

Public Notice

Integrated Nutrition, WASH, and Protection Response: DRC and Syria –Public Comments Invited

February 07, 2025 – Global Affairs Canada must determine whether the proposed Integrated Nutrition, WASH, and Protection Response: DRC and Syria, located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

To help inform this determination, Global Affairs Canada is inviting comments from the public respecting that determination. All comments received will be considered public and may be posted online.

Written comments must be submitted **by March 10, 2025** to:

Environment Specialists
Global Affairs Canada
200 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau (QC) J8X 4B7
Email: CommentsIAARegistry-CommentairesRegistreLEI@international.gc.ca

The Proposed Project

With a duration of 24 months, the project "**Integrated Nutrition, WASH, and Protection Response: DRC and Syria – Save the Children Canada – 2024-2026**" aims to address unmet critical needs in nutrition, water, hygiene, sanitation, as well as sexual and gender-based violence.

Implemented in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in the Ituri province, specifically in the Djugu territory, the project targets the most vulnerable populations, including children, individuals suffering from moderate and severe acute malnutrition (MAM/SAM), and those exposed to sexual and gender-based violence.

Covering eight (8) health areas distributed across two (2) health zones (Lita and Fataki), the project aims to improve the availability of water, hygiene, and sanitation services. Specifically, the project will involve the construction of five (5) placenta pits, six (6) incinerators, and the installation of six (6) bottle crushers.

The province of Ituri in the eastern part of the DRC, particularly the Djugu territory, is a region of high plateaus scattered with a large tropical rainforest, but also with savannah landscapes. This province has rich wildlife with rare species such as the Okapi. The anarchic mining activities and the activism of armed groups are among the major causes of the destruction of its fauna and flora. The terrain of the Ituri province is rugged, dominated by Mount Bleu and other massifs. It is situated between the basins of the Nile and Congo rivers. The province is governed by a territorial administrator and subdivided into various decentralized entities, including chiefdoms, groupings, villages, and local notables, each managed by chiefs of the chiefdoms, group leaders, local notables, or customary chiefs at the village level. These areas and settlements face significant sanitation challenges, including solid and liquid waste, proliferation of mosquitoes and flies that spread malaria and typhoid fever, and the lack of an appropriate waste management policy.

The health facilities involved in the construction projects are owned by the Congolese state through the Ministry of Public Health and Hygiene. The soil characteristics are clay-rich at lower altitudes and sandy at higher altitudes. In terms of phytogeographic vegetation, the Djugu territory is covered by two main types of vegetation: forest (a mix of natural and reforested areas) and savanna.

For these projects, environmental considerations will include:

1. **Deforestation:**
 - It is essential to assess the environmental impact and mitigate the risks of deforestation and habitat loss. Measures will be implemented, such as protecting sensitive areas and reforestation after the work is completed.
2. **Soil Erosion and Degradation:**
 - Construction activities, particularly those involving excavation (such as for placenta pits), can lead to soil erosion, especially in steep areas or where soil management practices are insufficient. This can reduce soil fertility in surrounding areas and increase the risk of flooding.
3. **Water Pollution and Contamination:**
 - Construction sites can lead to water pollution from the runoff of materials like cement, oils, and other pollutants into nearby rivers and water bodies. Effective drainage and wastewater management systems should be implemented during construction to minimize these impacts.
4. **Waste Generation and Disposal:**
 - Construction projects generate significant waste, including building materials, plastics, and other non-biodegradable items. Proper waste management must be implemented to avoid illegal dumping and the resulting pollution.

5. **Air Pollution and Dust:**
 - Construction activities, such as demolition, excavation, and transportation of materials, can release dust and particulate matter into the air, contributing to pollution. Managing the dust will be essential to minimize disruptions and limit its impact.
6. **Noise Pollution:**
 - Construction activities can lead to high noise levels, disturbing local wildlife and surrounding communities. Managing noise levels and scheduling activities to minimize disruptions are essential to limit this impact.
7. **Use of Local Materials and Sustainability:**
 - Using local materials for construction, such as stone, timber, and clay, can reduce the environmental footprint related to transporting materials. However, it is important to ensure that these materials are sourced sustainably to avoid over-exploitation of local resources.
8. **Mitigation Measures and Sustainability:**
 - It is crucial to include effective environmental mitigation strategies in the construction planning process. This includes erosion control methods, waste recycling, pollution prevention plans, and measures to protect nearby water resources. By ensuring the project follows sustainable practices, Save the Children can minimize the long-term environmental impacts.

Physical activities	Description
Construction of placenta pits	<p>This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing environmental protection measures, including the environmental risk mitigation plan; • Selecting the construction site followed by marking the area with safety wires; • Establishing the foundation of the structure; • Digging the pit; • Masonry work for the pit on a slab using fired bricks, columns, and mortar; • Securing the pit and pouring the slab; • Installing the ventilation pipe and metal gate; • Smoothing the slab; • Marking for visibility.
Construction of incinerators	<p>This incinerator will be coupled with an ash pit to avoid handling the ashes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing environmental protection measures, including the environmental risk mitigation plan; • Selecting the construction site followed by marking the area with safety wires; • Establishing the foundation of the structure; • Digging the pit; • Masonry work for the pit on a slab using fired bricks, columns, and mortar; • Securing the pit and pouring the slab; • Constructing the superstructure, which includes a recharge bin with a mesh to bring the ashes back into the pit; • Installing the chimney; • Plastering; • Installing the gates (on the recharge bin and ash pit).

Construction of bottle grinders	This involves the manufacturing of a bottle grinder with a simplified design, approved by Save the Children.
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Geographic coordinates

Name	Location	Geographical Coordinates Format
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Lita Health Zone, Virakpa Health Center	Lat : 1.6779697 Long : 30.3385996
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Lita Health Zone, Katoto Health Center	Lat : 1.6529518 Long : 30.3471849
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Lita Health Zone, Zumbe Health Center	Lat : 1.4795286 Long : 30.3309955
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Lita Health Zone, Ezekere Health Center	Lat : 1.5156939 Long : 30.3320684
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Fataki Health Zone, Duvire Health Center	Lat : 1.9797287 Long : 30.6152341
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Fataki Health Zone, Dhendro Health Center	Lat : 1.9183169 Long : 30.6267143
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Fataki Health Zone, Ngulo Health Center	Lat : 1.9314898 Long : 30.6387842
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Ituri Province, Djugu Territory, Fataki Health Zone, Djidha Health Center	Lat : 1.9731545 Long : 30.5717026