



The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the most enduring and complex humanitarian crises in the world. The country is simultaneously experiencing armed conflicts, food insecurity, forced displacement, and multiple recurring epidemics, including cholera, measles, and intermittent outbreaks of Ebola. It is the world's largest hunger crisis (27 million people, including 15.8m children) and fourth largest Internally Displaced Persons crisis (5.53 million) according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Country has experienced protracted conflict spanning decades and making it Africa's most complex and long-standing humanitarian crisis.

In the eastern provinces of the DRC, ongoing conflict is estimated to have caused the displacement of a staggering 1,165,789 people, according to figures from the North Kivu Provincial Humanitarian Coordination (COHP) group at the end of March 2023. Conditions for the displaced continue to deteriorate and the humanitarian situation remains a deep concern as hundreds of thousands remain without adequate shelter or consistent access to clean water and food. The internally displaced people also continue to experience attacks at the camps, latest being an attack at the Lala displacement site in Djugu territory, northeastern DRC, where more than 45 vulnerable people were massacred last week Monday 12 June.

The Joint Regional Force of the East African Community (EAC) continue to establish a presence in the North Kivu which, for over a year, has been subjected to violent clashes between government forces and non-state armed groups. A fragile ceasefire has been achieved in some parts of North Kivu Province as the frequency of violent clashes in Rutshuru and Masisi territory has been curbed.

As a result, some internally displaced populations have attempted to return to their homes and their livelihoods. As of 31 March 2023, the estimated number of recorded returns totalled as many as 280,000 people. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in collaboration with its partners, continues to monitor displacement and return movements in tandem with assessing access to regions to deliver life-saving assistance. Many locations in Rutshuru and Masisi territories have been inaccessible for months because of the violence. In addition, UNHRC has a serious funding gap for its work in DRC, as of June 2023, they only have funding allocated for 26% of their needs.

### **Church Responses to the humanitarian situation**

The Anglican Church of Congo, through its development department in Kinshasa has developed a project, **“Humanitarian assistance to displaced families and victims of armed insecurity in the territory of Masisi in the province of North Kivu”**. This project intends to support 1,500 internally displaced families in Goma and its outskirts with food, basic health care, drinking water and shelter.

As the province of North Kivu grapple with protracted conflict, the province of South Kivu has also been hit by disaster following heavy rains that the region has experienced since the first week of May 2023. The rains caused rivers to overflow (particularly Cibira/Cabondo and Nyamukubi Rivers), created mudslides and flash floods that resulted in casualties and severe damage.

The worst affected were the villages of Bushushu and Nyamukubi in South Kivu’s Kalehe territory. According to South Kivu provincial governor, Theo Kasi, they recorded 401 deaths in the two villages as of 8 May with an uncertain number of persons who were still missing, and dozens of houses destroyed, leaving about 3,000 people homeless.



Anglican Diocese of Bukavu has developed a response programme dubbed **“Humanitarian assistance to the survivors of the erosions and landslides in Kalehe (South-Kivu)”**. This response plan intends to meet the priority needs of the survivor population which are: foodstuff, non-food items, shelter equipment, medicines, and WASH (Water, sanitation, and hygiene). It targets 100 households from the affected population.

As the Church responds to these humanitarian needs, it is also concerned of the volatility of the Country in this electioneering year as DRC is scheduled to hold its general elections later in December 2023. This calls for civic education and mitigation of potential violence that has been associated with the elections in the past. The Church has thus developed a project called **“Raising awareness and building community capacity in civic and voter education in the 13 EAC dioceses”**. This six (6) month project aim to contribute to the restoration of civic and electoral education and to the success of the electoral process.

The Anglican Church of Congo has not received enough support to respond to the two emergencies occasioned by conflict in North Kivu and floods in South Kivu as well as to implement the civic education project in its 13 dioceses. We hope that partners can understand more the situation in DRC and the context of the Church ministry as we meet in a roundtable with the Primate, The Most Revd Titre Ande and his team on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2023.