

# Alert

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## The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

# Support to Displaced People in DRC

Geneva, 3 August 2011

### 1. Brief description of the emergency

The eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to face successive armed conflicts forcing hundreds of thousands of civilians into displacement and hardship. The security situation in the eastern regions of the country remains volatile owing to the presence of active foreign rebel groups and armed local militia. The volatile security situation has created instability for the population. According to UN OCHA humanitarian report of March 2011, 1,246,000 of the 1,700,000 internally displaced people in DRC are living in the provinces of North Kivu (557,027 IDPs) and South Kivu (689,000). This is an increase of almost 10% of internally displaced people in North Kivu since the beginning of 2011.

While the country is engaged in planning for presidential elections in November 2011, many people are worried by the fact that former local armed groups are becoming active again in the provinces of North and South Kivu while new groups are emerging. Some of these groups are the result of the population lacking confidence in the existing security and judiciary systems and have set up a kind of self-defense groups. These groups have turned out to be uncontrolled and have set up their own systems of "justice".

### 2. Impact

The impact of this ongoing crisis is heavily felt in the provinces of North and South Kivu. Since June 2010, armed military operations carried out by DRC government troops against rebel groups have caused several new waves of displacement of civilians towards areas considered to be safe. The huge presence of displaced people is creating enormous socio-economic pressure on the host community whose own coping capacity is already stretched to the maximum. In addition to IDPs accommodated in host families, 31 spontaneously formed IDP camps accommodating a total of 75,602 people have emerged in Masisi and Rusthuru.

Protection is a major concern as cases of banditry and also violence against civilians (particularly against women) by armed groups is reported daily. There have been several waves of looting of civilian homes and properties in the past months in these areas, leaving the already destitute population in an even more difficult situation. It is worth noting that the lack of non-food items, food security, adequate nutrition for children and hygiene remain the main concerns in this area for both host and displaced populations.

### **3. National and international response**

Through different mechanisms, international NGOs are trying to alleviate the suffering of the affected communities by providing them with relief aid (distribution of food and non food items) and rehabilitation works such as the improvement of the access road to enable aid to reach to worst affected areas. Food distribution is organised by WFP while FAO is dealing with the distribution of agricultural inputs in the Rutshuru, Masisi and Lubero territories. However, the gaps remain very high especially in the sectors of food security, water and hygiene, protection and psychosocial.

### **4. ACT Alliance response**

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has been providing assistance to the displaced people and their host communities in the Beni, Lubero and Masisi territories. Project activities were carried out related to food security, nutrition and psychosocial support. In food security, LWF's assistance consisted essentially in providing seeds and tools with agricultural technical support to the communities. The activities in food security were carried out as reinforcement to the nutrition activities implemented in favour of malnourished children and their families. The war and violent context in which LWF operated necessitated a psycho-social component to help traumatised people cope with the situation they lived. In total, 2000 households benefitted from LWF activities in 2011.

Apart from the intervention in Beni, Lubero and Masisi territories, LWF implemented an ACT funded RRF project in the Kisangani (Orientale Province) in response to a cholera epidemic outbreak. In addition, LWF and the Ecumenical Office for Support to Development (BOAD) have carried out an assessment in North Kivu province (Beni, Lubero, Rutshuru and Masisi) to determine the humanitarian needs among the displaced and returnee populations in these locations.

### **5. Planned activities**

The members of the ACT Forum involved in the planned appeal will come together to harmonise and develop standardised monitoring and management tools. Planned activities in the line of the appeal will be focused on food security (distribution of agricultural inputs and accompaniment of households in agricultural activities), psycho-social accompaniment of sexually abused survivors, distribution of non-food items to displaced people living with host families, hygiene, water and sanitation (rehabilitation of water sources and latrines), nutrition (support to integrated feeding units within medical structures/systems). These activities will be implemented in both North and South Kivu.

The following ACT members contributed to this alert and are planning to submit an appeal: Church of Christ in Congo (ECC), Ecumenical Office for Support to Development (BOAD), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Congo (EELCO), Christian Aid (CA), and The Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

**Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to Jean-Daniel Birmele, ACT Chief Finance Officer ([Jean.Daniel.Birmele@actalliance.org](mailto:Jean.Daniel.Birmele@actalliance.org)).**

**Thank you for your attention.**

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