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Flooding in Kalehe  
territory, South Kivu  
province, DRC

FLASH REPORT

9 May 2023



**Affected population:** around 20,000 persons including approx. 10,000 children  
(estimated figure as of 9 May)

## Situation Overview

Following heavy rains on 2 and 4 May 2023 in Luzira, Bushushu, Chabondo and Nyamukubi in Kalehe Territory in South-Kivu province, the Lukungula, Kabushungu, Nyamukubi, Chishova, and Kanyunyi rivers overflowed, causing massive flooding and mudslides.

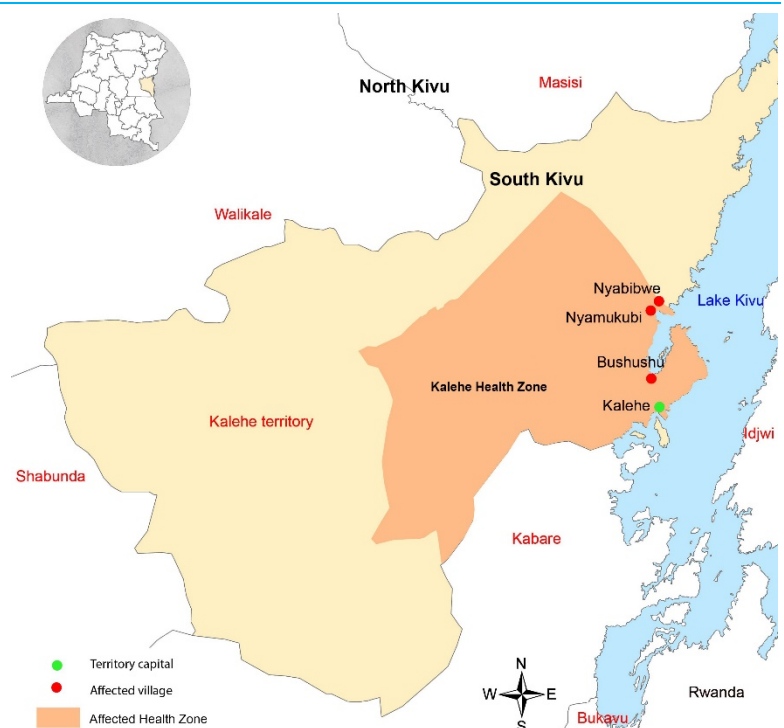
According to the latest estimates of 8 May from the Provincial Health Division (DPS), at least 422 persons have been killed, while more than 5,000 persons are still missing. About 3,000 houses have been affected, of which 1,200 have been destroyed. 3 primary schools and 1 secondary school were also washed away. In Nyamukubi, 70% of the local water infrastructures have been destroyed. A large warehouse was also destroyed, depriving farmers of 25 tons of seed.

Given the intensity of this disaster, several dozen people have been injured. 72 injured people in an absolute emergency have already been transferred by boat to the General Referral Hospital in Bukavu supported by ICRC, MSF, and Panzi Hospital. More than 150 minor injuries are treated in the local healthcare centres. It is likely that the casualties will increase in the coming days.

The impact of this disaster is multidimensional, with consequences for the physical and psychosocial well-being of so far 20,000 people affected, especially children. Moreover, children are exposed to additional and specific risks. To date, more than 30 unaccompanied and separated children from their families (UASC) have been registered, and more than 50 orphans and other vulnerable children have been recorded.

The Government of DRC declared a National Day of Mourning on 8 May, and a government mission including national ministers was deployed to support disaster management. The ICRC has deployed about 150 volunteers to ensure dignified and safe burials for all victims, and to prevent the outbreak of epidemics.

It should be noted that Kalehe territory is also a host area for displaced people, some of whom have fled the fighting between the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC) and the M23 in the neighboring North-Kivu province. Moreover, cholera remains one of the major challenges in South Kivu, which has already reported more than 1,200 suspected cases in 2023 according to official figures. Although the Kalehe health zone has not recorded any new cases for several weeks, the neighboring Kabare health zone has been on alert with 18 suspected cases since 1 May. In addition, the measles epidemic is taking a worrying turn in the Kalehe health zone, with 1,098 cases reported, including 4



Map 1: Localities affected by the flooding (Source: OCHA)

deaths since the beginning of the year. The South-Kivu province has registered 26,214 cases of measles and 216 deaths since the beginning of the year<sup>1</sup>.

The most immediate needs for the displaced populations reported include WASH support, medical supplies, food aid for the affected and injured, and shelter for those who lost their homes. Children and their families are also in need of psychosocial support after this extremely traumatic experience and need to ensure their ability to go back to school in the weeks to come.

## UNICEF's Emergency Response

UNICEF's team is participating on 10 May in the intersectoral evaluation mission led by OCHA in the Kalehe territory. In parallel to this evaluation, UNICEF is launching a first response to provide emergency aid to health centers, affected people in host families and spontaneous sites, as described below:



### Rapid response (UniRR)

UNICEF and its UNIRR partner in South Kivu Aides will launch on Friday:

- Distribution of roughly 3,000 NFI kits to affected households
- Distribution of approximately 3,000 WASH kits, including intimate hygiene kits, to affected households



### Cholera outbreak prevention

- 5 CATI teams are being deployed (2 are already on site) to strengthen cholera surveillance and respond to every suspected cholera case in less than 48h to:
  - Intensification of awareness-raising activities around hygiene practices
  - Supply of chlorine and 4 tons of WASH materials for the installation of chlorination points to ensure the population's access to safe and clean water
  - Technical support to healthcare infrastructures to avoid epidemics outbreaks



### Health

- Supply of emergency healthcare kits (obstetrics, surgery)
- Supply of antibiotics and drugs (anti-malaria, etc.)



### Water, Hygiene, and Sanitation

- PCI and protection supply for healthcare infrastructures
- 100kg of chlorine for healthcare infrastructures and ensuring dignified and safe burials



### Child protection

- Supply of 14 tents for establishing safe spaces and child-friendly spaces
- Mobilization of the social and para-social workforce to provide emergency psychosocial support to the most vulnerable affected children, and the referral and orientation of children in need and their families to the appropriate child protection services.
- Support the identification, documentation, family tracing, and reunification of unaccompanied and separated children

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Health – Provincial Health Authorities, 3 May 2023