As of December 2021, the DRC Humanitarian Fund (DRC HF) has allocated US$8.4 million to 20 projects with activities related to protection including general protection, child protection, protection against Gender-based violence (GBV), and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). This amount represents 20 per cent of HF funding in 2021.

It was estimated that 7 million people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) needed assistance in protection/GBV, according to the Humanitarian Response Plan for 2021. During the year, 1.1 million people were targeted by activities in protection/GBV.

In 2021, six projects were funded by the DRC HF to address issues of GBV in 11 territories located in the provinces of Ituri, Maniema, North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika. Activities mainly included raising community awareness and providing medical and psychosocial support to survivors of sexual violence.

DRC HF FUNDING TO PROTECTION IN 2021

$8.4M
allocated to Protection
including general protection, GBV, Child Protection and PSEA

12 partners
8 International NGOs
2 UN Agencies
2 National NGOs

20 projects
7 provinces

1.2M
people targeted
by protection-related activities

85% of women & children

FUNDING BY PROVINCE

RESERVE
PSEA
1 project

STANDARD
#1
13 projects

RESERVE
Nyiragongo
13 projects

RESERVE
South Ituri & Beni
13 projects

MANIEMA
2 projects
$0.5M

NORTH KIVU
13 projects
$3.1M

SOUTH KIVU
4 projects
$0.8M

TANGANYIKA
4 projects
$1.2M

KASAI
1 project
$0.3M

KASAI ORIENTAL
1 project
$0.1M

PROJECT AND FUNDING BY SUB-SECTOR

$1.5M
PSEA
1 project

$1.8M
PROTECTION
5 projects

$2.5M
PROTECTION
GBV
6 projects

$2.6M
CHILD
PROTECTION
9 projects

1 Cumulative figures.
2 Including HF-funded project to address PSEA.
HF funding to Protection has considerably increased in recent years, ranging from $3.6 million in 2017 to $11 million in 2020, engaging multiple humanitarian actors and ensuring complementarity with other clusters through a comprehensive package, including health, WASH and education.

In 2021, the percentage of funding granted to protection represents 20 per cent, compared to 10 per cent in 2017 and 16 per cent in 2020.

Protection mainstreaming and GBV - To ensure that the needs of women and girls are fully considered in the interventions, partners were provided guidance on gender mainstreaming in projects and the Gender and Age Marker (GAM) tool.

Training on Gender and Age Marker
2019: 43 eligible HF partners (37 national NGOs)
2020: 116 eligible HF partners (76 national NGOs)
2021: 63 eligible HF partners (33 national NGOs)

STRENGTHENING THE PSEA SYSTEM IN THE DRC

The Fund is committed to promote protection from and response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and expects appropriate measures to be mainstreamed throughout the projects of HF partners.

2018
December 2018 - $1.45 million allocated to reinforce coordination mechanism and raise awareness among partners.

2019
Partners’ capacity building activities on Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and consolidation of a sound network for PSEA.

2020
Enhanced monitoring for PSEA capacity of partners and feedback mechanisms for reporting SEA and related harassment complaints.

2021
June 2020 - Reserve Allocation for Mbandaka included $0.4 million to create a PSEA coordination mechanism to support the EVD response in Equateur.

Today, she even encourages other survivors to attend the listening sessions. "I realised that talking is the first step to overcome the trauma. I hid it for months and every night I was afraid. I’m trying to get everyone involved who has suffered like me".

Since March 2021, AVSI has been providing shelter, education and protection assistance to the most vulnerable internally displaced people and host populations in the Hauts Plateaux. In protection, AVSI supports survivors of gender-based violence, including with psychosocial support, socio-economic reintegration, medical and judicial referrals, and community awareness-raising activities. Amongst the displaced people, survivors have also benefited from emergency shelter and school kits for children.

Participating in the activities with other girls makes me feel that I am part of a group (...), here they understand my state of mind, that is why I often come”, explains Laure, 19 years old, who arrived in October 2020 in Kiridja (Lemera Health Zone), in the Haut-Plateaux, in South Kivu province.

While fleeing attacks and looting in her village, Laure was raped. "A few weeks later, I became pregnant. Then, my family abandoned me. Here, you can only get pregnant if the man stays, that is a custom."

Hosted by her extended family, Laure was plagued by guilt and had difficulty talking. Since June 2021, she has been participating in support and listening groups organised by psychosocial assistants trained by the organisation AVSI4. After a few individual sessions, she felt confident to share her experience.

Credit: AVSI

3 To respect anonymity, the names of the persons involved in this testimony have been changed.
4 Associazione Volontari per il Servizio Internazionale