

DRC: Diarrhoea outbreak kills IDPs in North Kivu

Scores of people have died while hundreds have been affected by an outbreak of acute watery diarrhoea in internally displaced people's (IDP) camps in North Kivu Province.

"So far more than 300 people have been infected and 37 deaths have been reported in the past two weeks in the camps," Dominique Bahago, the provincial medical inspector, said.

The outbreak was reported in the village of Ngungu, 100km northwest of Goma, the main town of North Kivu.

"The biggest problem is the inadequate water supply," Bahago said, as was the lack of basic hygiene. The outbreak had also affected local residents in the village, whose population was estimated at 21,000.

Recent fighting between the government and rebel CNDP (Congrès national pour la défense du peuple) militias has seen the village population double. At least 25,000 IDPs have sought refuge in the area.

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"The situation this week is better than the previous ones," Bahago said, adding that medical supplies were still inadequate.

At least 100,000 people have been displaced in recent fighting in the provinces of North and South Kivu, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

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