

Violence escalates in Congo; Minnesota-based American Refugee Committee responds

Written by

Friday, 30 November 2012 10:30

The crisis in the Congo worsened this week in the wake of rebel advances in the eastern part of the country. Families have been forced from their homes and are fleeing for safety in Rwanda, Uganda, and other parts of Congo. They join the more than 400,000 other Congolese men, women, and children who have fled their homes this year alone.

The Minnesota-based American Refugee Committee is responding to the crisis.

"The situation in Congo is urgent," said Daniel Wordsworth, President of the American Refugee Committee. "Our partners on the ground tell us that they have seen masses of people seeking medical help at their hospital in Goma. They have absolutely no room there to accommodate the need—and they have two patients assigned to each bed. Conditions are dire."

The ARC team will land in North Kivu's war-torn capital of Goma and conduct initial humanitarian assessments in the region.

"We've been helping Congolese refugees for more than 15 years, and, with our partners, we're poised to help immediately," added Wordsworth.

ARC currently works with tens of thousands of Congolese refugees in Rwanda, Uganda, and South Sudan. ARC also manages Kigeme Refugee Camp in Rwanda, which shelters 14,000 people—all of whom have fled since April. ARC began direct support in eastern Congo last year and is working to expand operations to meet the dire need. A special emergency assessment team is en route to Goma this week.

HOW TO HELP: The people of Congo are in need of support, and the American Refugee Committee is taking donations to support its relief efforts at: American Refugee Committee; 615 First Avenue NE, Suite 500; Minneapolis, MN 55413; tel 612-872-7060 or at, www.ARCrelief.org

ABOUT THE AMERICAN REFUGEE COMMITTEE:

American Refugee Committee programs are built from the ground up. We work with people at the most vulnerable points in their lives, when they have lost everything to war or disaster. They let us know what they need most, and we work together to develop ways to help them get it. Our programs are as diverse as the people we serve, but they all work together for the same goal: to help people take back control of their lives. We have worked with refugees around the world for more than 30 years, and our 2,000 staff members help nearly 2.5 million people a year throughout Africa and Asia. **ARC is actively involved in helping people affected by conflict in the Congo: we work with Congolese refugees in Rwanda, South Sudan, and Uganda, providing shelter, health care, food assistance, counseling, and support.**

ARC is also building a 21st Century humanitarian organization rooted in co-creating with committed people to provide more meaningful solutions to humanitarian crises worldwide. We are based in Minneapolis, MN. To learn more, visit

www.ARCrelief.org