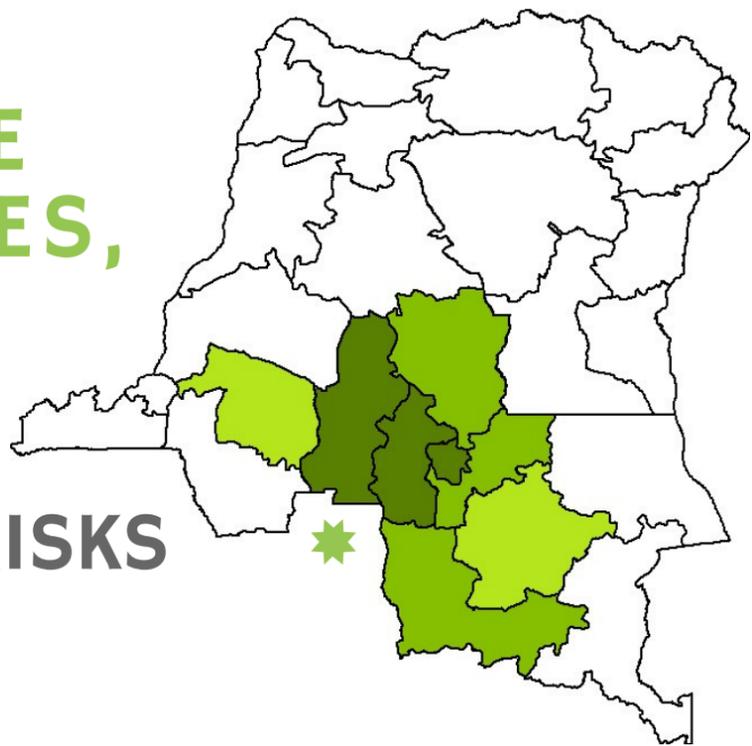


CRISIS IN THE KASAI PROVINCES, DR CONGO



CHILD PROTECTION RISKS AND NEEDS



Between 40% and 60% of the militia members are children, often younger than 15, which constitutes a war crime. More than 500 cases of children used as combatants or human shields have been registered.



The population and particularly the children live in a state of deep shock and panic. Children show signs of psychosocial distress and are often afraid to leave their parents, even for short amounts of time.



More than 300 children have been arrested in Kananga and Tshikapa between August 2016 and March 2017. Thanks to local child protection actors, only a dozen are still in detention in Kananga. The living conditions in the cells are precarious. There are also reports of children being victims of torture.



Over 400 attacks against schools and 170 attacks against health centers verified in the Kasai and Kasai Central provinces alone, depriving children of safe zones where they are protected even in times of conflict.



At least 5,000 children have been separated from their families: they are particularly vulnerable to being recruited by militias and to being victims of violence and abuse.



600 cases of sexual violence have been registered affecting 350 girls and 4 boys since the beginning of the crisis in August 2016. Stigmatization and fear of reprisals influence the number of survivors willing to report the violations. Consequently, their actual number is likely to be under-reported.



At least 100 children have been killed between January and March 2017. Numerous cases of summary and extra-judicial executions have been reported, affecting in particular children allegedly associated with the militias.



A financial gap of 91% constrains the provision of child protection services.