



# MapAction



## EFFECTIVE CRISIS RESPONSE THROUGH MAPPING PREPAREDNESS

### CASE STUDY: *HUMANITARIAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO*

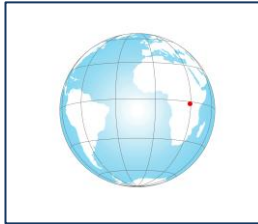
#### *Enhancing Local Capacity for Conflict Reporting, Monitoring and Analysis*

The few days following a disaster are critical for the affected population. Responders need to know where the affected area is, who is affected, what infrastructure is damaged, and what relief efforts are occurring or needed. MapAction has been helping relief agencies since 2004 to gather this crucial information, and are helping to pass on their experience to national disaster agencies, NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

MapAction has many valuable lessons that can help these agencies be prepared for emergency response mapping in turn decreasing suffering of affected populations and increasing their resilience for the future. These include:

- Having a good set of basemaps and information shared amongst responders before disaster strikes,
- **Having local skills in mapping and information management,**
- Using templates and standard procedures speeds up the ability to make good maps,
- Maps help responders make a common picture of a disaster, the area affected and where relief efforts exist.

This is one of a series of case studies to show why these learning points help organisations become more resilient in emergency preparedness.



AREA: Eastern Region, South Kivu Province, DRC

EVENT: Violent regional conflict

YEAR: 2012



People fleeing Goma. [© Frederic Bonamy EU/ECHO]

DRC has been plagued by violent conflict, in the east the recent history of violence includes the Rwanda/Burundi genocide (800,000), and the subsequent Second Congo War (1998-2003) which has continued sporadically up to the present. The ongoing conflict has involved 8 neighbouring countries, over 20 armed groups and reportedly resulted in the deaths of over 5 million people and millions more displaced.

In early 2012 MapAction was contacted by CAFOD for assistance regarding a project 'Development of a civil society network for conflict transformation in the Archdiocese of Bukavu, DRC'.

The project was supported by the EU's Instrument for Stability (IFS) initiative and was implemented by three local CAFOD partners, the Association of the Central African Episcopal Conferences (ACEAC) Justice and Peace Commission, Caritas



Bukavu and Centre Olame between September 2009 and November 2012. The programme aimed to enable and empower Church-based actors in South Kivu to prevent re-emerging conflict through enhanced field-based political analysis and early warning systems.

**MapAction were asked** to help CAFOD and its partners CARITAS and Centre Olame turn their extensive records of conflict events and participants into a format that could help communicate their analysis and the emerging conflict trends to decision-makers, to both help quick interventions and to influence policy. CAFOD believed that mapping would provide the means to visually represent their evidence most effectively and support advocacy at local, national and international levels.

### MapAction's comprehensive response involved:

- Assessing the project's mapping requirements
- Identifying a suitable mapping solution best suited to the project's reporting requirements
- Planning, developing and implementing a training course in DRC in French
- Training the project partners in documenting and mapping techniques using MS-Excel, QGIS (free GIS software), Google Earth/Google Maps tools and Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers.



Twelve representatives from CAFOD, Centre Olame and Caritas were trained initially and nine for the second visit.

The successful outcome of the capacity building was encapsulated in a trainee's comment:

*"When we went to meetings with (UN)OCHA, they would show maps of data and it was like magic. Now we can do it too."*

The training was targeted to integrate closely with the agencies' workflows, but using information management and geographical information systems to enhance analysis and improve results.

### KEY LEARNING POINTS

Passing software, data, maps and equipment to local counterparts is futile without proper support and capacity building. That support can come in the form of training but in also passing on a workable system to the organisation.

The **training programmes** designed for DRC allowed users to step through a series of carefully designed steps;

- showing the potential of GIS to help map their analysis,
- giving the rudimentary background theory and language of GIS to help people work with the software,
- showing how to use key parts of the software,
- eventually leading to practice in using GIS for their own applications.

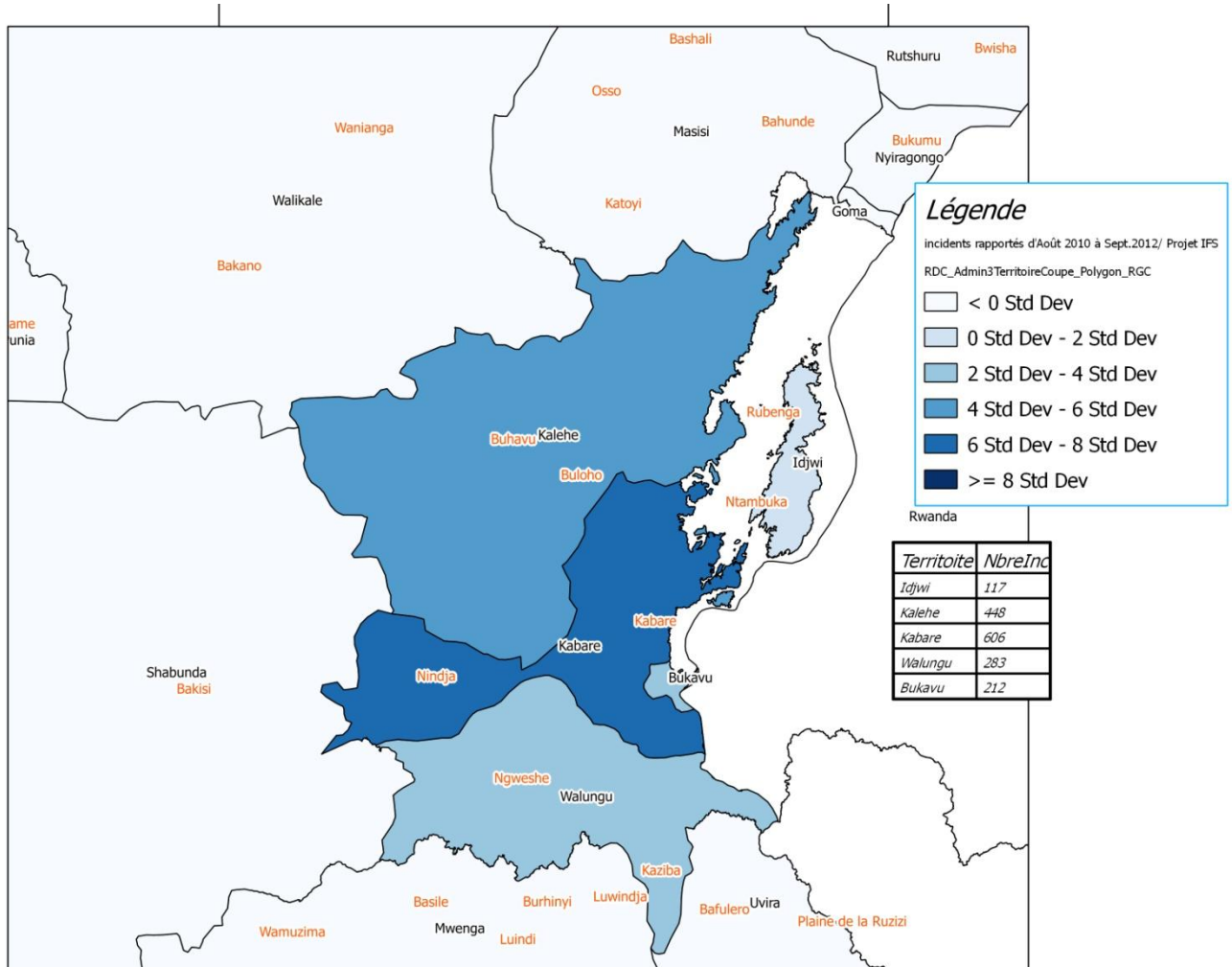
The training course helps to expose participants to the software, but then the materials act as an *aide memoire* when it becomes time to use software when the trainers have gone.





The capacity building does not just stop with training, but MapAction worked carefully to understand the **requirements** of CAFOD and its partners. As part of a **needs assessment**, MapAction first looked at the current situation (people, what data exist, current levels of skill and equipment) then the requirements (what outputs are needed, in what format, how often, how much detail) and worked out the gaps in knowledge, expertise and kit to get the job done.

By the end of the missions, reports and **procedural manuals** help to give people a written documentation for how to operate the system, and also how to collect, manage and analyse the data and maps they create. And there should also be a **groundswell of local expertise**, motivated to continue to learn, able to share experience, and able to routinely conduct the mapping work and analysis needed to fulfil their remits.



Map of reported incidents prepared by trainees in DRC.

### Partner Organisations

CAFOD [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)  
 CARITAS [www.caritas.org](http://www.caritas.org)  
 Centre Olame [www.olame.org](http://www.olame.org)  
 EC Humanitarian and Civil Protection (ECHO)  
[ec.europa.eu/echo](http://ec.europa.eu/echo)

### Contact MapAction

Web: [www.mapaction.org](http://www.mapaction.org)  
 Email: [info@mapaction.org](mailto:info@mapaction.org)  
 Tel: +44 (0)1494 56 88 99  
 Address: The Clare Charity Centre  
 Wycombe Road  
 Saunderton  
 Buckinghamshire  
 HP14 4BF  
 United Kingdom