



CAMEROON: PLANE CRASH IN MBANGA- PONGO, DOUALA

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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 over 185 countries.

In Brief

This DREF Bulletin is being issued based on the situation described below reflecting the information available at this time. CHF 25,000 (USD 20,661 or EUR 15,244) was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 7 May 2007 to respond to the needs in this operation.

This operation is expected to be implemented over one month, and will be completed by 7 June 2007; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.

[<Click here to go directly 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

In the night of 4 to 5 May 2007, a Kenya Airways passenger plane with 115 people on board crashed in a densely forested area of southern Cameroon. The Boeing 737-800 5 YKYA airliner was carrying 105 passengers of various nationalities and nine members of crew who were all Kenyans. It left Douala International Airport at 23:07 en route to Nairobi, Kenya, but disappeared from the radar screens of the control tower five minutes after taking off.

Immediately after it was announced that the plane had disappeared from the radar, Cameroonian authorities organized a search and rescue operation. After 48 hours of searching, the wreckage of the plane was found in a swampy area in Mbanga-Pongo, 23 kilometres from Douala. Reports from Cameroon Red Cross Society (CRCS) volunteers and first aid workers, who were among the first to reach the macabre scene, indicated that none of the 115 passengers survived. It is suspected that bad weather could have caused the plane to crash.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Since the announcement of the sad news, the Cameroon Red Cross Society (CRCS), with assistance from the International Federation's Central Africa sub-regional office (CASRO), has been actively participating in meetings of the crisis committees that have been set up by the Civil Protection Department of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MINATD). The Federation's sub-regional office and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Regional Delegation in Yaoundé have provided logistics means to enable Cameroon Red Cross Society staff and volunteers to access the scene of the crash.

Presently, several volunteers from the Wouri (Douala) divisional committee of CRCS are actively involved in the recovery operation in the field, alongside the team sent from the National Society's national headquarters. The Red Cross volunteers are helping to remove corpses in collaboration with the national fire brigade and security forces. However, the corpses have been difficult to identify. Other CRCS volunteers have been mobilized to provide psychological support to families and relatives of the passengers who were on board the ill-fated plane. These volunteers have been stationed at the Douala International Airport

Action by the Government and other partners

The Cameroonian Government set up crisis committees in Yaoundé (the capital), Douala and in other localities to organize searches for the plane. After it was officially confirmed that the plane crashed near Douala, the committees in Yaoundé and Douala are working with all the partners involved in the operation.

An inter-ministerial commission extended to other partners has been set up to ensure an orderly intervention. Partners have been associated depending on their area of specialization and with clearly defined roles. The French and American embassies in Cameroon have promised that their government will give the Cameroon Government the resources needed to manage the crisis.

The Ministry of Defence has deployed soldiers and the fire brigade to the scene. A unit has been set up by the Governor of Littoral Province to provide psychological support to families and relatives of the casualties.



Rescuers, including Red Cross volunteers, walk to the site of the plane crash in Cameroon. Joseph Mathenge and Chris Ojow/Daily Nation.

Needs

To ensure an efficient intervention in the field, Cameroon Red Cross Society volunteers require body bags, first aid kits, boots, coveralls, stretchers, gloves, raincoats, masks, helmets, sleeping bags and blankets. Furthermore, in collaboration with other actors in the field, the Red Cross needs to continue providing psychological and moral support to families and/or relatives of those who were on board the plane. At the end of the recovery operation, psychological debriefing will be done for the Red Cross volunteers.

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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.

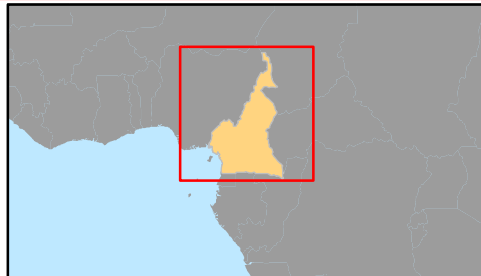
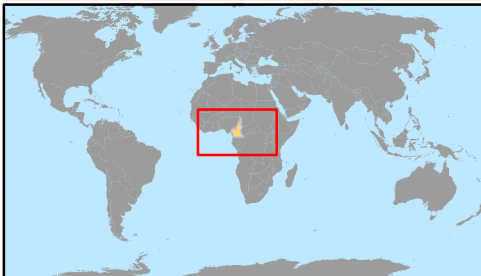
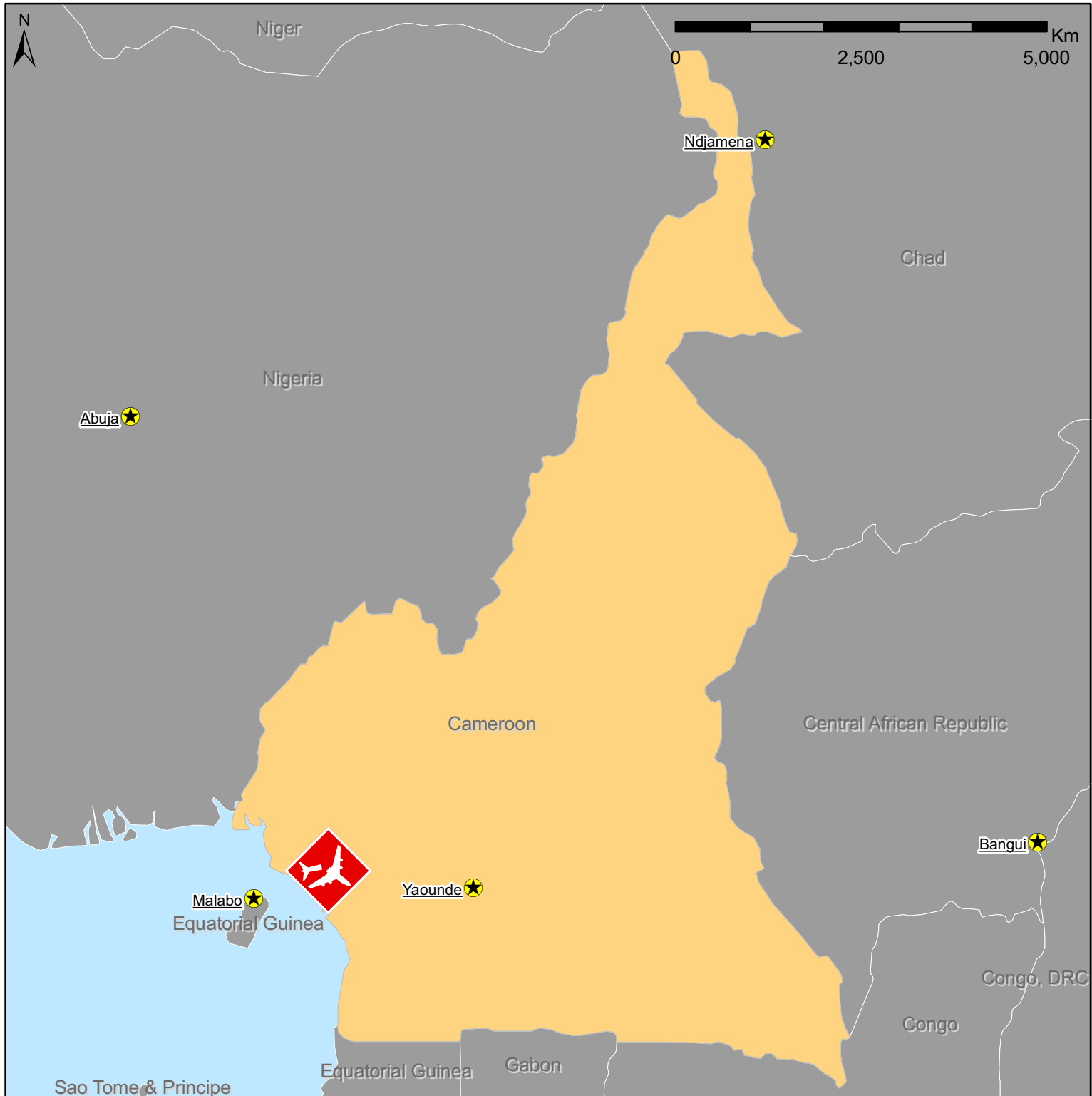
Cameroon: Plane crash in Mbanga-Pongo, Douala: DREF Bulletin No. MDRCM003

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



Cameroon: Plane crash



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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, Federation