

A project welcomed by the community

Implemented since March 1, 2022 in the villages of MUGERWA and NGANGI I, Nyiragongo Territory, North Kivu Province in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the project Innovating in community to better rebuild is a reality. This innovation program of START NETWORK, is the result of an expression of interest from the HUB DRC through MIDEFEHOPS.



The objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of community resilience by bringing together different stakeholders around the same table to discuss the new governance model related to the decision-making process for the management of predictable progressive or sudden volcano-type risks, taking into account the contribution of each stakeholder and local knowledge.

A project at the heart of the community

Gathered in the big room of the chiefdom of BUKUMU, Wednesday, March 23, 2022, to take part in the presentation of the project «**Innovate in community to better rebuild**», the men, women and youth, and community leaders who came to represent different villages of the territory of Nyiragongo, did not hesitate to commit themselves in the support of the project. It should be noted that this presentation was made by the Innovation Program team under the aegis of its coordinator, Mr. Sébastien MATERANYA.

In the name of his population, the chief of the Bukumu chiefdom, expressed himself in these terms: «*For my part, I think that this project will help the population to change their mentality, they were used to seeing people think for them for their own good, but now they will also be involved in giving their ideas, in saying what they think for their own good, it is really an innovation*». The president of the civil so-

ciety of the place also expressed himself in these words, «*this project addresses community problems through the community itself*».



The GVO is willing to support

The Goma Volcanological Observatory, through its Technical Director, Mr. Kasereka Mahinda, present at the presentation of the project «**Innovating in community for a better reconstruction**» before the provincial authorities of North Kivu, did not hide his feelings in these terms:

«*We are proud. This project is a strong hand to support the efforts of the GVO for more impact in the community.*

Similarly, other participants such as the representative of the Division of Social Affairs and the Division of Humanitarian Actions expressed their wishes for the realization of the project, while promising their support for the good of the population».



Why innovate now?

Innovating in community to better rebuild is to start from empiricism to realism.

Producing a quarterly newsletter is the result of the affirmation that we and the community with which we implement the project «**Innovate in community to rebuild better**» are available to transform our problems into innovative ideas. The newsletter that we put at your disposal would like to reflect the current state of progress of the implementation process of the above mentioned project. Several titles are developed for the attention of the readers with the sole purpose of serving as a communication belt with the different partners of the project. We remain convinced that this first issue of our newsletter will obtain your adhesion and serve as an opportunity to address us your comments and constructive suggestions for the next issue.

Isidore KALIMIRA

Capacity building of the Innovation project implementation team



«New ideas for new rebuilding»

From March 9 up to 11, 2022, an induction and capacity building workshop for the innovation project implementation's members team was organized in Goma at Bakanja Welcome Center with the technical support of the DRC HUB Leadership. This activity aimed to equip the members of the Innovation Program team with the necessary tools to enable them to properly implement the project activities. Another objective of the training was to bring the team members to support the communities to use their local knowledge to innovated better in the problems that affect the community. According to Yves Kahasha, trainer and member



of HUB DRC leadership, «*The contribution of the trained persons is to support community facilitators to have the capacity to lead communities to face disaster risks, so that they are able to detect the risks to which they are exposed, the vulnerabilities within their communities, as well as the capacities in relation to the hazards discussed in this program*».



The profiles of MUGERWA and NGANGI 1 villages

The selection's criteria for these two villages were to have experimented at least one of the three volcanic eruptions in 1977, 2002 and 2021. Then to have a large concentration of populations.



The MUGERWA village

This village is located in the KIBATI group in Nyiragongo territory. It is made up of 9 notabilities, 5 of which were decimated by the volcanic eruption of May 2021, and consequently the entire population of these notabilities is concentrated in the 4 remaining notabilities. The village of MUGERWA is inhabited by 2159 people, including 350 men, 362 women, 712 boys and 735 girls.

the NGANGI 1 village :

Located to the north of the city of Goma, this village was hit hard by the three successive eruptions from 1977 to 2021.

Community facilitators trained in conducting Participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments

From May 12 to 18, 2022, in Nyiragongo territory, 9 women and 11 men were trained in participatory data collection techniques on vulnerabilities, analysis and prioritization of problems and responses. In the same workshop, the participants were called to deepen the concepts :

HAZARDS, VULNERABILITY, RISKS, ISSUES AND CAPACITIES...

Thus, risk is defined as:



Danger = Hatari (in Swahili) multiplied by the **Vulnerability**(Kuto kujiweza kiwango fulani) over **Capacity**(uwezo)

These concepts were even translated into Kikumu language, which is spoken in the project area.



Dialogues with communities on the presentation of identified problems

To contribute to the improvement of community resilience by bringing together local authorities and their populations from the villages targeted by the project, a series of community dialogues were held successively from June 2 to 5 and July 5 to 6, 2022, through focus groups on the identification of community problems in the villages of MUGERWA and NGANGI1, on the volcano hazard, prioritization of problems and their va-

lidation. From these processes, the population and their leaders are able to work together on a community problem. From these community dialogues, 19 problems were identified in the village of MUGERWA, 26 in the village NGANGI 1.



The population gathered in a dialogue to validate the problems in MUGERWA Village

Thus, each village now has a base of community problems on which the project can intervene in the process of transforming problems into innovative ideas.



During the prioritization session of the problems identified in the community



In the focus groups, the mothers in the community problem identification session

Establishment of committees for the selection of innovators and the complaints and feedback mechanism

The choice of the committees's members for the selection of innovators and the complaints and feedback mechanism was made in the two villages by the community itself on the basis of criteria related to residence in the village, the ability to read, write and make a good analysis, the availability to work voluntarily, a good knowledge of the project «Innovate in community for better rebuilding».

The selection of the innovators and the committee members of the complaints and feedback mechanism was an opportunity to printures of democratic choice based on transparency.out in the community the proce From now on, each village has a committee for

selection of innovators and for complaints and feedback mechanism, which demonstrates the real commitment of the population to the project. In that way, 7 people from the local authority and community leaders lead the selection committee of innovators and 5 gender-based community leaders are in charge of collecting complaints and participating in the collective feedback.



Female participation in both committees

Without women, it's utopian to believe in community innovation. However, the involvement and commitment of women in the operation of the committees for the selection of innovators, complaints and feedback has been one of the priorities and a balance between community partners.

For example, in the selection committee for innovators in the village of Ngangi, 1 out of 7 members are women, and in the village of Mugerwa, 1 woman against 6 men. This beginning of women's involvement in community management is a step towards the awareness of men.



What do we need to know about the neighboring Nyiragongo volcano?

The volcano Nyiragongo, is an ancestor who does not speak, who looks at us, a neighbor friend but also an enemy with whom man is called to live with. The Nyiragongo volcano offers many potentialities to us as a population and country. Nyiragongo within its eruptions, man not only flees but man benefits from materials of construction, ash to fertilize the fields, meetings with foreigners in the framework of tourism and Nyiragongo, is able to offer us thermal electricity.

Nyiragongo volcano is one of the most active volcanoes in the world. According to the data of the Volcanological Observatory of Goma, since The first explorers went up to Nyiragongo volcano on June 7, 1894, and there were only three eruptions on the southern flank. The eruption of January 10, 1977, which took place at 10:00 am, the one of January 17, 2002, at 8:25 am, killed 250 people, and the last eruption of May 22, 2021, which took place at 6:15 pm,



The Nyiragongo volcano north of Goma city killed over 35 people. Although it is useful, it is no less dangerous for man. With regard to the collateral damage related to the volcanic eruption, they are numerous families.



Volcanic eruption of January 17, 2002. When the lava flow in the city of Goma destroyed everything in its path

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From right to left ,Honoré CIRAVA specialist of the GVO, showing the map of all three volcanic eruptions to Louise MAPENDO of MIDEFEHOPS

«What must always be done, every day in our villages. It is to organize such circumstances and opportunities, where we sit down to reflect on the cyclical problems in our village. It is really an innovation, to allow us to face the problems linked to the volcanic eruption».
 AMINADABU Faustin inhabitant of the village.



Testimonies

I lived all three volcanic eruptions from 1977 to 2021. For me, these group works are of paramount importance, because they are the first to be organized in our village. This allows us to say out loud what we think and often without an interlocutor. *«We are proud to see that there are people who think about us and that now we can be helped according to our real needs».*



Ms. KAVIRA Bertilla members of the FOCUS Group NGANGI 1

For SINAMENYE BRIGITE, a resident of NGANGI 1, *« as a woman, I will now go into the community to sensitize other women on how to behave in the face of a volcanic eruption During the recent volcanic eruption, I myself panicked but now I know how to behave by keeping calm, preparing all the documents to reduce the negative consequences after the eruption.*

