



REPUBLIC OF CONGO: FLOODS AND LANDSLIDES

No. MDRCG001
Glide no. FL-2006-000172-COG
1 December 2006

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 185 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 145,912 (USD 120,888 or EUR 91,711) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to assist some 5,855 beneficiaries and to replenish disaster preparedness stocks distributed to the affected population. This operation is expected to be implemented for 3 months, and will be completed by 24 February 2007. A Final Report will be made available 3 months after the end of the operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[<Click here to go to the attached map>](#)

This operation is aligned with the International Federation's Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Background and current situation

Brazzaville, the capital city of the Republic of Congo (RoC), is situated at the bank of the River Congo and it experiences recurrent floods during the rainy season. The floods occur with an enormous impact. Since late October 2006, the city has registered torrential rains that have caused flooding and left more than 4,000 people homeless. Densely populated areas such as Mpila, Mikalou, Tsiemé, Ma Mboualé, Peit-Chose, Yoro and Mfilou have been affected. These areas have very poor infrastructure and drainage systems.

The water has risen up to two meters high, flooding most of houses and resulting to loss of lives as well as damage and loss of property, particularly in Mpila and Kinsoudi. The flooding has so far claimed six lives, including two children from the same family who were trapped in their houses. Most of the affected people have sought refuge at the houses of relatives living in areas at lesser risk of flooding, but many others have nowhere to go.

In Mpila, the central water collector has remained blocked for the last twenty five years, resulting to the water overflows during the rainy season. There is a lack of latrines due to the marshy soil, exposing the population to waterborne diseases. This necessitates an urgent hygiene and sanitation intervention.

Elsewhere, landslides have affected Kombo, Eméraude, Ciespac and Kinsoudi areas. This situation might get worse if no action is taken since the rains are ongoing. Public cemeteries of Itatolo, situated in the northern part of

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Brazzaville on an area of about 600 metres, have not been spared by the landslides as most of the coffins have been washed away. More than 1,000 coffins for children have been destroyed and a huge gully has been dug exposing many of the remaining coffins. A site has been provided for the re-burying of the corpses that had been unearthed by the landslides.

Meanwhile, close to River Congo, there is a water pond where people fetch water to supply the population living close to the cemeteries. The landslides have polluted this water and exposed the population to high risks of contamination which can result to outbreaks of waterborne diseases.

The needs

Apart from sanitation and hygiene promotion needs, there is a need to assist the affected people with essential relief items such as blankets (especially for the homeless people) insecticide-treated mosquito nets (ITNs) for the families with children aged under five years, clothing, kitchen kits, soap and tents for temporary shelters. Red Cross volunteers also need protective gears and motivation in the cleaning up operation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the beginning of the disaster, the Congolese Red Cross (CRC) mobilized an assessment team comprised of volunteers, the national disaster management (DM) coordinator, the DM officer of the Federation sub-regional office in Yaoundé, a Regional Disaster Reponse Team (RDRT) member and the Federation field health delegate from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The team has been working together with humanitarian agencies in the field in confirming beneficiary figures and responding to the needs of the affected population.

In Mpila, Red Cross volunteers from the community launched a campaigns of cleaning drainages. This activity was however, carried out with a lot of difficulties due to lack of adequate materials. Based on the field assessment, a plan of action has been developed by CRC, together with the Federation, to respond to the urgent needs.

Coordination

Following preliminary assessment, the Federation sub-regional office in Yaoundé deployed a container with relief items such as stretchers, blankets, first aid kits, tents and boots. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Brazzaville also donated about 100 body bags to CRC for re-burying the exposed corpses. Due to the reputation and previous experiences with the national society, the Brazzaville Municipality has entrusted Red Cross volunteers with this task.

Plan of action

Objective: To contribute to reducing the vulnerability of the population affected by floods in Brazzaville in the next three months.

Expected results:

- 75 volunteers have been mobilized, trained and deployed to implement sanitation and hygiene promotion activities;
- 50 volunteers are able to carry out basic first aid within their community and share their knowledge with community members;
- The 771 most affected families have received non-food items (NFIs) including blankets, tents and soap.

Planned activities:

- Training of volunteers and community members on Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation (PHAST);
- Community-based first aid (CBFA) training for sustainability of actions after the emergency phase;
- Community sanitation of the most affected areas. This will involve:
 - Collection of garbage in public areas;
 - Door-to-door sanitation;
 - Disinfection of bore holes and water streams;
 - Drainage clean up;
 - Water chlorination.
- Distribution of NFIs to 771 most affected families in Brazzaville;

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- Provision of sanitation and hygiene materials;
- Sensitization and hygiene promotion campaigns (of the affected population and high risk communities) to prevent cholera and other waterborne diseases;
- Advocacy to other organizations and government entities for sustainable actions on the recurrent floods in Brazzaville through public investment.

Implementation strategy

The activities will be carried out in a participative manner with all humanitarian actors and the affected communities. This operation will be used to revamp some local committees and pave way for community disaster preparedness so as to efficiently and effectively respond to future potential disasters. Attention will also be given to women with specific needs. Red Cross volunteer teams will be formed to lead community volunteers in the implementation of the planned activities. There will be a community-based approach, integrated with community capacity building.

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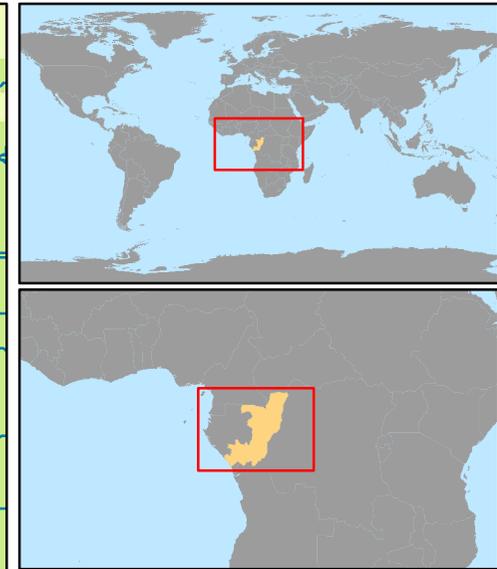
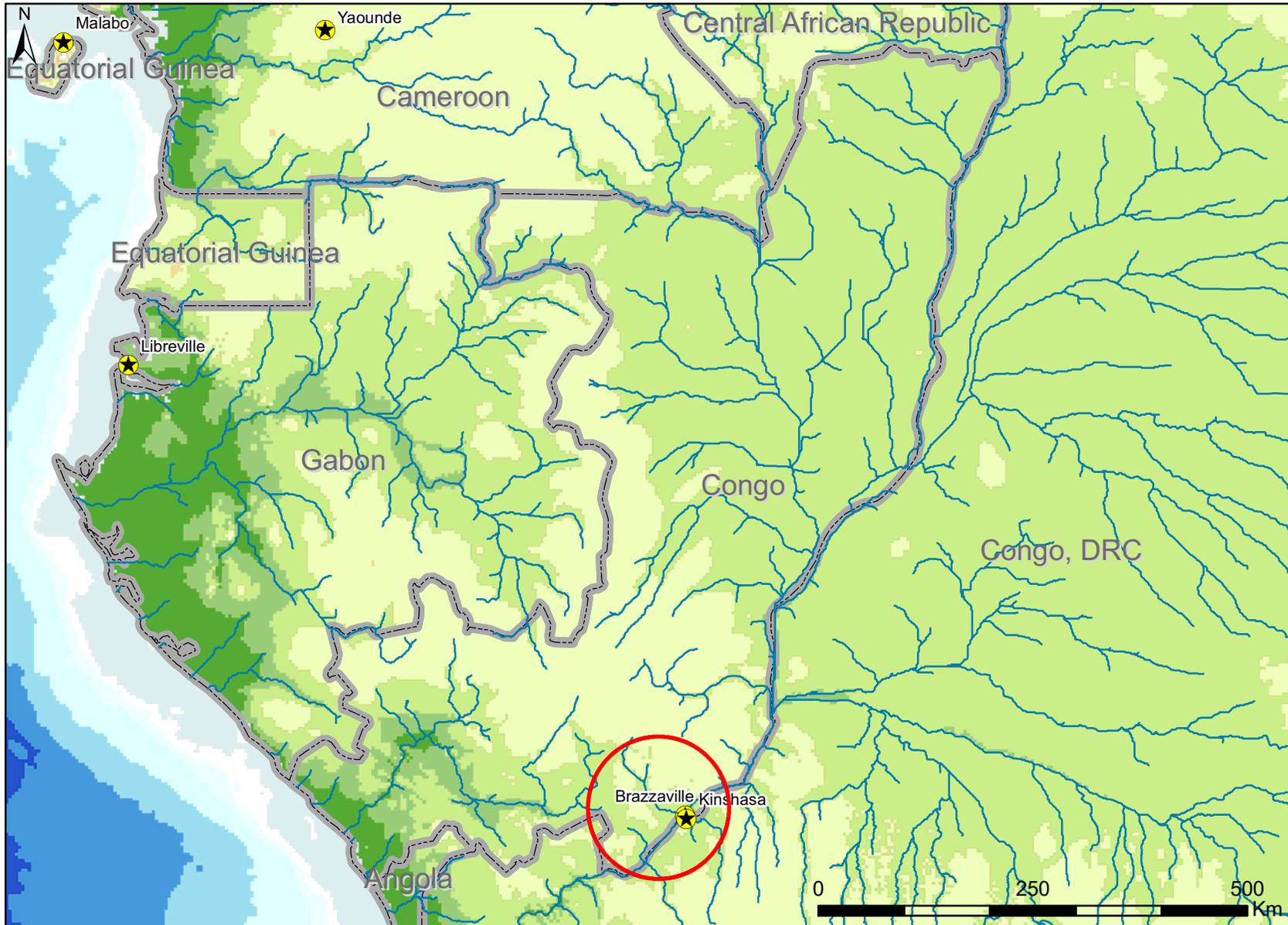
All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

[Map below; click here to return to the title page](#)



Congo: Floods and landslide



- Capitals
- Main rivers
- National borders

The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map data sources: ESRI, GIST, Federation