The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has deteriorated dramatically over the past year. The crisis has deepened and spread, affecting people in areas previously considered stable and stretching the coping mechanisms of people in areas already impacted. A surge in violent conflict and intercommunal tensions has forced more than 1.7 million people to flee their homes in 2017 – an average of more than 5,500 people per day. Today, the total number of internally displaced people in the DRC has reached 4.1 million, which is the highest number of any country on the African continent. Insecurity has had a devastating impact on people's ability to access food, and 7.7 million people across the DRC are facing severe food insecurity – a 30 per cent increase from the same time last year. The situation is further complicated by political uncertainty and economic downturn.

This deterioration, observed mainly in the Kasai, South Kivu and Tanganyika regions, is taking place against the backdrop of one of the world's largest and most complex humanitarian crises. Across the DRC, at least 8.5 million people need humanitarian assistance and protection, close to 2 million children are affected by severe acute malnutrition – i.e. 12 per cent of the world's caseload – and outbreaks of diseases, including cholera, affect tens of thousands of people every year. At the same time, DRC also hosts more than half of a million refugees, including from Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Rwanda and South Sudan.

Looking ahead to 2018, humanitarian partners estimate that 13.1 million Congolese will require humanitarian assistance and protection as a result of heightened violence in a number of hotspots across the country and the precarious food security situation. An estimated US $1.69 billion dollars will be required to reach 10.5 million.

Aid organizations in the DRC operate in an exceptionally complex and challenging environment, where insecurity, limited logistical infrastructure and vast swaths of wilderness require innovative approaches to reach people. In addition, despite limited resources, they have had to scale up their operations in new areas of need, such as the Kasais, while maintaining their presence in the areas of traditional humanitarian need, such as the Eastern Provinces.
Despite challenges, humanitarian partners have already delivered life-saving assistance and protection to more than 2.7 million people this year. However, this is far from the 7.4 million people targeted by the humanitarian response plan. Funding is projected to be at the lowest level in a decade by year-end, with only 47 per cent of the required $812 million received. Additional funding is urgently required to support the scale-up of response in areas where new needs have emerged while continuing to deliver in areas of existing need.

**KASAI REGION**

A violent uprising of a local militia spread rapidly across the Greater Kasai region, growing to dramatic proportions in geographic coverage and brutality. At the peak of the crisis, around 1.4 million people were displaced across the Kasais and grave human rights abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence, have been inflicted on the population. While a relative improvement in the security situation has allowed for some 631,000 people to return home, 762,000 people remain internally displaced and 34,000 people have fled to Angola as refugees. Needs remain great among both the displaced and returnee populations, as many people fled with nothing and are returning to villages, livelihoods and homes that have been destroyed. Violence has resulted in a 750 per cent increase in acute food insecurity across the Kasais, and loss of two agricultural seasons, further jeopardizing the food security outlook in 2018.

**TANGANYIKA**

A resurgence of the conflict in Tanganyika province, which began five years ago, has resulted in increased humanitarian needs. Long-simmering inter-community tensions and violent military operations have rapidly intensified since mid-2016 in Tanganyika and neighbouring provinces. As a result, some 277,000 people have been displaced this year, bringing the total number of displaced people in Tanganyika to 654,000. Some 6,000 refugees have also sought asylum in neighboring Zambia as a result, with numbers growing. Insecurity and displacement have left nearly 1 million people severely food insecure.

**NORTH KIVU & SOUTH KIVU**

North Kivu and South Kivu have seen an increase in humanitarian needs over the last year due to violent clashes between armed groups and counter efforts to neutralize them, resulting in multiple waves of displacement. More than 1 million people are estimated to be displaced in North Kivu alone, including 442,000 who have fled from their homes this year. The situation has notably deteriorated in South Kivu, where an upsurge in violence and insecurity has resulted in the displacement of at least 165,000 people since the beginning of 2017, with tens of thousands more people yet to be verified pending resources and capacity. This brings the total number of displaced people in South Kivu to 600,000. Combined, North and South Kivu account for almost 40 per cent of the total IDP population in DRC.