**International Co-operation to Support Displaced Persons in DRCongo**

***Kokisa Buka*** *is Chair of the* [*Congolese Development Project in Swansea*](http://www.cdpwales.org.uk/)*. Here he reports from Kinshasa on health check sessions he’s running for internally displaced people many of whom are in very dire state of health after the pandemic and the worst outbreak of Ebola every recorded in DRCongo. It is a powerful call to action for support and help. Read On!*

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the second largest country in Africa. It is both a major source of displaced people and it is also hosting numerous refugees from neighbouring countries. The DRC currently hosts more than half a million refugees and five million internally displaced people (IDPs) - the largest IDP population in Africa.

Many have managed to come to the capital, Kinshasa, without their families and without any support whatsoever from the government.

In addition to widespread violence from armed groups, many displaced people and refugees are facing major health risks. Since August 2018, the country has been battling the worst Ebola outbreak ever recorded in the country and the world’s second largest in history. In addition, the COVID-19 outbreak has made things worse, with many unable to access basic needs, especially water, food, and other essentials.

Displaced people are finding it very hard to get in touch with their families and this is causing serious problems of stress and trauma, negatively impacting their mental health and wellbeing.

Many people cannot access PPE equipment even though it is important that they protect themselves and protect others.

The government has put nothing in place to protect people. All pledges of support have been followed by nothing concrete.

To help support these people, in Kinshasa and in Kikwit (a town in the Bandundu region in Bas Congo), health check sessions are being organised by the Congolese Development Project based in Swansea, Wales, UK [www.cdpwales.org.uk](http://www.cdpwales.org.uk)  working in partnership with Association de Developpement pour la Promotion Humaine (ADPH CONGO ) <https://ms-my.facebook.com/Association-de-d%C3%A9veloppement-pour-la-promotion-humaine-ADPH-104228428638368/>

It is very sad to state that many of the people attending our sessions are in very poor health. Many have high levels of cholesterol, diabetes, some have obesity, and some have blood pressure problems without being aware of it.

We are organising our support by prioritising the following, for all of which we are in urgent need of humanitarian support from organisations and individuals:

* Provision of smart phones or other gadgets that would allow displaced people to get in touch with their families and with other assistance.
* Provision of 6-7 drilling water points of access to clean water.
* Provision of PPE and basic essentials.
* Provision of food (rice, dried food…)

Our current action can represent a good start. Looking ahead, the Congolese Development Project and Association de Developpement pour la Promotion Humaine CONGO will reflect on this experience to inform future cooperation projects.

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