

Emergency Update on Volcano Nyiragongo

#2 | 08 June 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Reopening of Goma International Airport** on 05 June
- UNHCR has provided basic items such as **soap, blankets, solar lamps, plastic sheeting and sleeping mats to 435 vulnerable families** in Sake town, 25 km west of Goma.
- **4 community shelters have been built by UNHCR** to host over 200 people in Sake town.
- **On 03 June, the Humanitarian Coordinator for the DRC, visited Sake together** a delegation of humanitarian agencies and donors to meet with local authorities and displaced communities.
- During his visit to the city on 7 June, the **DRC Prime Minister has announced the progressive return of displaced people** to Goma

SOURCE: UN OCHA



UNHCR provides emergency supplies to the most vulnerable families in Sake town, North Kivu Province. ©UNHCR/ Sanne Biesmans

Situation Overview

- The lava flow during the eruption of the Mount Nyiragongo volcano on May 22 in Goma has left about 4,000 people homeless, while at least 31 people died as a result of the eruption and related incidents.
- Approximately 1,340 children were separated from their families in Goma, Sake and Bukavu according to UNICEF. So far, 1,038 have been reunited with their families.
- On 27 May, the Congolese authorities ordered a partial evacuation of the city of Goma due to the risk of another volcanic eruption and hundreds of thousands of people left the city in the following days. Many left by road to Sake, west of Goma, and Rutshuru north of Goma, while others left by boat over Lake Kivu to Bukavu. Around 8,000 crossed the border to Rwanda.
- There is a risk of cholera in Sake town – which has 65,000 inhabitants. Water sources and infrastructures are limited and now overwhelmed with over 120,000 additional people who fled Goma.
- No earthquakes have been felt in the city over the past days. Following an announcement of the Minister of Transport, Communication and Access on 05 June, the International Airport of Goma has reopened. At the same time, also the road connecting Goma to Beni, which had been damaged by the lava, has now been cleared and is accessible again for traffic.
- People are slowly starting to return to Goma. Over 160,686 displaced people have already returned to the city, with increased transportation prices as a consequence.

- Criminality and petty crime are present in Sake and Goma town, with looting of houses and stealing of emergency relief items reported to UNHCR staff.

Protection needs and challenges

- Access to water, shelter, health care and food have been listed as the main needs by both host and displaced communities, due to demographic pressure and high concentration of displaced families in the areas.
- Some of the spontaneous IDP sites have still not received any form of assistance. The needs outgrow the capacities of the humanitarian actors present in displacement areas.
- The majority of IDPs who fled Goma are staying with host families in Sake, Minova, and Kiwanja, Rutshuru Territory. Many of the host families have used all their resources to accommodate the people in need – even if they already live in poor conditions themselves. As part of its response, UNHCR plans to support the most vulnerable host families, as well those families whose capacities are overstretched.
- The infrastructures and supplies in the hosting areas are already depleted. Both displaced and host communities have difficulties to access health care, running water and electricity.
- The shelter cluster, which is co-led by UNHCR, estimates that over 250,000 persons are in need of shelter – and other humanitarian assistance, particularly in Sake (61,951 persons), Rutshuru Territory (52,250 persons), in Lubero Territory (10,555 persons), Minova (78,494 persons) and in Bukavu (39,608 persons). Most of these people are staying in collective sites and with host families.
- There is an increased risk of a cholera outbreak in Sake, following the large influx of IDPs (approximately 120,000 persons), in a town of 65,000 inhabitants with limited and inadequate health and water facilities.
- The overcrowded character of IDP sites is also contributing to increased risks of COVID-19, while the medical infrastructures are overwhelmed.

Preparedness and response

UNHCR continues to work with the government, local communities, and other partners to help the internally displaced, offering shelter, core relief items and reinforcing the protection of human rights through a holistic coordinated response. UNHCR has employed emergency teams in Minova, Saké, Bukavu, Kiwanja in Rutshuru Territory and Masisi and Lubero (Kanyabayonga) to assess the most urgent needs and specific protection needs. Food, primary health care and core relief items (CRIs) were mentioned as priority by the affected people, together with need of shelter assistance to help rebuild their homes in Goma and transport to get back to Goma.



PROTECTION

- To help improve the protection and safety of those displaced, UNHCR and its partners deployed protection monitoring teams in Masisi Center, Kitshanga, Kanyabayonga (Lubero) and Kiwanja (Rutshuru) in addition to those deployed in Sake, Minova and Rutshuru center. These will help in the global identification, prevention and response to human rights violations.
- In order to improve data on displaced persons, UNHCR has trained a team of 120 persons who will profile the locations and needs of different groups of IDPs through the Kobo data collection tool. This will help to improve the quality of data as well as map the most urgent needs which will help guide other actors in the planning of their response.
- UNHCR's partner INTERSOS assessed the needs of IDP households in Sake originating from areas that were damaged or destroyed by the eruption and subsequent earthquakes. Despite the risks associated with the instability of volcano, 73% of the respondents indicated that they wish to return to Goma.



SHELTER AND CORE RELIEF ITEMS (CRI)

- UNHCR, through its partner AIDES, built four community shelters to free up space in overcrowded churches in Sake town. Over 400 people have been housed in these shelters and latrines have been provided in coordination with UNICEF.
- In Minova, South Kivu Province, two additional community hangars have also been completed to decongest the overcrowded sites, accommodating another 200 people.
- UNHCR has provided relief items (CRIs) such as blankets, mats, soaps, hygiene kits, and plastic sheeting to additional 435 vulnerable households, including persons living with disabilities. So far, a total of 7640 persons have received assistance by UNHCR through the provision of core relief items since 28 May.

Coordination

- The shelter cluster is working with the Congolese authorities to identify land for the construction of a temporary transit centre to accommodate persons who lost their houses during the eruption. This temporary solution will then be complemented by cash-for-rent support until victims will be able to rebuild their homes. In addition, the shelter cluster had started to assess and map the shelter needs in Goma, in anticipation of the expected return.
- The shelter cluster and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Working Group continue to work together on preparing for an emergency shelter response in IDP hosting areas in case the internally people affected decide not to return home and require shelter assistance in their hosting areas (Sake, Minova, Lubero, Rutshuru and Bukavu).

- On June third, UNHCR's team has welcomed David Mclachlan-Karr, the Humanitarian Coordinator in the DRC during his visit to Sake. He came to Sake town together with a delegation of humanitarian agencies and donor countries represented by the German Ambassador to view the humanitarian needs of over 350,000 displaced persons and oversee the humanitarian response in action.

External / Donor Relations

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REPUBLIQUE DEMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO
Eruption du volcan Nyiragongo dans la province du Nord-Kivu
au 31 mai 2021

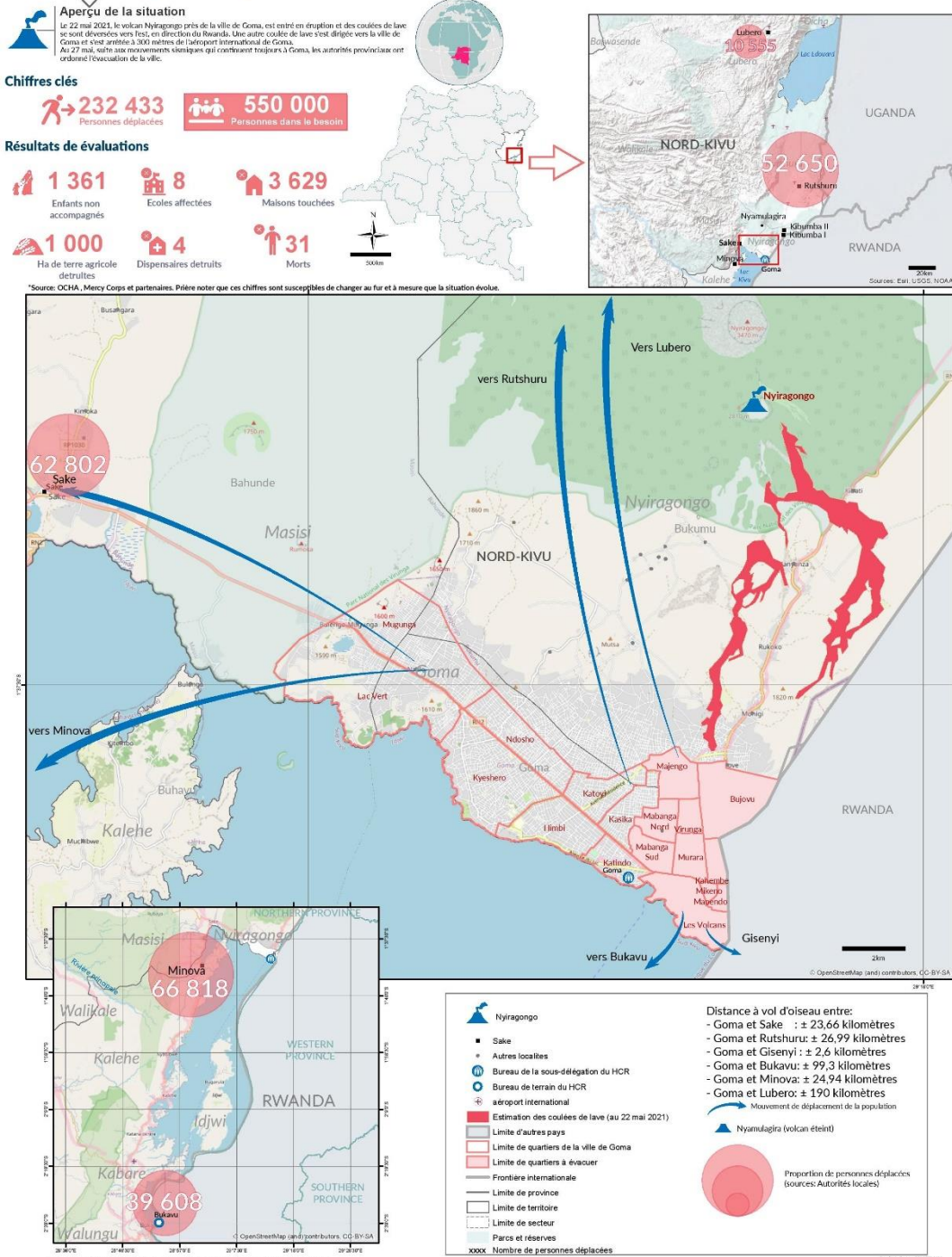


Figure 1 - The Map reflect the latest official figures shared by OCHA

