



SITUATION REPORT:

DRC VOLCANO EXPLOSION

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OVERVIEW

Mount Nyiragongo, one of the world's most active volcanos, located just north of Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, erupted on May 22, destroying numerous homes and causing thousands to flee to safety. A lava lake in Mount Nyiragongo began filling rapidly since the eruption. However, anecdotal reports had warned of seismic/volcanic activity beforehand.

In Goma, reports indicate that thousands of homes and hospitals have been destroyed in the regions north of the city, as well as two neighborhoods to the north of the city. One account claims 180 children are missing. The lava flow and pace are similar to an eruption that took place in 2002, triggering mass evacuations to the Rwandan border.

The lava has affected IMA World Health program areas and infrastructure. All staff have been accounted for and are safe. Tremors have continued intermittently since the eruption, usually in 10-minute cycles, with one recording a magnitude of 5.4.

Concerns of further lava flows continue. Residents of Goma were advised to remain locked in their houses due to heavily falling ash and evacuate from potentially directly affected zones due to further unpredictable volcanic activity. Although it is early in the evaluation process, it is clear that at least 30,000 people are internally displaced or otherwise affected by the volcanic eruption. OCHA has set up a crisis center in Goma to coordinate all assessments and response.



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CORUS RESPONSE

Corus has several programs running in the zones affected directly and indirectly by the eruption, including Tushinde Ujeuri and MOMENTUM. Corus has begun donor outreach and, working with in-country staff, has started coordinating with other agencies to lay out possibilities for a rapid assessment and an emergency response. Psychological support is critical and will have to be extended to the staff as well as the population, who is spending days outside of their houses, in the open air, afraid of potential cracks and collapsing of their shelters.

- Corus conducted rapid assessments and identified major gaps in urban areas experiencing a lack of non-food resources, cash and psychological support, particularly for gender-based violence victims. Health services and food resource availability are also critical. The use of safehouses for aid distribution has been highlighted, benefiting those housed as well as certain members of the surrounding community.
- The DRC is experiencing a multitude of intersected humanitarian crises, including grappling with the COVID-19 epidemic and numerous internally displaced communities from around the country due to internal strife. These factors are being taken into consideration in any planning.

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