiE methodology.

Complaints and feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries to articulate observations on deficiencies of implementation were also absent in the education sector. In cases such as those described above, where emergency rehabilitation of schools was of substandard quality, the potential to capture observations

and complaints from beneficiaries would be very appropriate; such monitoring could facilitate eventual corrective action. There is room to engage parents' associations or school committees for this purpose.

#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. There is a highly developed community information mechanism for beneficiary identification purposes, but no sector complaint mechanisms are formalized to help reinforce results monitoring and AAP.
2. In the child protection sector, AAP/ complaint mechanisms are especially relevant because they can serve as an immediate response mechanism or as a preventive measure.
3. Community participation in the education sector was limited by weak capacity of affected communities. No mechanism of participation on the design or to channel complaints was put in place.

#### To what extent did the UNICEF response converge, taking advantage of the complementary nature of its programming approaches (EQ A4)?

An integrated approach to education and child protection was conceptualized for the Kasai crisis<sup>58</sup> and later extended as an intervention framework to guide other areas of the L3 activation (as in South Kivu). This integrated approach aimed to provide support and referral of cases involving children associated

<sup>58</sup> United Nations Children's Fund, 'Intervention Permanente Conjointe Education-Protection: Présentation de l'intervention holistique pour l'éducation et la protection des enfants affectés par la crise dans le Grand Kasai', presentation, UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, August 2017.

with armed groups, sexual violence and other forms of abuse. The minimum standards for child protection advocate for integration between protection and education efforts by ensuring access to safe school education for all children, as well as long-term viable livelihood opportunities.

The integration of protection and education into a response strategy is highly relevant in the DRC context, even if its effective operationalization has been limited (see Section 5.7). Lessons could be derived from the experience currently being implemented in South Kivu, where a PCA with shared protection and education objectives is being implemented.

More limited has been the integration of WASH with other sectors. For example, WASH in nutrition initially targeted only half of nutrition cases, and the field visits conducted by the evaluation team found evidence of a lack of joint planning and follow-up. Regarding WASH in schools, further to the link with the “*écoles et villages assainis*” (hygienic schools and villages) approach, lack of coordinated planning and different geographical areas of intervention prevented the expected synergies. Furthermore, in many cases, the implementation of WASH in the schools visited by the evaluation team was below CCC standards.

Efforts have been made to jointly prioritize areas to be covered, as evidenced in the planning documents, but this has not led to multisectoral responses; rather the ‘silo’ approach of UNICEF sections prevails.<sup>59</sup> WASH and nutrition represent a consolidated area of integration, with some tools already in place,

but some constraints were identified as well (see Annex 16). Needs assessments confirm that targeted vulnerable people have varied needs; addressing the needs of some and not others can have harmful effects, especially for protection cases. For example, child protection partners have repeatedly mentioned how risky it is not to ensure school reintegration for reunified children who could easily be re-recruited into armed groups if they have no occupation during the day. The evaluation also found a lack of assistance in water and food in some of the child-friendly spaces visited. Although some integration of WASH and protection was pursued, it could have been sought more systematically between the protection and WASH sections, and also with the RRMP.

#### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The cross-cutting integration of protection into other sectors has not been assured in the L3 response.
2. The UNICEF strategy of integrating protection and education activities, although considered very appropriate, has not been effectively operationalized. Community reintegration is an important condition to reconcile education and protection and achieve integrated durable results.
3. Joint prioritization of areas between partners does not ensure a multisectoral response/package.

<sup>59</sup> This is evidenced by the very few joint PCAs addressing different sectors, the lack of joint sectoral planning and the absence of joint monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

## 5.7 Effectiveness<sup>60</sup>

Effectiveness of the response is hereby understood as the achievement of results toward targets. From the data analysis, and according to the targets established in the HPM indicators, the evaluation has assessed how progress, at the level of outputs, has been achieved in reaching those targets. The team also included in the analysis a summary of the UNICEF contribution toward the intended outcomes in education and child protection (see Annex 17).

Although the focus of the evaluation is on child protection and education, readers interested in getting a more complete view of the UNICEF response are referred to Annex 14, where key operational aspects of the WASH, nutrition and health interventions, as well as some conclusions and orientations addressed to UNICEF DRC, are presented.

### What are the results of the education and child protection responses in the Kasais and South Kivu (EQ EFT1)?

#### Education

The evaluation confirms that EiE activities reached a significant number of children in L3 areas (more than 150,000 children reached by October 2018), even if progress toward the targets is still in the range of 50 per cent (see Table 6, page 69). The support provided is judged necessary but not sufficient to reach

the intended output, namely: *"# of girls and boys (5-11 years) affected by conflict or natural disasters given access to quality education and psychosocial activities."* The aim as formulated of providing access to quality education implies a result that is actually an outcome of the emergency intervention.

The progress toward this outcome has been affected by the limited coverage of the intervention and the weak standards achieved for the rehabilitation of classrooms and the WASH in schools component. While a number of schools have been rehabilitated, the rehabilitation has not always been appropriate or is already in disrepair, as observed during the field phase of the evaluation. In addition, as noted under coverage, rehabilitation has not always been linked with teacher training or the distribution of kits for children (EiE package). And when both components have taken place, in many cases the WASH interventions provided (latrines) has been inadequate. While this statement is based on what the evaluation was able to witness in the field (see Annex 10 on field visit development), further interviews with partners and UNICEF staff, as well as further document review, allow us to generalize the finding.

The education section provided information on the estimated targets to be achieved, and those to be addressed within the HPM indicators framework (see Table 4, page 50). Table 6, page 69 shows progress toward targets as of October 2018.

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<sup>60</sup> As per the ToR, the evaluation focuses on child protection and education; however, this section also includes key operational aspects of other sectors in order to provide a global perspective of the L3 response.

**Table 6: Progress toward education targets - HPM**

HPM indicators. September 2018	Grand Kasai		South Kivu		Tanganyika	
	Target (Nov. 2017- Dec. 2018)	Total Results	Target (Nov. 2017- Dec. 2018)	Total Results*	Target (Nov. 2017- Dec. 2018)	Total Results*
<b>EDUCATION</b>						
# of girls and boys (5-11 years) affected by conflict or natural disasters given access to quality education and psychosocial activities	149,960	88,336	71,658	31,674	74,520	29,923
# of school-aged boys and girls (5 to 11 years) affected by crisis receiving learning materials	149,960	77,120	71,658	24,417	74,520	47,611
# of classrooms set up or rehabilitated	986	314	717	0	372	55
# of teachers trained on learner-centred methodologies, peace education, conflict/disaster risk reduction (C/DRR), and psychosocial support	2,727	3,178	1,303	680	1,613	2,818

Source: HPM tables of September 2018

Progress toward the consolidation of outcomes should stem from the intended activities and outputs (see ToCs for the sector) but the evaluation team found that such consolidation/sustainability is limited by the type of emergency contracts linked to L3<sup>61</sup> and the lack of a transition programme to consolidate results and capacities (see Annex 17 on the contribution to outcomes). Corrective action has also been limited by the difficulties faced in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), which included access limitations, scarcity of funding and security constraints.

The complementarities between education and protection cannot be seen as effectively implemented so far, even if the strategy has

been conceptualized<sup>62</sup> and some initiatives are ongoing and can provide lessons for the future.<sup>63</sup> Several constraints prevented an effective integrated response. Challenges identified include limited coverage of the initiative, difficult integration between partners, challenges in follow-up and monitoring<sup>64</sup> and structural weaknesses in the referral of protection cases.

The field visits were however able to identify examples of good practice, such as where CFS were set up close to schools, some of which established afternoon shifts to absorb pupils from those CFS that otherwise would have lost education opportunities. In other cases, however, education activities and support to

<sup>61</sup> L3 PCAs and contracts are short-term due to limited flexibility of funding contributions.

<sup>62</sup> Stratégie d'intervention permanente conjointe éducation-protection. United Nations Children's Fund, 'Intervention Permanente Conjointe Éducation- Protection: Présentation de l'intervention holistique pour l'éducation et la protection des enfants affectés par la crise dans le Grand Kasai', présentation, UNICEF DRC, Kinshasa, August 2017.

<sup>63</sup> This statement is based on the assessment of the situation in the field (Kasais and South Kivu) as of November 2018. Some initiatives that were just beginning in South Kivu toward an integrated education/CP PCA could offer a useful lesson at the time of publishing the report.

<sup>64</sup> Different partners, contracts and sections make it difficult to harmonize M&E – see section on lessons learned.

schools were not linked with CP-related issues, and no referral or proactive identification was in place. Also, access to safe schools for reunited children has barely been provided, for financial reasons. The weak capacity of partners and the differences in PCAs in regard to administrative and monitoring processes have also been unhelpful. A pilot initiative currently underway in South Kivu, which integrates objectives in education and protection into a single PCA,<sup>65</sup> offers an opportunity to derive lessons for a more extended application of the concept.

Despite the limitations with regard to WASH in schools, one intervention that was actually present in all schools visited was hygiene awareness, even with the usual constraint of not having water points nearby. This is due to awareness-raising by partners and UNICEF C4D, and the proactive involvement of school directors and teachers and provincial communication plans promoted by UNICEF C4D.<sup>66</sup>

**Picture 4:** Latrines for a school with 400 pupils



Emergency interventions aimed to urgently provide a secure environment for children in a context where schools had been heavily targeted by armed groups. In the areas and schools targeted by the response, the rapid reaction sponsored by UNICEF allowed children to restore their attendance to schools and protected them from other threats by providing an enabling environment and supervision by teachers.

However, the situation has changed over time, and while the positive effect of these initiatives is undeniable, the lack of follow-up affects the situation at the time of the evaluation. In most of the schools visited where emergency rehabilitation was provided (tarpaulins or tents), these were often in very poor condition, with plastic sheeting or tents already leaking. In addition, no school furniture was available, no kits for children had been provided, and teachers did not receive any training or support activity. In other areas, the rehabilitation was incomplete due to the difficult engagement of very vulnerable communities. In these areas as well, the learning spaces for children were in very poor condition, without tables and seats, to say nothing of a permanent school structure. In some cases, communities had completed the construction of walls and ceiling, but this was done without proper guidance and education cluster standards regarding classroom area, height, ventilation, lighting, were not applied.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> PCA of PTO-DRC currently being implemented in Bunyakiri, Kalonge, Minova and Kalehe.

<sup>66</sup> Handwashing is one of 15 essential family practices agreed in common with the sectoral programme, which have been promoted in the Kasais and other L3 regions. The approach put in place for this promotion has considered students not only as beneficiaries but also as agents of change in their respective environments. The emphasis on handwashing during the five key moments was also made through provincial communication plans implementation in support to cholera response operations, including the epidemic registered in some provinces that were already in L3.

<sup>67</sup> Global Education Cluster, 'Lignes Directrices du Cluster Education 2015', DRC Education Cluster, Kinshasa, 2015.

**Pictures 5 and 6:** School with tarpaulins provided by UNICEF in Kananga, with signs of deterioration



**Pictures 7 and 8:** Examples of semi-permanent rehabilitation



Community engagement is an integral component of the EiE model, but during the field phase of the evaluation, FGDs and KIIs raised concerns about the capacity of communities to engage in reconstruction or maintenance.<sup>68</sup> In some cases, the weak capacities of communities – who were already in a critical situation, with acute needs in health, access to food and livelihoods, etc. – affects their community participation. In addition, the community component of EiE is sometimes difficult to achieve through short-term contracts such as those linked to an emergency response.

We can infer from the PCAs and the *fiches techniques* analysed that those weaknesses affect the majority of the schools targeted in the Kasais. This is due to the limited budget and contract duration, the manner of implementation, and especially the reliance on plastic sheeting (used in 180 classrooms in Kasai Central) and tents (we accounted for

at least 50 tented classrooms) related to the global number of classes rehabilitated (314, including semi-permanent rehabilitation, some of which also exhibited substandard outcomes). In all, the evaluation concludes that what has been provided is not sufficient to achieve the intended results, other than the immediate effect of providing a suitable space to start education activities.

This is obvious when plastic sheeting or tents were used, but is also the case when community engagement for semi-permanent rehabilitation was the modality, as mentioned above. The usual approach was to provide to the community with materials to a value of \$1,500-2,000 per school to promote rehabilitation.<sup>69</sup> Without proper guidance and follow up, however, this contribution is unlikely to make any difference to the overall precarious state of learning conditions. Better coordination of partners and better matching between the EiE

<sup>68</sup> Semi-permanent rehabilitation was based on the provision of building materials to communities, basically sheets of corrugated iron and poles and bricks to build half walls and provide some shelter. Communities did not respect standards regarding classroom size. Quality of the works where visited was poor; such facilities would not last for more than a few months if not properly followed up and reinforced. Lack of a transition plan will affect the outcome.

<sup>69</sup> This was decided in order to ensure a minimum across the board, given the needs and the resources available. With this approach, the need of strong engagement of the partner is crucial to provide guidance and supervision. In addition, consolidation of the structures would require a transition plan addressing identified weaknesses.

package and the rehabilitations carried out would result in more effective and efficient use of resources.

It should be noted that the situation in South Kivu is different. To begin with, the baseline situation of structures is better. In addition, reconstruction has been approached with better knowledge on the use of available resources, communities are better prepared and have greater resources, and it seems the long tradition of humanitarian aid in the regions visited favours a better integration of the activities into a more sustainable outcome.

All this being said, in both contexts, while the initial response seems to have achieved limited results, a second phase, which is now underway (one year after the L3 declaration) seems to take account of lessons learned, and a better standard of quality is intended. This has been observed in Kasai Oriental, where new tents are being deployed where the old ones are damaged, or in Tshikapa and South Kivu, where initial rehabilitation is being completed in a second phase. The approach, however, preserves the short-term and emergency nature of the L3 interventions and does not address transition to development. Where permanent solutions have been applied (there are some limited examples of reconstruction of classrooms using professional building companies in the Kasais and South Kivu), appropriate standards were respected. The criteria to select locations for permanent rehabilitation are not clear,<sup>70</sup> but these are interesting examples of a possible 'build back better' approach.

#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Progress toward targets has been substantial, yet the support provided is judged insufficient to reach the intended result (access to quality education and psychosocial activities).
2. The main limitation is in consolidating outcomes, which is the consequence of the type of emergency contracts linked to L3, and the lack of a transition programme to consolidate results and capacities.
3. The complementarities between education and protection cannot be judged effective so far. Challenges identified include limited coverage of the initiative, difficult integration between partners, challenges in follow-up and monitoring, lack of integrated objectives/indicators, and structural weaknesses of the referral of eventual protection cases.
4. In some cases, especially in the Kasais, the WASH intervention was not aligned with the EiE package, due to different geographical areas of intervention between education and WASH clusters. When alignment did occur, the evaluation deemed the implementation to be substandard.
5. The training provided to teachers within the EiE intervention has been effective, has been implemented with efficiency gains and is potentially a good instrument to improve the overall effectiveness of the education response. However, there was limited coverage.

<sup>70</sup> The evaluation concludes that the criteria were ad hoc, depending on personal engagements and capacities available, and required some adaptation of initial budgets in PCAs to reach the amount necessary for those works.

## Child Protection

The levels of attainment of planned activities and outputs in child protection are discussed in this section, based on the progress made up to September 2018 as reflected in the HPM data. Planned outcomes are defined in the UNICEF response plans, and the UNICEF contribution to their achievement is presented in Annex 17. Among other sources, the analysis takes into consideration key lessons learned from partners, as discussed in the field. A summary of these lessons learned is presented in Annex 18.

In the L3 response plans, this HPM indicator/output relates to child protection outcome 7,<sup>71</sup> which addresses the prevention of and response to child recruitment. Prevention activities have included advocacy against the illegal or arbitrary detention of children (and, in the case of Kasai Oriental, facilitating access to legal and other assistance for children in contact with the law), training of security forces on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), and sensitization/awareness-raising around the prevention of recruitment and use of children in armed forces and groups.

Response activities have included the identification/release of children associated with armed forces and groups (CAAFAG) and the provision of immediate holistic assistance (medical, psychosocial, clothing and food) in transit centres (*centres de transits*, or CTOs). CTOs are designed to give holistic and temporary assistance to children before they are reunified and supported with educational, vocational or socio-economic reintegration.

CTOs are well valued and are effective in the short term, since children receive comprehensive assistance quickly, are protected, exchange experiences and stand in solidarity with each other (compared to temporary families, which are discussed below). The problem is that once children leave the centre to be reunified, they may return to negative behaviours. Another concern was that in CTOs, children were offered three meals per day, which increased the number of cases in which children falsely claimed to be associated with armed groups in order to receive assistance. To mitigate this problem, UNICEF adapted its CTO assistance to more closely match the standards familiar to children by reducing the meals to two per day.

**Table 7: Children formerly associated with armed forces/groups – progress toward results**

Child protection output	Grand Kasai		South Kivu		Tanganyika	
	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)
# of children formerly associated with armed forces/groups released and provided with temporary assistance	1,600	1,793 (112%)	1,000	318 (32%)	1,000	220 (22%)

<sup>71</sup> Child recruitment and use, illegal and arbitrary detention is prevented and addressed for conflict-affected children.

Considering the short duration of projects (usually six months) and the fact that children can remain in the centre for up to two months,<sup>72</sup> the evaluation has noted through field interviews with implementing partners and UNICEF that it is crucial to start the reintegration process when the child is still in the centre. However, in many cases, children have not been included in any (school or professional) reintegration process and have not received any follow-up visit after being reunified with their families. Monitoring activities have been especially weak, mainly due to budget restrictions. Another constraint is that CTOs are only located in cities, meaning that there is a lack of on-site mechanisms for specific cases that need a quick response. This is the case now for all returnees from Angola not installed in Tshikapa (where the CTO is located). UNICEF and partners have indirectly addressed this problem by prioritizing temporary host families (*familles transitoires*, or FATs) over CTOs, given that building new CTOs is too expensive. This is a questionable solution (see the weaknesses with regard to FATs in the following section).

CTO assistance has been restricted due to lack of resources. For example, in Kasai Oriental, after the third CERF project in February 2018, the response in CTOs has been removed, and children have started to be assisted through FATs only. There are, however, additional reasons to prioritize FATs over CTOs. The former type of assistance is considered to be more adapted to existing community mechanisms and habits, and it makes possible to adapt care to groups of children disseminated across several localities.

According to HPM figures, targets were apparently exceeded only in Grand Kasai. However, it is important to note that these targets have in many cases been revised upwards from their original values, reflecting additions to the caseload. This appears to be good practice when considering that L3 targets and achievements are low compared to the needs. However, this should not result in the quality of the response being reduced, or the range of its activities circumscribed, in order to accommodate an increased caseload within the existing budget. In other words, quality should not be sacrificed for quantity. This has been

**Table 8: UASC care and family reunification – progress toward results**

Child protection output	Grand Kasai		South Kivu		Tanganyika	
	L3 Target (Nov. 17-Dec 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17-Dec 18)	Total Results* (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17-Dec. 18)	Total Results* (Sept. 18)
# of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) identified and/or placed in alternative care arrangements and/or who benefited from individual follow-up (SC/ UASC; girls/boys)	9,000	4,245 (47%)	1,000	272 (27%)	2,000	996 (50%)
# of separated and unaccompanied children identified and reunited with their families	9,000	3,847 (43%)	200	119 (60%)	1,000	390 (39%)

<sup>72</sup> Criteria for assistance in CTOs is not always clear, given that many cases exist of children who have remained in the centre for more than two months. This is also observed with the FATs.

observed in Kasai Oriental, where a partner reduced the composition of all kits (already limited) in order to provide CTO assistance to seven additional children. While this is a particular case that cannot be generalized, it is normally not good practice and demonstrates limited partner capacity and low UNICEF control/monitoring of activities.

These indicators/outputs are related to CP outcome 4,<sup>73</sup> which addresses the needs and reunification of UASC. The level of achievement in the number of UASC placed in FATs is below 50 per cent of the targets in all L3 regions. UASC reunification is also low, except in South Kivu where it reaches 60 per cent – albeit with an incomprehensibly low target (only 200 UASC had been targeted for reunification).<sup>74</sup>

Some elements indicate that FAT assistance has worked effectively as a relief measure. For instance, many reunified children want to return to their old FATs, where they had a better quality of life, and the number of FATs has grown progressively as community awareness spreads. They are particularly essential for the many cases of children that have lost all possible links with their community of origin.

Even so, there is substantial room for improvement:

- There are cases of children remaining for longer than the maximum designated length of time (two months), for whom there is no possibility of being reunified with their biological families and no clear solutions are foreseen;

- There are FATs that act not out of solidarity but rather to receive assistance, and there is no mechanism to identify such cases;
- There is a growing number of ‘spontaneous FATs’ (leaders, pastors), who have not been ‘officially’ targeted under the project and therefore do not receive kits;
- The criteria by which official FATs are selected are very broad;<sup>75</sup>
- Many FATs do not take host children to school, and no follow-up actions exist to address this;
- There is limited follow-up on the use of cash distributed to FATs. The cash is meant to buy food for host children, but some FATs have admitted that they invest the cash for their own benefit (e.g. buying fields or feeding their biological children);
- Taking care of additional children places an economic burden on FATs;<sup>76</sup>
- There is no clarity about the decision-making and criteria with regard to the composition of the entry/exit kits (for example, the percentage in-kind vs. cash);
- There is some conflation between UASC and CAAFAG and confusion around the assistance provided to each category across regions. For example, in Tshikapa, the reintegration kit for CAAFAG was not provided (entry/exit kits are provided only to UASC), whereas in Mbuji-Mayi, exit kits are provided in CTOs rather than FATs, which has no rational explanation (many partners have actually suggested that an exit kit in FATs should be added to the intervention package).

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<sup>73</sup> Separation of children from families is prevented and addressed and family-based care is promoted.

<sup>74</sup> The evaluation team has requested sectoral clarifications from the CO on HPM targets and progress toward results. Some data inconsistencies have been clarified, others not.

<sup>75</sup> Some of the selection criteria for FATs include: being a couple; having other (biological) children; having a stable socio-economic situation.

<sup>76</sup> FATs receive \$3/day/child, which they consider to be insufficient.

The family reunification process is also a challenge. As mentioned **above**, there are children who remain for long periods of time in FATs because of the impossibility of tracing their biological families. This increases the economic pressure on FATs, but providing them with further support is not envisaged due to limited resources. All partners consulted by the evaluation recommended that support be provided to biological families as well, in order to ensure that reunited children do not live in precarious conditions, but this would require a post-reunification follow-up plan to ensure the capacity of biological families to take care of children. Another concern is that many reunified children are stigmatized and rejected by their communities, despite the awareness-raising work done by the RECOPE before the children are reunified.

In general terms, children’s safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning is the most successful result of the CP intervention. This output contributes to outcome 6 of the L3 response plans.<sup>78</sup> The figures show that in the three L3 regions, more than 60 per cent of the target has been achieved.

The CFS are the meeting points for all vulnerable children, who are supplied with games and sports (adapted for boys and girls), for their amusement and to support learning and social cohesion. They are also given psychosocial support (individual or in focus groups), for which the animators / social workers have been trained. The CFS is also a space used to raise awareness among parents, children and the RECOPE about the rights and protection of children. On many occasions, CFS have been built next to schools to facilitate attendance at both sites. Some CFS existed before the L3, but they were not functional, so their renewed functionality is a result of the L3 response; this has allowed other vulnerable children to benefit from CP projects.

There is a large dependence on CFS, especially on the part of children who do not go to school. This dependence turns into a risk of children relapsing when projects are completed and CFS activities finish. In order to mitigate this risk, social workers have continued the activities on a voluntary basis after project completion.<sup>79</sup> However, there is no incentive for the volunteers to sustain

**Table 9: Safe access to community spaces (CFS) – progress toward results**

Child protection output	Grand Kasai		South Kivu		Tanganyika	
	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results* (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results* (Sept. 18)
# of displaced, refugee and returnee children provided with safe access to community spaces for socialization, play and learning	25,000 <sup>77</sup>	65,740 (263%)	20,000	12,869 (64%)	40,000	24,306 (61%)

<sup>77</sup> As per the explanation received from UNICEF in the field, the 25,000 target figure was revised and increased, but has not been updated in the table. This means that UNICEF did not reach, in September 2018, 263 per cent of the target. The team has requested updated data and will be able to better clarify disparities when the updated data are provided.

<sup>78</sup> Psychosocial support is provided to children and their caregivers.

<sup>79</sup> The animators receive a bonus of \$80/month and when the project has finished, many of them have continued as volunteers but decreasing the regularity of activities.

these activities, other than solidarity and awareness of the community good. Another problem expressed is that on many occasions, children arrive hungry and thirsty and are not provided with any food assistance. Other services are similarly lacking: although UNICEF child protection staff, at the internal level, try to coordinate with WASH colleagues to ensure WASH assistance in CFS, the evaluation found that in several CFS visited there was a lack of water. In addition, the participation of girls is much lower than that of boys, and at the time of the mission this had not yet been addressed. Finally, although the displaced, refugee and returnee children are in good harmony inside the CFS, the same social cohesion is not found at the level of their parents, so community tensions remain.

The UNICEF gender-based violence response is linked with child protection outcome 5.<sup>80</sup> Survivors of gender-based violence are provided with holistic support, i.e. psychosocial, medical and judicial support, as well as socio-economic reintegration. Mobile partner teams visiting communities have helped substantially in identifying cases of gender-based violence, and UNICEF has been coordinating well with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in ensuring the mapping and distribution of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits in

health centres – despite the limited resources of UNFPA and the difficulty in providing support within the required 72 hours. With regard to the latter, the evaluation team wishes to highlight the persuasion practice of CAMPS, which provides women with an additional hygienic kit on the condition that they reach a health centre within 72 hours. For socio-economic reintegration, especially in South Kivu, the L3 response has included the creation of women’s credit and savings associations, which have helped mitigate the stigma faced by survivors of gender-based violence.

The evaluation observed that the psychosocial support is highly valued by women, as are the sensitization/training activities, despite the fact that social workers are predominantly male. The success of the CP trainings in all regions is clear; the evaluation found that there is widespread demand for sensitization and training to be renewed and be more frequent, especially in Kasai Oriental, where gender-based violence aspects are not very present in the training. In short, while the response to gender-based violence has been effective, the caseload in the three regions is low: there are many identified cases that have not been targeted due to lack of funds, and many other cases are known but have not been identified.

**Table 10: Comprehensive gender-based violence response – progress toward results**

Child protection output	Grand Kasai		Sud Kivu		Tanganyika	
	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)	L3 Target (Nov. 17- Dec. 18)	Total Results (Sept. 18)
# of identified survivors of sexual violence provided with a comprehensive response to GBV	3,000	1,701 (57%)	700	842 (120%)	1,000	292 (29%)

<sup>80</sup> Violence, exploitation and abuse of children and women is prevented and addressed, including gender-based violence.

Cultural norms and taboos are also a hindering aspect for the identification and reporting of cases of gender-based violence.

Other CP outcomes (CP1, CP2 and CP3)<sup>81</sup> have been addressed through cross-cutting actions such as coordination, reporting, communication and advocacy. CP2 on monitoring and reporting on grave violations is addressed through training workshops for partners on MRM, MRM reporting, C4D campaigns and advocacy work with local authorities and community leaders against child recruitment and, more broadly, on monitoring analysis and reporting arrangements. In Kasai Central, to enhance the link between education and protection, education partners participated in MRM trainings. Training activities are considered very useful and there is a general demand for receiving more.

CP1 (child protection working group is operational) and CP3 on strengthening child protection mechanisms are addressed through capacity reinforcement of the child protection sub-cluster in the identification of problems and formulation of alerts, the referral system, and CP reporting. Also, community volunteers are trained on denouncing and reporting child protection risks and events. The CP sub-cluster is considered to have reported well on CP cases and have informed on updated data. However, a major challenge is the weakness and inefficiency of national institutions, laws and processes to protect the child. Nor is there a global referral system that ensures that all identified CP cases are referred and

have access to comprehensive and specialized care and support. As building the capacity of authorities in DRC is very complex, most activities for CP2 and CP3 have given a higher priority to local ownership, thus channelling the support to families and community-based child protection mechanisms, in line with the CP minimum standards.

Finally, CP8 on preventing the use of landmines and other weapons is addressed through the identification of areas at risk of pollution from mines and explosive remnants of war and advocacy campaigns for mapping, community outreach and clean-up of sites. The work done in this area has been very limited; it has not been a priority for the L3 response.

To conclude, the planned CP activities were adequate to reach the intended outputs and contribute toward the eight outcomes. Furthermore, all planned activities have been carried out. However, there are key activities that have been implemented either partially or with very low coverage, for the reasons explained throughout the report. This has prevented a more effective and comprehensive response. Such activities include, for instance, the provision of legal support, support for educational, vocational and economic reintegration of children released from armed forces/groups, or the response to gender-based violence. The analysis recognizes, however, that there have been some good achievements in the CP intervention, given the difficult conditions in which it has been implemented.

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<sup>81</sup> Monitoring and reporting on grave violations and other serious protection concerns for children and women is undertaken and systematically triggers response (including advocacy); key child protection mechanisms are strengthened in emergency-affected areas; and the use of landmines and other indiscriminate or illicit weapons by state and non-state actors is prevented and their impact addressed.

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## SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. The L3 response has provided a fair immediate response to addressing child recruitment, UASC and other vulnerable children through temporary holistic assistance (in transit centres and host families), with better results in the Kasai region.
2. Child-friendly spaces are greatly appreciated by the communities and have potentially valuable linkages with education interventions. However, these synergies have not been sufficiently leveraged.
3. Prevention activities at the community level are well implemented through advocacy, trainings and sensitization work, but to achieve sustainable results, these need to be reinforced.
4. There are very limited individual follow-up actions after reunification. The risk of relapse remains high and reunification does not ensure a protective environment or improvement in the living conditions of children.
5. Schooling and socio-economic reintegration are key elements to contribute to the well-being of children in the longer term, but have rarely been implemented and only a case-by-case basis.
6. The limited technical capacity of partners, lack of funds, short duration of the projects, limited monitoring of activities, and the low engagement and capacity of the government for protection have been the main constraints to the achievement of protection results.
7. The response to gender-based violence has resulted in isolated cases of success, more in South Kivu than in the Kasais. However, coverage of the response has been scarce.
8. Community networks are an effective resource for identifying protection cases and for perpetuating actions after project completion, but cannot be a sustainable system unless they are further reinforced and regularly monitored by UNICEF and partners.
9. Resources put in place for the CP response have not been sufficient to attain planned results. However, with the available resources, UNICEF and partners could have achieved more results with a multiplier effect through community networks.

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The online survey results on the effectiveness of the global L3 response (which include the Tanganyika region and all sectors) reveal that the most important factors for the success of the wider UNICEF L3 response have been the agency's operational capacity, supplies, L3 SSOPs, strategic management and strong

cluster leadership. These are all internal factors that depend on UNICEF performance, a fact that should be considered a success. The three factors that, according to survey respondents, have most hindered the response are security constraints, limited funding and bottlenecks within UNICEF administrative procedures.

## 5.8 Efficiency

### To what extent was the supply component of the UNICEF response planned, procured and distributed efficiently and in a financially convenient way (EQ EFY1)?

As a general practice, upon a request for an emergency deployment, the approach of Supply Division includes a discussion around whether and how to use the supply function roster tool to identify staff with skills and experience that match the needs of the CO, expressed through a ToR. This involves the SD emergency coordination unit, director's office and the human resources centre.

The supply function roster is useful to quickly screen for the right expertise and profile. SD facilitates communications with the RO and COs in relation to surge support before and during the emergency, an approach that has been tested over a number of emergencies and has proven to be effective in meeting the requirements of the emergency response on timely basis.

In the specific case of DRC, SD used the established mechanism, proposing staff short-listed from the roster. When some COs were reluctant to free their staff for deployment, and as the DRC CO also expressed reservations as to some of the profiles originally proposed, SD managed to identify one staff member from its own emergency team, who was deployed to support the Kasai crisis.

Before the beginning of the crisis in the Kasai region at the end of 2016, the supply situation for UNICEF DRC was characterized by 12 warehouses around the country (which did not include Kananga), with some stocks mainly

dedicated to the RRMP mechanism in the east of the country. No real supply contingency plans or 'non-RRMP' stocks were in place. As noted before, LTAs existed only for services, including transport within the country, and did not include product purchase.

Before the L3 activation, the supply response in the Kasais was – as is generally the case in emergency response – quite limited, and affected by lack of funding and local capacities, as indicated by several respondents at different levels. Several interviewees indicated that excessive centralization at Kinshasa level further hampered field-level initiatives. Some misunderstandings between CO and RO, confirmed by interviews with staff at both levels, prevented the deployment of supply staff on support mission from the latter.

The supply response gathered pace very quickly after the L3 activation, with the assistance of SD in Copenhagen. Statistical information obtained from this office (in Annex 19) confirms the prompt activation of the supply component of the L3 corporate response. Initial steps were taken to receive, handle and deliver to the field a large contribution of NFIs and WASH products,<sup>82</sup> all destined for the RRMP mechanism.

During these initial phases, a senior staff member was deployed from SD to assist the Kananga FO. Two warehouses were established there for the first time, obtained from WFP. Within the framework of the logistics cluster, UNICEF managed to have a very good collaboration with WFP. New, faster processes were put in place for supply management, at the same time building the limited capacity of the FO. Notwithstanding these rapid developments, the first supplies arrived in Kananga only in October.

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<sup>82</sup> Worth \$1.1 million, transported on 12 planeloads, and composed of NFI (~85%) and WASH products and equipment (~15%).

With support from SD, the CO developed a supply and logistics strategy for the Kasais, identifying best access routes and transport options for the region. Given the size, complexities and challenges of the DRC, the document covered most of the country, and was also suitable for Tanganyika and South Kivu, once the L3 was expanded to these two provinces. Within the framework of this strategy, supplies for the Kasai region (Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi and Tshikapa) are mainly transported from Kinshasa by road, while Kalemie is provisioned from Tanzania by boat across Lake Tanganyika. Finally, Bukavu receives its supplies from Rwanda by road. An additional warehouse was opened in Tshikapa to facilitate and shorten transport by road from Kinshasa to the Kasai provinces.

To a very large extent, the majority of supplies purchased and delivered to the field for the L3 Kasai crisis were directed to the RRMP response.<sup>83</sup> Exceptions included ready-to-use therapeutic foods for nutrition, some health kits, and soap for C4D hygiene awareness campaigns. This underscores once more the usefulness of the RRMP as the favoured mechanism for the immediate response – but also the over-reliance on it.

Several challenges affected the supply response and, in some cases, slowed down the delivery and distribution processes. Insufficient financial resources obliged UNICEF to limit the use of air transport (which, while much faster, is extremely expensive), and to utilize road transport instead, which was heavily affected by the terrible state of roads in DRC. Lack of implementing partners, especially during the first months of the crisis, also decreased the distribution pace. Several respondents at different levels indicated that

over-centralization of decisions at Kinshasa level, where supply requirements and orders from the field were often questioned and reduced, caused some unnecessary glitches and delays. Finally, although the redeployment of staff from other FOs helped the supply component of the response, lack of seniority was felt in some FOs; several attempts were made to deploy senior supply staff from other countries within the framework of the L3 SSOPs, but COs refused to release them.

### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. Aside from the arrangements in place for the RRMP in Kinshasa and other FOs (i.e. not in the Kasais), no contingency supply stocks and plans existed in the DRC, and no LTAs for product purchase were in place. The L3 activation allowed for a rapid scale-up and expansion of supply operations, with new warehouses, processes and strategy.
2. The great majority of UNICEF emergency supplies were linked to the RRMP, underscoring the important role played by this mechanism, but also the risk of over-reliance on it.
3. Several factors affected an otherwise successful supply response: shortage of funds limited the use of air transport; lack of suitable implementing partners slowed distribution at field level and increased the need for warehousing capacity; over-centralization and risk-aversion in Kinshasa created unnecessary bottlenecks; several senior supply staff deployments were refused by other COs, notwithstanding the L3 SSOPs activation.

<sup>83</sup> The evaluators have been trying to obtain consolidated information about supply delivery and distribution at FO level and by sector of intervention, with the understanding that the use of warehouse coding would allow for detailed follow-up of supply flows. At the time of writing, this information was not yet available.

## How did UNICEF operations (administration, finance, human resources, information and communication technology) support or constrain the response (EQ EFY2)?

### Human resources

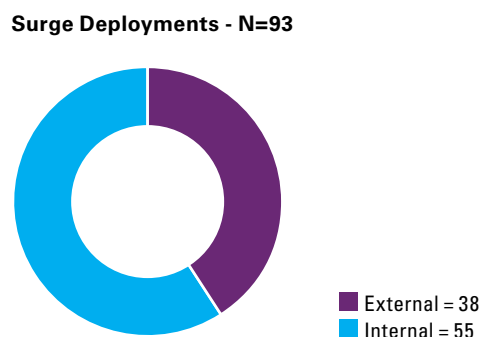
UNICEF DRC began planning a major review of its field presence and staffing in 2016. The physical restructuring process started in 2017, and is still ongoing. The main objectives of the process were a 30 per cent reduction in staff costs and a reduction in the number of FOs from 14 to 10, with some of them downsized.

The Kasai crisis unfolded in parallel to the restructuring process. The need to scale up capacities and staffing in the affected FOs – primarily Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi, and later Tshikapa – offered an opportunity to ‘buffer’ the contract termination of staff in the abolished FOs. Several staff members who had their contracts terminated were deployed in crisis-affected areas, either on mission or with new contracts. By October 2018, 173 positions were abolished around the country and 100 new ones were established, several of which in the crisis-affected FOs. The utilization of the crisis to support and facilitate the redeployment of several staff on abolished posts should be acknowledged as a good practice.

Before the L3 activation, few missions – either redeployments or from other offices – supported the response in Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi. Issues of language and trust had to be taken into consideration when deploying national staff from other FOs to the Kasais (for example, when sending staff from Goma to support the activation of the RRMP in Kananga),

in some cases slowing down the process or requiring some negotiations with the local staff. These support missions greatly increased with the L3 activation. By May 2018, a total of 93 surge missions were undertaken to Kinshasa, the Kasais, Tanganyika and South Kivu.

Figure 5: Surge deployments<sup>84</sup>

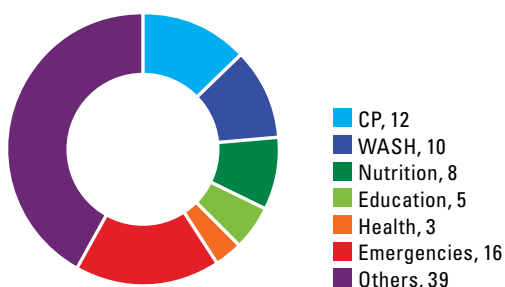


To some extent, the greater use of internal redeployments made sense in light of the restructuring process, and allowed the organization to contain surge costs. However, in some sectors and operations, it raised the issue of lack of seniority and leadership in key positions at field level. According to available data on surge, HQ fielded five support missions to the Kasai crisis (four from New York and one from Geneva) and the RO 16. Some interviewees stressed the fact that the DRC CO did not sufficiently tap into the technical support from HQ made available by the L3 activation. This was especially felt among some of the clusters in Geneva. Additionally, as in other similar crises, it was challenging for the CO to identify French-speakers with the right set of skills, and to limit the frequent turnover of staff on mission, due to the limited attractiveness of the deployment areas.

<sup>84</sup> This and following two figures based on the latest available version of the DRC Surge Recruitment Tracking System (SRTS), 8 May 2018.

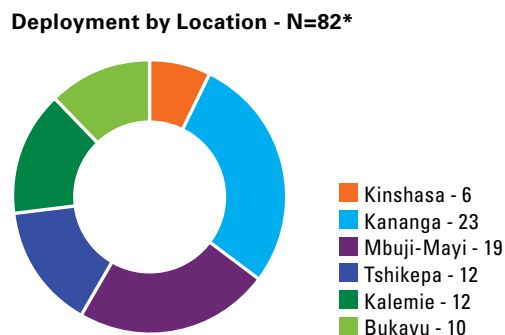
Deployment by sector indicates that child protection fielded the highest number of missions (12), followed by WASH (10), nutrition (8), education (5) and health (3); in addition, 16 deployments supporting the general emergency response took place. Another 39 support missions – covering administrative and financial needs, HR, supply and logistics, information and communication technology (ICT), C4D, and report-writing – were finalized, showing a good balance between programme and operations (often skewed toward programmes in other emergency responses).

**Figure 6: Deployment by sector (N=93)**



The geographical destinations of the various surge mission underlines again the main focus of the response on the Kasais, with a total of 54 deployments to Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi or Tshikapa. Twelve missions were directed to Kalemie (Tanganyika), ten to Bukavu (South Kivu), and six to Kinshasa. An additional ten missions covered multiple locations and one was based in Freetown (Sierra Leone) to support the increase of HR requirements.

**Figure 7: Deployment by location**



**\*Note:** additionally, 9 deployments were shared between Kinshasa and Kananga, one between Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi and Tshikapa, and one was located in Freetown (Sierra Leone) for administrative support to HR processes.

The emergency surge was run smoothly, with a good use of the fast-track recruitment process (FTRP) and in good coordination with the Division of Human Resources' HR partner for emergencies unit. The inclusion of all internal redeployments within the main surge tracking system matrix provided a continuous snapshot of who was deployed where, as well as existing gaps and upcoming needs.

Coordination with the RO for HR-related issues and surge was broadly efficient, although some additional, non-indispensable administrative steps were required for approval by the RO during the selection of surge candidates.

**SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. UNICEF DRC was successful in the utilization of the L3 crisis to buffer the abolishment of numerous posts within the main restructuring process; several staff were either temporarily re-deployed or re-hired in one of the affected FOs.
2. The CO made good use of the FTRP, in coordination with HQ and with the RO, and found a good balance between programme and operations surge.



### Administrative issues other than HR

Before the activation of the L3 response, the FOs in Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi reported to the Lubumbashi FO, and all transactions and administrative processes between the Kasais and Kinshasa had to pass through that office. This additional bureaucratic layer affected the initial scaling up of operations in the Kasais, slowing down contracts, supply procurements, missions and other processes.

The restructuring of UNICEF DRC discussed above changed this arrangement, making the Kananga FO the principal administrative centre in the Kasais, responding directly to Kinshasa. While this happened informally from before the L3 activation, resulting in a notable improvement in administrative processes, it took several months to formally apply the revised structure.

With the activation of the L3 response, demands on FOs increased in terms of working space, logistics and security arrangements, living premises for staff on mission,

increased administrative workload for contracts and travels, etc. Kinshasa acted quickly during the first month in supporting the affected FOs with extra staff for administrative and operations issues. One person on mission from NYHQ was deployed to Kananga, while staff from either Kinshasa or other DRC FOs supported Mbuji-Mayi, Tshikapa and Bukavu. A new office was smoothly opened in Tshikapa (reporting to Kananga), in order to support the response in Western Kasai and facilitate the supply pipeline between Kinshasa and the region. Some decentralization of authority permitted an increase to the financial limit for transactions at field level: everything below \$300,000 can now be managed directly by the Kananga FO, while Kalemie and Bukavu have a limit of \$100,000, above which they must get clearance from Goma FO.

Aside from the utilization of the FTRP for surge and the activation of support from SD (with the consequent speeding up of international procurements), the DRC CO did not fully take advantage of the simplified administrative processes available within the L3 response. Simplified procedures for PCA approval and signature – i.e. virtual contract review committee (CRC) meetings with reduced quorum – were not applied; occasionally, on an *ad hoc* basis, L3-related PCAs were ‘placed on top of the pile’ for priority consideration. Risk-aversion and limited knowledge of these administrative simplifications have been cited as the main reasons for this. At the beginning of the L3 response, when administrative support was sent to Kananga on surge, the FO tried to centralize at its level the management of temporary assignments and PCAs, but this system was never finalized.

The restructuring process also entailed a review of the authorization structure, aimed at the decentralization of certain authorities from Kinshasa to the FOs. This decentralization review did not take place in parallel to the

programme budget review, and it is apparently still pending. In addition, the Kananga FO still lacks its Head of Office, several staff members are covering multiple functions and the future structure of the Kasai FOs still unclear. For example, the future of the Tshikapa office – currently heavily understaffed – is uncertain, with options ranging from possible closure to the office being strengthened in light of the Angola returnee crisis. In the latter scenario, its dependence on the Kananga office, which is much farther away from the border, should be reviewed in order to avoid possible administrative delays and responsibility avoidance.

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### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. Following the L3 activation, the CO proactively obtained administrative assistance for all crisis-affected FOs. Staff from abroad or from other DRC offices were sent on medium-term missions to support Kananga, Mbuji-Mayi, Tshikapa and Bukavu FOs with the increased workload related to administrative, operations and security processes.
  2. The CO did not take advantage of several administrative simplifications allowed by the L3 activation; only occasional ad hoc priority was given to contracts and PCAs linked to the L3.
  3. Following the restructuring of the FOs and the development of the new organigrammes, the necessary parallel authority decentralization structure is still pending and a degree of confusion about accountabilities is still felt at field level.
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## Grand Bargain

The crisis in the Kasais started unfolding at the time the World Humanitarian Summit was closing in Istanbul in May 2016. The main outcome of the summit, the ‘Grand Bargain’ (GB), envisaged a set of provisions and engagements agreed upon by donors and agencies aimed at addressing some of the constraints and challenges the humanitarian system has been experiencing.

Some of its provisions could have been tested during the response to the Kasai crisis. In particular, the GB addresses shortages of funding by increasing flexibility, promoting localization and enhancing efficiency. The L3 SSOPs are intended to address those aspects and have contributed to improved coverage and effectiveness through a more efficient mechanism of organizational engagement, facilitating the mobilization of resources, staff and supply and easing procedures.

The evaluation found some reluctance from donors in-country to support some of the commitments of the GB, especially with regard to flexibility and multi-year funding. However, the team could also highlight some contextual limitations from the side of UNICEF, notably the weak move to localization, partially due to a lack of partners and/or because of their limited capacity. In addition, some are constraints linked to the Government of DRC itself, which is a UNICEF partner but also party to the conflict. The ‘participatory revolution’ foreseen within the GB commitments has not seen significant progress during the L3 response, and neither has there been enhanced engagement between humanitarian and development donors.

## 5.9 Lessons Learned<sup>85</sup>

### Was the L3 corporate activation and architecture useful to delivering planned results (EQ LL1)?

As indicated in previous chapters, the activation of the L3 response by UNICEF on 1 August 2017, had some positive effects, but the implementation of its SSOPs was not comprehensive.

The appointment of the RD as GEC, together with the increased role of the RO, offered one of the first opportunities to have more consistent interactions between the latter and the DRC CO, which has traditionally been very self-reliant and reluctant to ask for external support.

Along with the L3 activation, the DRC CO was able to immediately access the Emergency Programme Fund (EPF), and a total of approximately \$10 million was obtained in three tranches. This amount was extremely useful to intensify emergency operations at field level and scale up the response in terms of staffing, supplies and programmatic partnerships.

Fundraising for the Kasai crisis had some momentum during the second half of 2017, when approximately \$18 million was received from different donors. However, this momentum drastically decreased in 2018, with a single contribution of \$3.3 million from the CERF. With the beginning of the first Ebola outbreak, funding for the Kasais was merged with the country-wide

fundraising framework linked to the HAC. Other L3-mandated processes such as the SitRep, HPM, EMT and other coordination meetings became devoted to the DRC as a whole, including the Ebola crisis, rather than being specific to the Kasai crisis. Additional funds were raised against the country-wide HAC, and part of this (at least \$37.3 million as of end September 2018)<sup>86</sup> utilized in the Kasai response.<sup>87</sup>

The merging of all crises under the same fundraising document and approach, instead of keeping a separate L3-framed focus on the Kasai response, contributed to some degree to the perceived decreasing relevance of the L3 and the progressively looser adherence to the SSOPs.

As noted above, the L3 activation allowed a rapid surge response, although the CO made limited use of the several surge corporate mechanisms available. In addition, several COs refused to release medium- to high-level staff selected for surge to the Kasais, notwithstanding the L3 SSOP requirements. This further underscores the diminishing adherence to the approach and the perception of its relevance.

The supply response also changed gear with the L3 activation. A senior deployment supported the scaling up of UNICEF warehousing capacities in the field, which contributed to a more efficient supply pipeline. (More deployments were planned, but these plans were hindered by COs refusing to release selected staff).

<sup>85</sup> It is important to note that, according to the evaluation matrix in the ToRs, lessons learned are understood as another evaluation criterion with its related specific evaluation questions. This section is therefore part of the findings section and cannot be confused with the usual section of lessons learned "that stem logically from the findings, presents an analysis of how they can be applied to different contexts and/or different sectors, and takes into account evidential limitations such as generalizing from single point observations" (GEROS). Thus, since they are part of the findings, the lessons presented are derived from the KII and focus groups done in the field; they are learned by the programme and not by the evaluation. During the reporting phase, it has been agreed with the EO that there is no need to do the usual separate section on lessons learned.

<sup>86</sup> The evaluators were not able to extrapolate the detailed amounts of funds raised through the HAC and utilized in the Kasai crisis. The figure proposed is indicative and possibly conservative.

<sup>87</sup> A financial analysis of the contributions to the Kasai crisis – including its limits – is proposed in Annex 13.

Other administrative simplifications associated with the activation of the L3 – faster contractual and PCA processes, utilization of virtual CRC meetings – were not utilized by the CO, either for lack of knowledge and understanding of these, or for fear of relaxing control systems in place (risk-aversion). In several instances, this decision slowed down some of the processes.

As of June 2019, the L3 is still active for the Kasai region and the Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces.

In sum, while some positive initial outcomes from the L3 activation are visible within the Kasai response, particularly in terms of funding, HR and supplies, the ‘à-la-carte’ application of the L3 SSOPs and its questionable extension in parallel with other emergencies (ultimately undermining its perceived relevance) raise several questions about the utility of the L3 approach in countries like the DRC, as well as about its possible over-utilization as a mechanism.

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#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. There was only partial implementation of the L3 SSOPs, mainly due to risk-aversion and limited knowledge of its features. These procedures worked well during the initial phases for immediate financial contributions, strengthening of coordination structures and for the supply response. The HR surge response was successfully utilized, but not to its full potential, especially for cluster coordination.
  2. The absorption of the Kasai crisis into the country-wide humanitarian response seems a contradiction to the parallel extension of the L3 until January 2019. This inevitably diluted the relevance and profile of this approach.
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## **What lessons can be learned from innovative approaches in programming and monitoring adjustments that helped adapt and scale up the response to the crisis (EQ LL2)?**

### **Monitoring**

The evaluation came across significant weaknesses in the monitoring mechanisms in place. Factors affecting monitoring included security constraints, the weak operational capacity (shortage of programme staff and monitoring specialists to monitor more regularly, shortage of funds) and logistic difficulties. In all, this demonstrates an institutional weakness that has not been addressed properly over the L3 response. More broadly, the monitoring that was carried out by UNICEF does not seem to have substantially contributed to adapting and scaling up the response to the crisis. Third-party monitoring is being put in place and is likely to address some of these issues, even if there is no evidence so far of an improved flow of monitoring information (see section below).

The HPM system was set up to report on the main aspects of the response and to be able to communicate progress and inform decision-making. However, even this institutionally-standardized mechanism became confusing to some extent when the Kasai crisis was merged into the broader emergency response, since integrated country-wide HPM indicators did not offer a clear picture of the L3-specific response.

In addition, the evaluation found that information management at cluster level has been weak. The post of information manager to support cluster information management has been covered unevenly and is sometimes absent, especially at provincial level.

The evaluation also highlighted that one of the difficulties in integrating education and protection activities has been the monitoring by two different sections, with different processes and timing. The current pilot PCA in South Kivu, where objectives of education and protection are integrated through a single partner and contract, should provide useful lessons on how to build adequate M&E for an integrated strategy.

Some innovative approaches have been attempted to improve the flow of, namely the RapidPro SMS system (see below). In addition, MRM training has been provided to improve the monitoring and reporting of CP violations.

### **Innovative approaches**

Access limitations have been a major challenge for the monitoring of results. To overcome this constraint, UNICEF began piloting third-party monitoring in Kasai in April 2018. Third-party monitors are not subject to United Nations security procedures, and therefore in principle have greater access in insecure areas. Although the pilot seems accurate, it is recent, and the results are not yet known. Having been launched at such a late stage, there is no clear contribution from third-party monitoring to the response – nor does UNICEF monitoring seem to have contributed substantially to adapting and scaling up the response to the crisis. Survey respondents did not perceive innovative approaches and monitoring to be essential components of success: 25 per cent considered innovations as having had “limited importance”. Monitoring and field visits were perceived as more valuable, given that 37 per cent of respondents considered these

to have been a “very important” element of the response. However, they were seen as less important than many other elements, such as operational capacity or donor support, among others (see Annex 8 on survey results).

The evaluation has noted that information management in general, and particularly the adaptation of HPM indicators to the crisis context, can certainly be improved. A positive effort is being made to find innovative ways to improve efficiency, data collection and partner performance, yet for innovations to substantially contribute to the improvement of a response, it is necessary to invest in them, and this has not been the case. The proof is that many of the innovations come from the C4D section,<sup>88</sup> yet the L3 activation has not resulted in any significant increase of resources for that section.

Some of these key innovations are presented below.<sup>89</sup>

- ‘RapidProSMS’: A tool for real-time monitoring that has been used in the L3 response in hard-to-reach areas. In addition to monitoring, the tool has been used for information exchange with communities, for example for by giving alerts or issuing information messages such as those announcing vaccination campaigns. There is room to extend the system as an end-user monitoring tool across all sectors.
- ‘Performance-based financing’ (PBF): A financial accountability tool that has been applied in South Kivu and Kasai that links financing to planned results. Payment to partners is made only upon verification

<sup>88</sup> For instance, the C4D section, under the lead of UNICEF, set up a provincial structure of coordinators in the L3 regions. Coordinators were trained in C4D in emergencies and served to mark the path for humanitarian operations. This C4D coordination format is the basis of current C4D interventions in emergencies in the DRC.

<sup>89</sup> The evaluation does not have specific information on the results achieved through the innovative tools and where they have been applied concretely.

that outputs have actually been delivered. PBF has been mainly used in the health and nutrition sectors.

- ‘Public utility establishment’: Another accountability tool aimed at controlling the inputs that arrive at health centres and are used by health agents.
- Mobile phones/green numbers: With the rural health partner Santé Rurale, UNICEF has established ‘green numbers’ for direct communication with communities for alerts and epidemics. This has been applied in 11 health zones in Kasai.

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### SUMMARY FINDINGS:

1. Innovative approaches and monitoring adjustments have helped gather information from inaccessible areas and served to monitor partner performance, but have not contributed substantially to a successful and adapted response.
2. The monitoring system in general needs improvement, and should be further drawn upon to assess progress within and across sectors.

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### Were there any good practices identified that can inform other emergencies in the region or globally (EQ LL3)?

Some good practices have been highlighted, but they have not substantially informed other L3 regions, since there has been little in the way of experience-sharing between them – despite the fact that many staff have served in more than one L3 location during the response, presenting a good opportunity to institutionalize the transfer of knowledge. UNICEF staff could not explain why such experience-sharing does not occur.

The evaluation took note of the following good practices.

In the Kasais, an effective early warning system was established with Caritas, taking advantage of the latter’s extensive community networks (140 parishes in the five provinces) that have proved to be very useful for immediate alerts on violence and displacements. In general, to counteract access limits, UNICEF has been able to take advantage of existing community structures to obtain first-hand information from the field.

Another good practice is the strategy for integrated education and child protection interventions in Kasai; although it has not been sufficiently implemented, it was the right approach for the local context. Other integrated approaches have shown positive results as well, especially between nutrition and WASH and nutrition and education (see Section 5.6 and Annex 13). Other good practices include: the use of risk-informed programming; the definition of priority areas of convergence; the integration of emergency response into regular programming; the leveraging of RRMP tools and the inclusion of WFP food security indicators in MSAs; and the quality assurance framework of the nutrition response (in the Kasais) agreed by the nutrition cluster, which is being standardized across the country.

Additional good practices are presented below per sector.

**Child protection:** Supplying FATs with an entry kit has turned out to be a positive and necessary practice. Also, having included the category of ‘other vulnerable children’ (such as orphans, disabled children) in the CP programme is considered good practice, as is working closely and training the RECOPE, the Division of Social Affairs and families in general on child protection issues. The creation of a children’s parliament to promote the rights

of children and the C4D campaigns against recruitment have also been revealing examples of good practice.

**Education:** The introduction of courses addressing aspects of active pedagogy and new curricula for teachers has been adequate and effective in motivating teachers and a contribution to improving quality of education. This should be retained as a good practice to be applied in the EiE package where relevant. The ongoing process of change in curricula in the DRC and the lack of government capacity to train teachers on the new requirements offered a unique opportunity, suggesting that in any other context introducing training for teachers that addresses their needs as professionals could be a tool to improve results of an EiE response.

In addition, as already mentioned, the conceptualization of an integrated education and protection strategy intended to create synergies between sectors has been a worthwhile practice that has raised the interest of donors and achieved specific funding.

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#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Some good practices have been identified that could inform other emergencies in the region or globally. Unfortunately, these are not well documented or capitalized upon internally.

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#### **To what extent did the response in the Kasais help to inform the response in South Kivu or vice-versa (EQ LL4)?**

The evaluation identified a few interesting examples of experience-sharing between the L3 regions, and in particular some rotation of staff that sometimes helped to build common

approaches, even if the circumstances were very different. However, this would have needed consolidation and specific management decisions to create common knowledge. It should be noted that in the Kasais, the initial reflex to address needs through CERF and RRMP was based on previous experience in the east. But in many instances, experience and lessons from previous crises in the eastern provinces did not inform the response in the Kasais, even if some staff moved between the regions.

For the education sector specifically, it is clear that different baseline situations among the affected regions made sharing of intervention strategies problematic. The situation in South Kivu was characterized by better school infrastructure and previous experience in 'building back better'. In the Kasais, the situation was already precarious before the crisis, and capacity to consolidate humanitarian results is weak. With regard to child protection, providing FATs with entry kits as a programme readjustment was only replicated in South Kivu much later in the response.

The main lesson is the need to consolidate achievements through a post-emergency phase (recovery or transition). This affects all the regions visited, but requires contextualization of the measures to be adopted.

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#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS:**

1. Transfer of experiences between L3 regions has not been significant, other than the activation of RRMP mechanisms in the Kasais.
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# 6

## CONCLUSIONS



This section is framed in accordance with the objectives of the evaluation, the evaluation criteria and key questions as set out in the ToR.

To begin with, the team wishes to recognize the enormous effort and commitment of UNICEF DRC in implementing the L3 response in the face of significant operational constraints. The team also wishes to acknowledge the valuable support and guidance provided by WCARO and HQ. The magnitude of the crisis has been disproportionately large in relation to the available resources, which has affected the coverage of the response.

**Objective 1:** To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response addressed the humanitarian-development nexus in a sustainable manner (preparedness, connectedness).

**Preparedness:** *To what extent were appropriate preparedness measures in place in DRC CO, facilitating an adequate, timely and effective response?*

Preparedness arrangements and field-level capacity before the crisis were weak, and no contingency plans existed. This neglect can be attributed to two main factors: UNICEF DRC was in the midst of a comprehensive downsizing process, during which decreasing attention was dedicated to preparedness, and there was an over-reliance on the RRMP mechanism for immediate response, further exacerbated by donor reluctant to fund broader preparedness and contingency efforts. The recent launch and roll-out of the new EPP and the current challenges to secure financing for the RRMP offer the CO the opportunity to revisit its broad preparedness and immediate response strategy for the country.

**Connectedness:** *To what extent has the UNICEF response addressed both the immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development goals, including the humanitarian-development nexus?*

Limited preparedness capacity is coupled with the lack of clear planning for the transition phase. Steps to link development programmes with the humanitarian response have been taken, but the lack of an adequate follow-up in the field, financial constraints and the low commitment and capacity of state services have affected the framework for a more structured and sustainable nexus. The evaluation team considers that the L3 response and the central role of UNICEF in DRC were good opportunities to create more ties with development agencies and exploit further the potential link of the RRMP with the transition phase through the PEAR+. Also, the growing donor interest in funding transitional programmes should have motivated the development of a (joint) fundraising strategy to attract longer-term funds.

**Objective 2:** To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response adequately identified and met the needs of the affected population, while prioritizing the most deprived first, from a gender perspective (coverage, gender and human rights, coordination, appropriateness).

A number of factors have hindered the adequate identification and coverage of needs of the affected population. UNICEF has been able to manage constraints relatively well: ensuring links with the government while maintaining independence and strengthening

local capacities, making regular programmatic readjustments to cover the greatest possible needs, and addressing constraints around insecurity and lack of access by wisely engaging local NGOs and communities in the identification and data-gathering on specific needs. Also, UNICEF initiatives to undertake preliminary needs assessments and promote a response among humanitarian actors through the clusters are examples of leadership and commitment. Despite these positive steps, the achievement of Objective 2 has been modest.

**Coverage and gender/human rights:** *To what extent did the UNICEF response meet the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*

UNICEF defined valid vulnerability criteria, especially geographically, and some specific vulnerabilities in the education and protection sectors were targeted in the L3 areas. However, given the financial shortages and operational constraints, in addition to the structural limitations of the affected areas, targets were not defined on the basis of specific vulnerabilities but as a proportion of the estimated needs. Through the enhancement of institutional capacities with RO/HQ support, UNICEF managed to better articulate response plans and strategies and scale up capacity by engaging partners and state services. Nevertheless, the response coverage remained relatively moderate compared with the case-load in nutrition, education and protection. In contrast, the health response was adequate: coverage of immunization campaigns and rapid response to cholera was fairly achieved. Progress toward targets has been positive over time, but the estimated needs are far from being covered, which, in the DRC context, poses further challenges for strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus.

Gender equality and gender-specific vulnerabilities have not been addressed in the L3 response. The objective of putting gender dynamics and roles at the centre of the programming efforts has not been achieved despite clear organizational policies and strategies on gender. References to gender (approaches, objectives, indicators) are absent in L3 operational documents. The limited gender requirements in PCAs are not translated into any specific gender response. The difficulties in mainstreaming gender are linked to institutional weakness: There are no dedicated gender staff in any of the FOs, and the planned incorporation of a P4 gender position at CO level has not yet materialized.

**Coordination:** *To what extent is the intervention harmonized, avoiding gaps and duplications?*

Internal coordination between different levels of the organization was broadly successful and smooth until the L3 crisis was merged with other emergency responses in the country, at which point the focus on the Kasais drastically decreased. Cluster coordination was affected by the challenging context and lack of financial resources; nonetheless, the perception is that UNICEF managed to do a reasonable job within the clusters under its responsibility. However, the CO did not fully utilize the potential support available from the rest of the organization, notwithstanding the L3 SSOPs.

**Appropriateness:** *To what extent was the UNICEF response adequate and relevant to the needs of affected populations, especially children, women and the most deprived?*

The L3 response, according to 35 per cent of the online survey respondents, has been 'partially inadequate'. Joint needs assessments have not been timely, in part because of the

late system-wide L3 activation. However, the initial alerts and data from the Kasai region came from UNICEF. UNICEF has also shown a significant level of adaptation to changing (or emerging) needs, due to a degree of adaptive planning, also related to the evolution from a full-blown L3 corporate emergency to a stabilization of the operation and the consequent adaptation to available resources and capacity. The lack of an early recovery response has affected the attainment of outcomes and calls into question the appropriateness of the response over time.

There is potential for UNICEF to improve AAP in the humanitarian response. Two-way communication and feedback processes between community focal points and UNICEF have been utilized only to a limited extent, and community participation in the response design has remained poor. Complaint mechanisms are still weak. Practices that involve more explicit beneficiary feedback (e.g. third-party monitoring, RapidPro) should be extended, and other options explored to contribute to a more transparent system.

Child protection concerns have been adequately identified, but the intervention strategy has not been able to address root causes and has not provided alternative durable solutions to prevent child rights violations. However, there are positive elements of the design, such as the sensitization activities, the provision of immediate assistance for children in protective transit centres and/or host families, and the proactive identification of needs carried out by the child protection sub-cluster.

For the education sector, the EiE package as implemented in this context adequately addresses immediate challenges, but is a long way from restoring secure and adequate conditions for education. In the Kasais, the condition of schools was generally

substandard before the conflict due to a chronic lack of investment. This would seem to be an opportunity to 'build back better', but in practice this has happened only to a very limited extent.

With regard to integrated sectoral approaches, UNICEF has established links mainly between WASH and nutrition and education, but protection as a cross-cutting approach has not been assured in the L3 design. The UNICEF strategy to integrate protection and education activities is very appropriate and adapted to the DRC context, but has been poorly operationalized. Complementarities with other partners have been identified, but this has not resulted in a joint multisectoral response.

**Objective 3:** To determine the extent to which the UNICEF response to the Kasai, South Kivu and Tanganyika Crisis since the L3 declaration has met its stated objectives and produced unintended effects (positive or negative) (effectiveness, efficiency).

The response has not met all its stated objectives, and the education and child protection interventions have not been as effective and efficient as intended, due in large part to operational constraints. UNICEF has recently applied innovative operational approaches that deserve recognition, even if the effects of these measures are not yet visible.

**Effectiveness/Efficiency:** *To what extent did the UNICEF response achieve the intended results under the changing circumstances, and did it produce any unintended results?*

The progress toward targets as established in the HPM has been significant for most of the planned activities; outputs have been achieved to some extent. Effectiveness in the education sector is affected by the poor standards of the rehabilitation carried out. The support provided

has been necessary but not sufficient to reach the result/output. It should be noted, however, that the EiE package has been effective where it has been rolled out, even if some concerns were raised around the limited distribution of school kits and school furniture. The training of teachers has been an effective means to improve their engagement and to upgrade their skills, the benefits of which will be long-term, and partners were able to extend them to more beneficiaries within the same resources (efficiency gains). Lessons could be derived to extend these types of pertinent trainings, which were well appreciated.

Regarding protection, the L3 response has provided a fair immediate response to address child recruitment, UASC and other child vulnerabilities through temporary holistic assistance (in CTOs and FATs), with better results in the Kasai region. Overall, however, progress to targets and toward a protective environment has been limited. Prevention is attempted through advocacy, trainings and sensitization work with communities and security forces, but is poorly followed up after family reunification. The response to gender-based violence has had isolated cases of success, but has been affected by the limited coverage. Thanks to community networks, many protection cases have been identified and continuity of many aspects of the response has been possible even after project completion. This will require follow-up and support from UNICEF and its partners.

The activation of the L3 positively influenced the efficiency of the response. Human resources surge in support of the Kasai response was broadly effective, and successfully complemented by the parallel internal re-deployments and re-employments of staff affected by the closure and/or down-sizing of several DRC FOs, an approach which should

be recognized as a good practice. The supply response, with consistent support from Supply Division, managed to overcome many of the logistical challenges posed by complexities of the country. Delays in delivery and distribution can be attributed to lack of financial resources, which limited the use of air transport, and to internal glitches linked to miscommunication between Kinshasa and the field. Administrative support to the FOs affected by the crisis was prompt and effective, although many of the administrative and financial simplifications allowed by the L3 activation were not implemented due to lack of knowledge and risk aversion.

**Objective 4:** To capture lessons that can be learned and identify good practices for L3 emergency settings (lessons learned).

*To what extent is the L3 emergency architecture fit-for-purpose, and what are the lessons that can be learned?*

The activation by UNICEF of the L3 on 1 August 2017 had some initial positive effects, notably the immediate access to funds, the utilization of the FTRP, the prompt corporate supply response and the formalization of overall smooth coordination structures and processes between different levels of the organization. However, the implementation of the L3 SSOPs was not comprehensive: The HR surge response was not utilized to its maximum extent, especially for cluster coordination, the simplification of administrative processes was not implemented, largely due to risk aversion and lack of knowledge, and some COs refused to release staff to support the response. The merging of the Kasai response with the other crises in the country, despite its formal designation as an L3, further diluted the significance of the activation, and raises questions about the relevance of the approach.

Innovative approaches and monitoring adjustments have helped to gather information from inaccessible areas and to monitor partner performance, but have not significantly contributed to a successful and adapted response. The M&E system in general needs improvement to better assess and monitor progress of the response. Overall, UNICEF DRC should reflect on the internal factors affecting the efficiency of its M&E tools and mechanisms.

Good practices have been identified that could inform other emergencies in the region or globally. Unfortunately, these are not sufficiently documented or capitalized upon. Transfer of experiences between L3 regions has not been significant other than the activation of the RRMP mechanism in the Kasais. Some anecdotal programme adaptations did however result from shared experiences (e.g. the experience from the Kasais of providing FATs with entry kits was later replicated in South Kivu).

To conclude, UNICEF has designed education and child protection L3 intervention packages that are comprehensive and adequate, although lacking a strong gender approach and not fully adapted to scarce financing and the short-term conditions of an L3. Additionally, due to the limited attention to preparedness and to the unclear formulation of a transitional phase, there have been limited opportunities to integrate humanitarian and development programme components. Overall, UNICEF has probably been too ambitious. The agency has not been able to fully implement some of the activities, and there has been limited monitoring of results. This has brought into question the intervention strategy – in particular the ambitious scope of planned activities in the education and child protection response within limited resources. Better planning and leveraging of partnerships, not only to attract donor interest and funding but to contribute to outcomes, seems essential in DRC. There is also important work to do in order to capitalize on all the accumulated knowledge, exchange good practices among L3 regions and inform other emergency responses in the region or globally. UNICEF has great potential to carry out improvements in its response.

# 7

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Priority 1: Immediate	
Priority 2: Short-term	

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
1	<p>To help attract longer-term funds:</p> <p><b>1.1</b> Develop a multi-year resource mobilization strategy with an objective to secure predictable and longer-term funding for implementation of priorities outlined in the country programme document (CPD) and the Humanitarian Action for Children report (HAC).<sup>90</sup></p> <p><b>1-2.</b> Develop a narrative and key message that provides linkages between the HAC and CPD in support of resource mobilization, advocacy and communication plan.</p>	<p>5.1 Preparedness (EQ P1 /Findings 1-3)</p> <p>5.8 Efficiency (EQ EFY2 /“Grand Bargain” subchapter)</p>	<p>Country representative; Support from RO and HQ.</p>
2	<p>Clarify the roles and accountabilities of CO staff with respect of preparedness and EPP requirements. The application of the EPP (defining prepositioning, contingency stocks and stand-by partners per FO) should be inspired by, and complementary to, the RRMP.<sup>91</sup></p> <p><b>2-1</b> Develop/update a CO accountability framework that will clarify the roles and accountabilities of staff, including in the field, with respect to preparedness and as per the EPP requirements.</p> <p><b>2-2</b> Significantly develop the capacity of staff – both programme and operations – in emergency preparedness as per the EPP.</p>	<p>5.1 Preparedness (EQ P1 /Findings 1-3)</p> <p>5.8 Efficiency (EQ EFY2 /Findings 63, 65)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative/ Chief of Field Operations</p>
3	<p>To better address the humanitarian-development nexus:</p> <p><b>3.1.</b> Adopt longer-term risk-informed humanitarian-development strategy, in accordance with UNICEF procedures and linked to Recommendation 1 above.</p> <p><b>3-2.</b> Engage with partners during key planning processes and devote significant attention to long-term results and strategies.</p>	<p>Connectedness (EQ C2 /Findings 7, 8, 10)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative/ Chief of Field Operations</p>

<sup>90</sup> This recommendation is in line with Recommendations 1 and 6 from the 2018 UNICEF evaluation of the RRMP. Rec. 1: “In line with HCT first multi-year strategy adopted in 2017 and Grand Bargain commitments, advocate to donors for multi-year funding that would allow for better prepositioning of partners and supplies as well as the transition from humanitarian to development programming and resilience-building (including support/follow-up activities)”. And Rec. 6: “Advocate to donors for a specific share of humanitarian and/or development funding for recovery or transition (including follow-up support) to address the funding gap in transition between the humanitarian and development programming nexus and to achieve the collective outcomes.” UNICEF RRMP evaluation, p.9.

<sup>91</sup> The application of the EPP and its platform (effective from March 2018):

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
4	<p>In order to seek complementarities with partners with a view to enhancing integrated transitional/resilience programmes:</p> <p><b>4-1</b> Advocate for a joint nutrition/education programme to be integrated with the WFP school feeding programme, which is expected to be scaled up and implemented in the three Kasai regions in coordination with government.</p>	Connectedness (EQ C2 /Findings 7, 8, 10)	UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative, with Chief of Education and Chief of Nutrition
5	<p>Reinforcing a cross-cutting gender perspective would help to harmonize and cross-fertilize specific gender issues within the planning and response of each sector and globally. Some institutional and programmatic measures are recommended for an enhanced gender perspective:</p> <p><b>5-1</b> Ensure gender analyses are conducted and fully integrated in the response plans.</p> <p><b>5-2</b> Education programme: (i) introduce preschool programmes to care for younger boys and girls; (ii) provide hygienic kits and support for menstruating girls (exploring possible synergies with the United Nations Population Fund).</p> <p><b>5-3</b> Child protection programme: (i) for the gender-based violence response, build on the experience of the CAMPS initiative of providing conditional support to women arriving at health centres before 72 hours; (ii) address the low participation of girls in child-friendly spaces, especially of girls with menstruation pain, pregnant girls or young mothers, through the provision of hygienic kits and the establishment of a creche for the care of babies; (iii) include more gender-based violence aspects in child protection (CP) training/sensitization activities and CP campaigns.</p>	<p>Gender section (EQ GE&amp;HR1 and EQ GE&amp;HR2/ Findings 16-19)</p> <p>Coverage (EQ CV1/ Finding 13)</p> <p>Appropriateness (EQ A3/“adaptation of strategies” subchapter)</p> <p>Effectiveness section (EQ EFT1 / narrative on Table 9 and Table 10)</p>	UNICEF DRC Deputy Representative
6	<p>Address the programme monitoring weaknesses identified by:</p> <p><b>6-1</b> Establishing a monitoring strategy that includes regular field visits to assess implementation and measure progress toward results.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Consider expanding the RapidProSMS or similar technology within other sectoral response.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Ensure a systematic approach of community engagement through routinely collecting, analysing and using monitoring information to gauge community satisfaction with the appropriateness and effectiveness of the response.</p>	<p>Lessons learned section (EQ LL2/M&amp;E subchapter)</p> <p>Appropriateness section (EQ A3 / AAP subchapter)</p>	UNICEF DRC Chief of Planning and Monitoring
7	<b>7.1</b> Given the inter-agency review of the humanitarian architecture, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS) to incorporate the experiences and lessons learned from the utilization of the L3 approach in DRC.	Efficiency/ L3 procedures/ Connectedness/ Lessons Learned	UNICEF HQ EMOPS
8	<b>8.1</b> UNICEF DRC Supply Section to expand its sourcing base in Kinshasa and other locations, especially in the field, in order to extend its network of local procurement and long-term agreements (LTAs) for contingency and immediate response.	5.8 Efficiency (EFY1 /Findings 58-60)	UNICEF DRC Chief of Supply

Priority	Recommendation	Link with findings	Responsibility
9	<p>In order to improve the education emergency response (including taking into account the experience in South Kivu), implement a transition plan that includes:</p> <p><b>9.1</b> A comprehensive EiE intervention package, including catch-up courses, in targeted schools;</p> <p><b>9.2</b> A review of what has been implemented so far and the establishment of a strategy that consolidates the interventions to date, ensures standards for rehabilitation and WASH, provides furniture and links teacher training with quality improvement of education for children in a crisis environment;</p> <p><b>9.3</b> In the case of the Kasais, building on the opportunity to define a solid ‘build back better’ strategy, raising standards of targeted schools to contextually acceptable levels;</p> <p><b>9.4</b> Advocate for the inclusion of schools with damaged structures in the <i>Projet de Réhabilitation et de Reconstruction des Infrastructures Scolaires</i> (PRRIS) within the Annual workplans and;</p> <p><b>9.5</b> A promotion of schools as the entry point for convergence of programmes (health, nutrition, hygienic practices, communications for development, WASH and protection), building on Benchmark 4 of the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies for education.<sup>92</sup></p>	<p>Appropriateness section (EQ A2/ Finding 32 and EQ A4 /Findings 41-43)</p> <p>Coverage (EQ CV1 / Findings 11-14)</p> <p>Effectiveness (EQ EFT1 / Findings 44-48)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC</p> <p>Chief of Education</p>
10	<p>To improve CP programming:</p> <p><b>10.1</b> Strengthen and expand community networks (RECOPE, churches, parents) through reinforced CP training/sensitization activities and monitoring, and through the creation of (individual and community-based) incentives and/or conditional support for the identification and monitoring of child protection cases (including post-reunification monitoring).</p> <p><b>10.2</b> Contribute proactively through the CP working group and within the protection cluster to develop a global referral system in order to avoid situations where specific protection cases are identified but not targeted/supported by any protection actor.</p> <p><b>10.3</b> Advocate with donors and development partners in order to find synergies for an integrated child protection-education approach to ensure school reintegration for children associated with armed forces and groups, UASC and other vulnerable children.</p>	<p>Effectiveness (EQ EFT1 /Findings 51, 53, 54, 56, 57)</p>	<p>UNICEF DRC</p> <p>Chief of Child Protection</p>

<sup>92</sup> CCCs, Benchmark 4: ‘All education-related humanitarian response integrates appropriate psychosocial, health and nutritional interventions’.

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